

## Monday April 30th 2018

We woke up quite late after a full night's sleep. David was able to close his eyelids so he got some real “shut eye”. A golden orb was streaming gorgeous light into the bedroom.

Weather: Toronto 41F to 63F sun Louisville 40F to 73F sun

NYTX: David three minutes and 4 seconds – need to learn US slang Louise two minutes and 20 secs

The morning walk was lovely. With the brilliant sunshine, and no wind, it was downright refreshing. There was actually HOPE that spring had finally arrived and was here to stay.

We had been scanning the book shelves and pulled off many dated books that we no longer wanted cluttering things up. So, we bagged them for donation to the Port Union branch of the TPL.

Wikipedia: This is the anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase. President Jefferson literally doubled the size of the United States. The Louisiana Purchase was the acquisition of the Louisiana territory (828,000 square miles or 2.14 million km<sup>2</sup>) by the United States from France in 1803. The U.S. paid fifty million francs (\$11,250,000) and a cancellation of debts worth eighteen million francs (\$3,750,000) for a total of sixty-eight million francs (\$15 million, equivalent to \$300 million in 2016). The Louisiana territory included land from fifteen present U.S. States and two Canadian provinces. The territory contained land that forms Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska; the portion of Minnesota west of the Mississippi River; a large portion of North Dakota; a large portion of South Dakota; the northeastern section of New Mexico; the northern portion of Texas; the area of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado east of the Continental Divide; Louisiana west of the Mississippi River (plus New Orleans); and small portions of land within the present Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Its non-native population was around 60,000 inhabitants, of whom half were African slaves.

CBC: The Rideau Canal was originally built (1826-1832) in response to the War of 1812 with the United States. During the war, ships travelling along the St. Lawrence River near the state of New York were vulnerable to attack. So the canal was constructed to serve as an alternate transit route between Montreal and Kingston, keeping ships out of the line of fire.

The workforce was made up in large part by Irish immigrants, French-Canadians and Algonquin peoples, many of whom brought their families with them to homes near their work sites. Most of the work was done by hand, with thousands of workers involved in its construction. At least 1,000 workers died — some in accidents, others from diseases like malaria.

In mid-morning we drove over to the public library to return two books and to donate others for the used book sale. We were reluctantly allowed to drop off our gifts. Perhaps the librarian was having a bad day. We went on the the LCBO and got three free boxes in which to pack other donations. Then we stopped at No Frills to do grocery shopping. Our final port of call was the Dollarama to get some packing tape and a triple wall plug receptacle.

Lunch was toasted 7 grain bread sandwiches made of sliced tomato and cheddar cheese.

Louise spent considerable time and effort carefully packing up china that had not been used in decades. It would be donated to a church bazaar.

We read a bit and snoozed a bit.

About 15:30 Louise spotted a ruby-throated hummingbird. School children send in their sightings and these are aggregated on a master map to show the annual migration from the South.

<http://www.hummingbirds.net/map.html>

On the afternoon walk, with lovely warm sun and a light breeze, we spotted a tiny Cairn Terrier. We met the Millie's owner and had a Terrier Talk. Millie is a brindle colour, is about six months old and weighs six pounds – Maisie weighs sixteen pounds. Louise remembers that her Chester from many years ago was very small, too. Maybe the breed standard is getting larger. The Cairn male up the street here in Toronto is much larger than Maisie. He is more the size of a Scottie.

In the mail David received his tax return and was lucky enough to get a refund, which covered the cost of the tax return preparation.

We had tacos for supper and then prepared for the denouement of “Broadchurch”.

“Broadchurch” had two plots running concurrently and we really got twisted in knots. We had seen our three episodes when the clock told us that it was 22:00 hrs. And so to bed on the edge of a cliffhanger for sure! It was just time for the jury to give its verdict!

### **Tuesday May 1st 2018**

Weather: Toronto 47F 63F sun Louisville 47F to 80F sun  
NYTX: David two minutes and 3 seconds Louise one minute and 40 seconds

On the morning walk we met an early bird recycling man. He was picking up stuff before the garbage truck stole it.

We had taco-scrambled eggs for breakfast – a tangy treat.

CBC: The Trudeau government is proposing to limit the length of federal election campaigns, restrict the amount of spending allowed in the period immediately before a campaign and introduce new rules to regulate third-party political activity — all part of a new set of reforms to Canada's elections laws. Under Bill C-76, the official campaign period could be no longer than 50 days. In 2015, the writ period was 78 days long — a modern record that raised concerns about the government's ability to dictate the election calendar. The Liberals had promised to regulate party spending between campaigns. They now propose that, in years when a fixed election date is to be honoured in October, a "pre-writ period" would commence on June 30, running until the start of the official writ period. During that pre-writ period, political parties would be able to spend only \$1.5 million on partisan advertising.

