



Pen & PADDLE

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Results are in: The Champlain Society Membership

Last spring, in association with Professor Wendy Duff of the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto, we asked the members of The Champlain Society to tell us more about themselves and about their wishes for the organization. We were very impressed by the returns. The society currently has 450 individual Canadian members (another 300 subscribers are institutions), and we received responses from 169 of you, a respectable return of over 37 percent. We are very grateful for the feedback.

We heard some good news, and read some useful advice on how the Society can move into its second century confident that it is meeting the wishes of its membership.

Who answered our questionnaire? 83 percent of respondents identified themselves as male, and no less than 52 percent identified themselves as being older than 65. Another 24 percent listed themselves as between the ages of 56 and 64. 14 percent of respondents identified themselves as between the ages of 46 and 55, leaving nine percent below the age of 45. One of our members wrote: "I think the Champlain Society needs to find a way to attract younger generations of supporters." Clearly, our membership is aging fast, and the Society will have to address this succession issue.

We asked members to indicate if they had any professional involvement in history. This was the case for half of the respondents, and of them 44 percent identified themselves as university professors, 33 percent identified themselves as "historians," and 25 percent labeled themselves "researchers." The grouping was rounded out by "teachers" (15 percent), "archivists" (11 percent) and "museum workers" (10 percent).

We asked our members what areas interested them the most. While

Area	%
Canadian studies	69
Cultural history	46
Military history	44
Political history	42
Social history	42
First Nations	38
Family history	30
Economic history	21
History of transportation	18
Business history	16
History of science and technology	15
Religious communities	15
History of medicine	13
Labor history	10
History of gender	7

*Percentages will total more than 100% due to multiple responses.

** Percentages have been rounded.

an overwhelming 70 percent listed themselves as interested in "Canadian studies," the chart below

shows the wide range of interests: The Council of the Society is keen to explore other revenue streams and has been considering organizing special fundraising evenings where distinguished speakers could address the membership on a topic of history. Although Council is open to organizing such evenings across Canada, it was felt that the concentration of members in the Southern Ontario region would likely make such evenings more feasible in the Greater Toronto Area. The response was encouraging. 16 percent of respondents said they would attend regularly, and another 30 percent indicated that they would attend on occasion or depending on the topic. All told, the Society could probably count on 50 people to be present for such an evening.

We also asked what people would be prepared to pay, and there again the response was positive. 50 percent of respondents indicated that they would be prepared to pay up to \$40, and another 11 percent was willing to contribute more. Putting willingness to attend and willingness to pay together, the Council could envisage organizing an event for 50 people at a cost of about \$40 per person. One member wrote that the Champlain Society should be "more visible. Share

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AN INTERVIEW WITH DONALD AVERY AND MARK EATON ON “THE MEANING OF LIFE”

Early next year, The Champlain Society will publish *The Meaning of Life: The Scientific and Social Experiences of Everitt and Robert Murray, 1930-1964*. This volume sheds light on a neglected aspect of Canadian history: the role of the medical and scientific communities. The focus is on the correspondence of two of Canada's most distinguished microbiologists: Everitt G.D. Murray (1890-1964), formerly at McGill University, and his son Robert G. Murray, Professor Emeritus of the University of Western Ontario.

Patrice Dutil, Vice President of The Champlain Society, recently interviewed the editors of the book. Donald Avery is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Western Ontario. During his academic career he has published five books and anthologies, written over 90 scholarly articles, book chapters, book reviews, and participated in seven film documentary projects. His 1999 book, *The Science of War: Canadian Scientists and Allied Military Technology During the Second World War*, was runner-up for the prestigious John A. Macdonald Prize. Dr. Mark Eaton is currently working with the Historical Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He recently completed his Ph.D. at the University of Western Ontario.

Patrice Dutil: You have spent a lot of time studying the Murray letters. What kept you returning to your desk to do more work on them?

Donald Avery and Mark Eaton: The

letters contain such interesting material and diverse topics: Science, politics, social and cultural issues, nature, etc. are all discussed in great vivid detail. It also helps that both father and son have very attractive and readable writing styles.

Patrice: What did you learn about father-son relationships from this collection of letters?

Donald and Mark : Many things. First of all, and most obviously, this collection provides an example of a father-son relationship based on multiple shared interests in many different areas of life. I believe this differs from many such relationships that while close, can also be somewhat distant and lacking common interests and experiences. The Murrays shared an obvious interest in science generally and microbiology in particular, and they constantly shared their observations and assisted each other in their work. They also shared a great love of the natural world, camped and went fishing together on a regular basis, although less regularly as the years passed. The relationship provides an example of how parents and children can continue to rely on each other, even depend on each other, for advice, assistance, and support, for the duration.

The relationship between Everitt and Robert Murray illustrates how multifaceted father-son relationships can be. It is rare, to be sure, but possible for parents and siblings to be dependent on each

other in the traditional family sense. It is rare, however, also to be close companions and friends, mutual advisors and critics, respected colleagues, etc.

Patrice: How did you find these papers? Had anyone used them before?

