

October 2016

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

**NF Book Club: Tuesday, October 4, 2:00 P.M.** Join us at the Falmouth Public Library to discuss our latest book, a history of Islam called *Destiny Disrupted* by Tanim Ansary. Our next read is *At the Edge of the Orchard* by Tracy Chevalier, on Tuesday, November 8. To round out the fall, our December book is *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld, and we will meet Tuesday, December 6. We gather in the Trustees Room at the Main Library. Newcomers always welcome, and rides are available.

**Meet for Breakfast: Tuesday, October 11, 9:00 A.M.** Our small and spirited group meets in the back of Friendly's, usually the second Monday of the month. This time, because of the Columbus Day holiday, we'll meet on the 11th. Please join us! RSVP's helpful, but not at all necessary. Let us know if you need a ride.

**Aging Anonymous: Wednesday, October 12, 2:00-3:15 P.M.** Aging Anonymous, held quarterly at Dillingham Place, is an opportunity to get to know each other and to share what's on our minds in a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere. This month we'll start by talking about the freedoms that come with aging. All are welcome and rides are available—just let us know you want to attend.

**Meet for Lunch: Wednesday, October 26, 11:45 A.M.** Let's meet up at the Silver Lounge for good food and conversation. All are welcome. We order from the menu, and separate checks are provided. Please call the office if you need a ride or to reserve a place.

### NF Portrait Exhibit in October

*Neighborhood Falmouth: Honoring a Part of Our Community*, the portrait exhibit that featuring a few NF members and volunteers, heads to the Woods Hole Library for October. If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to catch it at this or a coming destination.



A Profile of NF Members Ian and Shirley Nisbet  
By Tom Sbarra

I don't know if gracious people are born or made, but either way it sure is nice when you make their acquaintance.

Ian and Shirley Nisbet had just had a busy month, travelling for several weeks then coming home to houseguests for a week. I would want to crawl into bed for a couple of days to recharge the batteries. Yet they invited me to interview them on their first day of peace and quiet as if they had all the time and energy in the world. Their charm and enthusiasm were infectious and the visit was capped with a fabulous lunch of homemade quiche, carrot ginger soup, salad, and homemade bread fresh from the oven, all expertly prepared by Ian. One of the best meals I have had all summer—and they called it “just lunch.”

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*Ian and Shirley Nisbet—continued from page 1*

Both Ian and Shirley were born in England before the Second World War to families who had to uproot their lives to avoid German bombs raining down on their country. Ian was sent to boarding school in Wales at age nine, and Shirley's family moved her to Wales, too, for a few months while her dad built a bomb shelter. Ian returned to London in 1944, just in time to experience the stress of V2 rockets randomly falling.

Fortunately, as a result of their prudence, they did not lose any family members, but there were few clothes to buy, and Shirley's mother had to sew garments from scraps. Food was rationed for years and gasoline available only to those with important duties. Despite the deprivation, and perhaps portending their adult personalities, they found it to be a time of shared purpose and camaraderie. A new willingness of the social classes to mix was seen as an added benefit. From such a chaotic beginning would come twin towers of strength and resiliency with a sense of adventure and frugality, and a compassion for the suffering that war can bring.

When she returned from Wales at age six, Shirley was struck with polio and spent months in bed. When she recovered enough, she required leg braces to walk and spent years in rehabilitation. Ian recalls that she still had a slight limp when he met her in her mid-20's. By then, she had become strong enough to cycle to school and even play tennis.

Characteristically, she recalls her time confined as an opportunity to indulge in her interest in art, already evident at that early age. She never really looked back, became more confident in her talents, and began to realize that making art and teaching art would be a fulfilling career. She has exceeded all expectations with a career that included teaching at high schools and colleges, writing as an art critic, contributing as an activist for artists, and having a successful painting career with an international following.

When they met, Ian was a postdoctoral fellow in physics at King's College in Cambridge, England, working at the famed Cavendish Laboratories. But he was torn. His real passion was birds. Shirley was invited to exhibit her work at the college. Ian bought a painting. To this day, he won't say whether he bought it because he liked it or because it represented an opportunity to meet the artist. He wooed Shirley by taking her birding in the surrounding hills, where she was impressed that "birds go to the nicest places." She sketched while he watched birds. Ian's enthusiasm was

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*Welcome new Members:*

Caroline & Thomas Burgess  
Catherine Donahue  
Adele and Charles Huestis  
Kay Perry  
Carol & Mario Regonini  
Robert Singer  
Rob & Carol Suitor

*Welcome new Volunteers:*

Parker Cleary  
Heather Foss  
Lisa MacLean

*We hope you love your experience with  
Neighborhood Falmouth!*

**ELECTION TIME NEARS**

Your vote is important, in every election, and NF wants to make sure that you get to the polls on Tuesday, November 8. Please call the office (and it's never too early!) if you would like a ride on Election Day.

