



Endacott Society

Retired Faculty and Staff endacottsociety.org November 2020



While it may be difficult to top the 22 scheduled activities of the Endacott Society on my calendar in October, our members will be only slightly less active in the month of November. The surge in active Covid19 numbers has us all concerned, but has not curtailed our meetings on Zoom or our hopes that an effective, safe vaccine will be available in the new year. Our task force continues to box up the contents of the Endacott library and computer room in the Alumni Center in preparation for their storage. Heath Peterson, president of the Alumni Association, is taking our ideas for changes in the plans for the new library/computer room to the architect and hopes to report back to the Endacott Society in mid-November. We continue to explore options for meeting sites once we can meet again safely in person during the construction period for the renovated Alumni Center. Our best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving. --- Jo Cink, President

Here are a few of the highlights of some of the Zoom offerings for Endacott interest groups this month. Check your **November Zoom Guide** for links and other details for these and the other groups.

Paul Lim's **Cinema Studies** theme for the month is "Yes, We Can-Can". The Domestic Film features the screen adaptation of Cole Porter's 1960 Broadway musical **Can-Can**, and the Foreign Film of 1955 **French Cancan**, that inspired the Hollywood version. His Documentary Films include **Forbidden City USA**

and **Behind the Burly Q**. You need to email plim@ku.edu for the links to these and all film adaptations.

Drama Study will discuss the play **The House of Bernarda Alba**. Set in Spain, a domineering matriarch decrees that her five unmarried daughters be sequestered for eight years to mourn the death of their father, her husband. It seldom ends well when tyranny meets resistance. The film adaptation will be shown on Nov 9 (in Spanish with English subtitles).

The **Great Books** reading will be Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning 1928 novel **The Bridge of San Luis Rey** on Nov 11. The 2004 film adaptation will be shown Nov 12.

Music Appreciation on the 27th will feature **Offenbach in Paris**, in which selections from six operettas are performed by Les Musiciens du Louvre-Grenoble.

Opera Study on the 20th offers **Orphee aux Enfers**, Jacques Offenbach's satirical retelling of the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice.

Old-Time Radio on the fifth and final Monday of the month will have a Christmas theme, listening to Blondie, The Doris Day Show, and Tales of the Texas Ranger.

Endacott ReMembers is our annual tribute to our dearly departed Endacott members and will take a slightly different form on Zoom. Participants can pick up challah bread and votive candles from Paul Lim's house on Sunday

Nov 1 (noon to 5pm). The program on Monday the 2nd will include reading the names of those members we have lost, followed by the screening of ***Young at Heart***, a documentary about a fun-loving senior citizen's choir coping with life and death issues through the power of music and song. Email plim@ku.edu for the link.

Please remember Endacott Society members Betty Banks and Rita Tracy who died in October.

Thanksgiving Special- If you aren't celebrating the holiday with the usual family members this year, Paul Lim will let you participate in a cinematic dinner experience with Luis Bunuel's sardonic masterpiece ***The Exterminating Angel***. It is about a group of high-society friends who are invited to a mansion for dinner, and find themselves inexplicably trapped and unable to leave. Email Paul for the invitation link.

Last month while loading storage boxes of equipment and documents from our computer room at the Alumni Center, I came across this photograph captioned "Computer Club 10-15-99, John W., Speaker: Corine Ullom, Joe Marzluff".



Joe was a past president (1985-87) and was now leading the Computer Club (now called Computer and Technology Studies). Unmentioned in the caption is the person sitting next to the CRT screen, presumably working on a computer underneath the table. Corine is working to focus the overhead

transparency projector that will be used in her presentation. Unfortunately, I have not come across any information about her presentation topic. I think this photo is a good illustration of the transition period between old and new technologies. The popularity of PowerPoint on a computer connected to a video projector eventually consigned the overhead transparency projector to the trash heap (Though one can still sometimes see one for sale on eBay). I believe the last time I saw one in use was in the mid 90's in a lecture given by a then famous speaker (I won't mention the name) in Woodruff Auditorium who planned illustrate his points by drawing diagrams on a blank transparency sheets, and he had brought a stack of them to draw from. The problem is he forgot to put the first transparency sheet on the projector and unwittingly drew directly on the glass. There was a bit of a pause while someone hunted down a bit of cloth to use as an eraser. So, I guess the adoption of computer-based presentations didn't create the "demon" that sometimes seems to cause glitches in the most inopportune moments. Still, PowerPoint has evolved and can easily show diagrams, photos and videos along with text, and I don't see another "presentation technology poised to displace it anytime soon. Now, of course, PowerPoint is widely derided by audiences who feel like a screen composed solely of bullet points is useless (and that it causes the so-called "Death by PowerPoint") But there are many ways to use PowerPoint to create informative and non-boring presentations. Some of these tricks were demonstrated by John Nicholson at the October 19 Computer and Technology Studies meeting (almost exactly 23 years after the meeting in the photo), and none of them required a cloth eraser. -Dave Mannering

The Endacott Society extends our best wishes for a "Happy Birthday!" to all members who celebrate their birthday in November.

Stopping the Trains to Auschwitz

Because the twenty-minute documentary film about the *Stopping the Trains to Auschwitz* has involved Endacott Society members, it seems appropriate to explain how the project originated. It is a product of my recent collaboration with film maker Jim Jewell, who was responsible for the technical and artistic work. But the project goes far back.

Although I was only eight years old in 1944, when the events of the film took place, I was old enough to take away memories of this dramatic phase of World War II in Budapest, especially the five weeks of living through constant explosions, the fierce fighting, shelling, and bombing, involving military and political actions of Hungarians, Germans, and Russians, which eventually caused the death of my father. The extensive destruction was a stern lesson about what war can mean.

After the war my family was fortunate to emigrate to the United States. In 1985 I had a chance to return to Budapest with a Fulbright grant. At that time I became acquainted with the Hungarian journalist Sándor Szenes, who had conducted the most important scholarly investigation about the Auschwitz Report, which had revealed the nature of the crisis facing the Jewish population in Hungary. Because Szenes's treatment focused primarily on events in that country, our discussions broadened the scope of that investigation to cover the questions about how the report had reached Switzerland and the Allies, the news that eventually contributed to the end of the deportations. Szenes and I began a scholarly collaboration. The result was a book in German in 1994.

In that initial investigation we were unable to tell the entire story. After retirement I found time to revisit this subject, which is still quite controversial in Hungary. Jim Jewell and I were able to spend two weeks filming in Budapest, during which time we gained access to original newsreels from the archives of the national film museum.

Despite Hitler's and Eichmann's secret machinery for the deportation of Jews from the Hungarian provinces, dramatic events finally interrupted the progress of their unprecedented crimes. Although many thousands had already perished, a rescue effort saved the Jewish population of Budapest. The initiative resulted from the courageous actions of networks within Hungary and Switzerland. Individuals who learned the details of the Auschwitz Report took dangerous risks by aggressively challenging the power of the Nazi extermination program. How this story unfolded is the focus of the documentary film. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmJ8X-IW33U>

We were fortunate to have found friends in the Endacott Society willing to become partners in this enterprise. Moreover, a book of the same title, in which I have attempted to provide a detailed chronology and the sources for the film, is now available at the KU bookstore or at Amazon.com. --Frank Baron