Donald and Mark: Don Avery worked with the Everitt and Robert Murray collections at Library and Archives Canada and learned of the vast personal correspondence in discussions with Robert Murray some years ago. Several years of assuring Dr. Murray of the potential value of

Donald Avery



the collection convinced him to provide access to Avery. It was soon clear that Avery's hunch was correct and that the letters contained valuable information concerning the development of microbiology in Canada from the perspective of two of its most important pioneers. This is the first time that the personal correspondence has been used by scholars and we have exclusive access to the collection.

Patrice: How is Montreal's Anglo-phone culture portrayed in these letters?

Donald and Mark: This topic is

covered in less detail in the letters, but it is nevertheless obvious that McGill was a bastion of Anglophone life in the city. This is clear in discussions about the various faculty members that take

Mark Eaton



place, the restaurants and other social settings described, etc. An excellent example is the references to royal visits that occur throughout the period covered in the letters. They are described in vivid detail, often because family members are guests at events held on these occasions.

Patrice: These are by far the most recent letters The Champlain Society

has ever published. What role did Robert Murray (who is now 88 years old) play in this adventure?

Donald and Mark: Once convinced of the value of the collection, Dr. Murray played a central role in the development of the manuscript. He has participated in approximately 20 hours of recorded interviews and written numerous short pieces on various aspects of his life and career (such as the family's history, his and his father's contributions to the field, and major developments in microbiology in the 20th century). He has also provided much material in addition to the main father-son correspondence which adds great variety to the publication (letters between Robert and his first wife, Doris; letters from his mother, Freda; photographs). He has also provided much-needed background information about scientific concepts and methods, as well as on the multitude of individuals that appear in the correspondence.

The Champlain Society's "Order of Good Cheer"

To honour the generosity of its members, the Society created new membership categories in 2005: **Patrons of the "Habitation":** This membership category recognizes annual gifts of over \$5,000 and identifies supporters of the very "foundation" of the Champlain Society: individuals, corporations and foundations who provide sustaining grants.

Patrons of the "Astrolabe": This membership category recognizes annual gifts that range between \$1000-\$4999 and identifies supporters whose funds allow the Champlain Society the capacity to "seek out" and publish manuscripts

Patrons of the "Capitaine": This membership category recognizes annual gifts that range between \$100-\$999 and identifies supporters whose funds allow the Champlain Society the capacity to "steer in confidence".

(See the membership form)

The Champlain Society Membership Survey (continued)

the stage with other history organizations across Canada." Perhaps this strategy might help us find a stage!

We also asked members if they would be willing to attend an annual Champlain Society Centennial Fundraising Dinner (again, regrettably, in Toronto), and 57 members indicated that they would attend, at a cost of \$125 per person.

Finally we asked the members if they would be interested in attending one-day field trips to historic sites in

Southern Ontario, at an approximate cost of \$110. The response was positive, if tentative. More than 60 percent said that they would consider it, but would make a final decision based on the actual destination. One of our faithful members remarked that "The War of 1812 has been greatly overlooked"...perhaps a tour of some interesting sites might be in order to rekindle interest in this fascinating time of our past.

The results of the questionnaire

have given the Council of The Champlain Society much food for thought. As one member put it: "It is my firm belief that when we all are dust, scholars will be consulting CS publications and sincerely blessing those people who took such great pains to preserve in beauty the marvels of our past." We aim to live up to that fine ambition and ensure that the Champlain Society continues to thrive.

-Patrice Dutil

WHAT'S NEW

With You?

Are you moving?
Do you have a new email address?

Send us your new information so we can keep in touch with you. Mail it to the address at the right or email info@champlainsociety.ca.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Province _____ Postal Code _____
Email _____

With Us!

Upcoming Events
& Publications

The Society is pleased to present the following schedule for its publications, which may be subject to change as projects unfold during the coming years:

- *The Meaning of Life: The Scientific and Social Experiences of Everitt and Robert Murray, 1930-1964.* By Donald Avery and Mark Eaton. Early 2008.
- *The Writings of David Thompson.* Edited by William E. Moreau. Published with McGill-Queen's University Press and University of Washington Press. 3 volumes, with volume 1 scheduled for 2008.
- *The Works of Samuel de Champlain, 2nd Edition.* Edited by Conrad Heidenreich and Janet Ritch. 6 volumes, with volume 1 scheduled for 2008.
- *The Letters and Diaries of Harry Cassidy and Beatrice Pearce: The Courtship Years.* Edited by Keith Walden. 2009.
- *The Voyages of Pierre-Esprit Radisson.* Edited by Germaine Warkentin. 2010.

For more than 100 years, **The Champlain Society** has increased public awareness of and access to Canada's rich documentary heritage. Our goals are

- to publish Canadian documentary materials edited and produced to the highest standards both for members of the Society and for the public at large;
- to assist the Canadian public to a better understanding of the nation's past through occasional public lectures, seminars, colloquia, conferences and the publication of occasional papers;
- to serve as an advocate on the proper care of and accessibility to Canada's historical records; and
- to increase participation in the work of the Society by enlarging and broadening the membership.



The Champlain Society
www.champlainsociety.ca

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Please address all comments and suggestions to the Society's Secretariat:

The Champlain Society
10 Morrow Avenue
Suite 202
Toronto, Ontario
M6R 2J1
Email: info@champlainsociety.ca
www.champlainsociety.ca
phone: 416-538-1650
fax: 416-489-1713