We gratefully thank the following organizations for their support of Neighborhood Falmouth:

Beatrice A. Bunker Architecture • Cape Cod Cooperative Bank • Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank • Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank Charitable Foundation Trust • Chapman Cole & Gleason • Bristol County Savings Bank • Celebrations • Elder Life Care Network • Pat Dillon, Ermine Lovell Real Estate • Dr. Richard Armstrong, Falmouth Podiatry • Falmouth Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation • Foley & Foley, PC • Gardens by Barbara Conolly • Hamilton Tree and Landscape • Janney Montgomery Scott • Jorge Muxica, Kalospix • Carol Kenney, Esq. • Michael Leahy, MD • Dr. James W. O'Connor • Dr. Gerald Roan • Royal Nursing Megansett • Simply Hearing • Upper Cape Ear Nose and Throat • Waterbury Optometry • Windfall Market & Windfall Florals • Dr. William Wittmann • Wood Lumber Company • Woods Hole Foundation

## OCTOBER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

If you are interested in these or other activities, we'd love to get you a ride and perhaps even someone to join you. Please call the office to learn more.

**Play Screening: National Theatre of London's *One Man, Two Guvnors* Friday, October 14, 7:00 P.M. and Saturday, October 15, 2:00 P.M. at Falmouth Academy.** a comedy hit both in London's West End and on Broadway. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased online, by phone, or at the door.

**Falmouth Chorale: Mozart 260, Saturday, October 22 and Sunday, October 23, 4:00 P.M., John Wesley United Methodist Church, Falmouth.** Celebrating the 260th anniversary of Mozart's birth, the program features *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, Sparrow Mass, and excerpts from *The Magic Flute*. Neighborhood Falmouth members and volunteers can receive tickets at the discounted price of \$15 each by mailing a check payable to Falmouth Chorale directly to NF (PO Box 435, Falmouth, 02541). Checks must be received by October 18. Ticket pick up will be at the "Will Call" table.

**Storytelling Performance: Tales and Anecdotes #2 Friday and Saturday, October 28 and 29, 7:30 P.M., and, Woods Hole Community Hall**

Woods Hole Theater Co. presents 8 Storytellers who will be sharing 8 different interesting, adventurous, unique, fascinating, personal stories. Tickets are \$10.

### **Ian and Shirley Nisbet continued from page 2**

contagious and he eventually got the best bird of all, Shirley. They were married in 1962.

Prior to their meeting, both Ian and Shirley had travelled extensively through Europe as students. Shirley had hitchhiked across the continent and spent a whole summer in Italy studying Renaissance art. Ian also had a Fulbright Scholarship to Cornell and MIT. This was just after 'Sputnik' in 1957 and the US was in full panic mode over the perception of a 'science deficit' compared to the Russians. MIT was totally revising its engineering curriculum and Ian was not able to do much research. Instead, he was given the opportunity to meld his science training with his passion in the newly emerging discipline of environmental science. This was a time shortly after the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, which touched Ian to his bird watching core and woke up the country. He would become expert in environmental hazards first to wildlife, then humans. He went on to publish numerous articles and a book

about the hazards of pesticides and other toxins to human reproduction, and he conducted multiple studies while also serving on committees of the National Academy of Sciences.

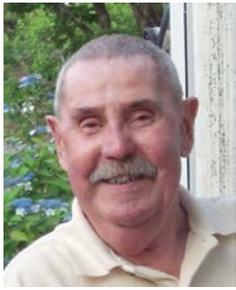
Before that career took off they had taken , you might say, a slight detour. Ian was offered a teaching position at the University of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia gained its independence soon after they arrived in 1963, and was immediately 'confronted' by Indonesia, which waged a low-level war throughout their stay there. Despite having a newborn in tow and perhaps due to their experience during the London bombings and their general optimism they saw this as more of an opportunity than a threat.

And what an opportunity! Ian was a junior professor of physics and Shirley was able to teach art to the polyculture of local children. She wrote an art column for the *Malay Mail*, the English language newspaper. There was a fantastic collection of similarly adventurous ex-pat academics from all over the world to learn from. There was a steady influx of art exhibits and music events and the junior professor and his wife were able to afford two live-in servants, which gave them time to explore all over SE Asia. They were invited to embassy parties and Ian wrote as a music critic and learned Mandarin in his spare time!

They left Asia in 1968 to come to the US because Ian, now recognized for his expertise with birds and the environment, was offered a job at the Massachusetts Audubon Society, where he started to study the effects of environmental toxins. Infected with the optimism of the 1960s in the US, they found plenty of work opportunities. Shirley taught at various places including Lincoln-Sudbury High School, near their home in Lincoln. She rented a studio in Lexington and spent a few weeks working in a storefront studio in Boston where passers-by could watch and converse with the artists. *Birds under glass?* With 10 other artists she renovated a giant mill in Waltham where they all could work. The 16' ceilings and 14' windows led her to paint large 4'x9' paintings for which she found a market in banks and offices. The Federal Reserve Bank in Boston has several of her works.

Ian's interest in birds and the effects of pesticides led him to study seabirds, especially terns, which are very long-lived small animals, able to reproduce into their 20's and living almost to 30. He quipped that the secret to their long lives is lots of exercise, eating fish and going to the Southern Hemisphere for the winter! He co-founded a consulting company that conducted research for the newly formed EPA. Their work provided much of the science that supported the first regulations on toxic chemicals. Things went well until

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## “Cookin’ Cozy”

By Bruce Ivar Haslun

In my serious working life, I was mostly a salesman of life re-insurance; i.e. I sold insurance to insurance companies. It was (and is) a fascinatingly

complicated and lucrative business, but not at all germane to a column about cooking for one or two. Except, as I travelled around the country I made sure, every morning in my hotel dining room, to read the local newspaper with my breakfast. As a good salesman, I wanted to impress my clients with my knowledge of their local happenings and concerns and, of course, high school sports scores.

Because of my cooking hobby, I also looked for regional, strange-to-me, oddball or outrageous recipes. The other evening, Carol suggested it was rather strange that, living in Falmouth on the Atlantic coast, surrounded by good fishing water, I have never offered a seafood recipe. My excuse is that y’all also live here and most probably have recipes for everything that swims in the sea. What can I possibly add to your repertoire? So I checked the notebooks (handwritten in black ink on 3-ring paper. I don’t do electronic.) The first one comes from an underwriting convention where I was a panelist at Lake of the Ozarks. The second from a speaking assignment at a Lake Michigan resort. The question, of course: What in the name of Poseidon could these folks possibly know about cod fish?!? And yet:

### Arkansas Crisp Cod

Stir one or two TBL of sour cream with ½ to 1 tsp dry Italian seasonings, salt and pepper. Spread over a cod fillet (about a pound.) Coat the fillet in ½ cup or more of finely broken corn flakes\* and place on an oiled flat pan. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes. In my opinion this was bland and only got 3 of 5 stars. Carol noted, “What does Arkansas know about cod?” but gave it 4 stars.

\*Corn flakes alternatives: bread crumbs, Panko (very chi-chi), shredded wheat; in other words, anything crispy and crunchy. Try YOUR favorite cereal (but I wouldn’t recommend Cocoa Krispies.)

### Minnesota Cod Fish

Place cod fillet (about a pound) into baking dish. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with dry sherry to taste. In butter, saute’ several sliced mushrooms and then add to fish. In a bowl, mix some soft butter, sour cream, and grated parmesan cheese. Spoon the mix over the mushroomed fish in dollops, and then gently spread. Sprinkle with paprika, “just for pretty” as Grandma Ingeborg would say. Bake at 350 degrees

for 35 to 40 minutes (until it flakes with a fork.) We both gave this 4 stars.

Skoal, y’all!

### **Ian and Shirley Nisbet continued from page 3**

Ronald Reagan’s election. Convinced the regulations were unnecessary his administration destroyed some of the newly published studies and withdrew funding from the company. They eventually recovered, but Ian sold his share in 1987 to work as a free-lance consultant and to devote more time to his bird research.

Because the terns ate fish, they accumulated DDT and other pesticides. Ian’s work has helped elucidate how these chemicals have affected the birds and, more recently, humans. Fortunately, there was a perfect laboratory nearby. Bird Island in upper Buzzards Bay is a nesting refuge for Common and Roseate Terns.

Ian spent 40 years there banding them and studying their breeding habits and physiology, including studies of aging. Although he can no longer bend over for hours at a time to study their nests, he continues to publish papers detailing his findings and has enough material to continue to do so for years to come. In 2013 he published a remarkable book, simply called Terns, that documents much of his research and contains beautiful photos, some of which were taken on Bird Island.

Meantime, Shirley has found a wide audience for her paintings. She produces them in her beautiful studio overlooking the marsh near Wild Harbor. She cleverly designed movable large easels that can accommodate her very large format paintings. She can roll the easels around to capture the best light.

In recent years, as often happens, her post polio leg weakness has become more problematic. The Nisbets put in a chair lift so she can get to her studio on the lower level. More spry, Ian can get to his extensive office and library via the stairs. The Nisbets both drive but utilize the services of NF to help move their patio furniture and small boats seasonally.

Having lived in the US for nearly 50 years, the Nisbets have seen lots of changes. At the moment they, like many of us, are concerned about the direction of the country. To such gracious souls, the coarsening of the political dialogue is particularly disturbing. They are concerned for the life their American children and grandchildren will lead.

Hopefully between their healthy eating habits, active minds and insatiable curiosity, they will continue for some time to come. The country continues to need their contributions.