David finished Elspeth Huxley's “The Flame Trees of Thika”. The book describes an era in British colonialism in Kenya that is hard to understand in the context of modern life. There are many beautiful descriptive passages that make this a work of merit.

We both read “Vi” , a very unusual novel by Kim Thuy, translated from Vietnamese by Sheila

Fischman. It is the story of Vietnamese boat people who settled in Quebec. We are nonplussed about this book. We will think about it. Not even sure how to think about it, but we do know that this type of 'memoir' from Asian young people is very widely in demand by publishers now.

We had egg rolls for lunch and then Louise decided that she needed to make some biscotti. Biscotti: Italian almond biscuits that originated in the city of Prato, Italy. They are twice-baked, oblong-shaped, dry, and crunchy. Maisie loves them.

"Swedish meatballs are actually based on a recipe King Charles XII brought home from Turkey in the early 18th century".

When the sun re-appeared after a couple of hours of gloom, we decided to go for a neighbourhood walk. It was about 70F and we almost felt too warm.

Back home David continued to cull books from his library. He had books he has not looked at in decades. They were nothing but ornamental dust-catchers. It is quite amazing how heavy books can be.

We decided we would have scratch-made spaghetti for supper. So, in the late afternoon David plunged into the ravine and cut a swatch of noodles. In the kitchen, Louise diced and sliced all sorts of carrots, garlic, onion, celery which she then melded into a tomato-based sauce.

"Broadchurch" ended in a bit of a mess. Then the third series started and it took a while to wind up.

### **Wednesday May 2nd 2018**

A brilliant splash of gold reflected off the bedroom walkout window bathing the whole room with a golden glow.

We departed for the morning walk about ten after seven and followed another dog walker at a safe distance. The air had a musty warm smell – we surmised that polluted Gulf air was being drawn northward.

We had cold cereal and a banana for breakfast.

Weather: Toronto 60F to 71F sun Louisville 67F to 84F sun

NYTX: David two minutes 25 seconds

About 09:40 we drove off to get David's eyelid stitches removed at his 10:30 appointment. All went smoothly and David's eyes look a lot better.

On the way home we dropped into the Dollarama to pick up tissue paper. David spotted a fake CCTV camera for \$4.

To celebrate David's new look we had Costco tomato soup with cheesy crackers and tea.

Off and on we had been finding things to throw away, donate or recycle. David had been in this

location since 1987 and the 'urge to purge' had grown stronger.

The mail person brought David's new "Ring" video doorbell. He got it by redeeming airline frequent flyer points. He would never have bought it otherwise. It took the better part of two hours to follow the "dead simple" instructions. When it was operational it was satisfactory, but not the brightest bulb in the string. The primary assumption is that you have an iPhone or iPad with you at all times so that you can access the menu in the application. Of course you have to launch the application first so it is hardly real time. David found a Windows 10 application that can be put in the System Tray – it gives a much quicker response.

Earlier in the day Louise had marinated chunks of chicken in Balsamic vinegar. So, for supper we had pan-fried chicken with a side of broccoli flavoured with shallots and an avocado-based green salad. Although an acorn squash was roasted in the oven, we forgot to take it out.

"Broadchurch" continued its rather creepy and sad story. The old episodes continue to lurk in background. The odd red herring was thrown in as filler. The main thrust of "Broadchurch" is the collateral damage done by crime. Whole communities get thrown into a back-biting spiral where old warm relationships get ripped apart and fear and suspicion brought to the fore.

### **Thursday May 3rd 2018**

We had heat lightning late the night before and then it rained heavily in the early hours, waking up David at 04:00 hrs. Unable to sleep he got up to work on computer files.

Coffee was brewed a bit earlier than usual. We tested a four piece boiled egg silver set, cups and spoons on a tray, that had been purchased in the Portobello Road Flea Market, London England about 1972.

Weather: Toronto 61F to 68F showers Louisville 74F to 82F cloudy  
NYTX: David two minutes and 55 seconds

Louise took Maisie out for a walk between showers. David stayed home and monitored on the desktop RING application. From the library he could hear birds chirping in the front garden.

We had booked a window washing for today, but wet weather cancelled that appointment.

BBC: Australia's Commonwealth Bank has admitted losing the bank records of almost 20 million people. Names, addresses, account numbers and statements were stored on two magnetic tapes which were meant to be destroyed by a subcontractor in 2016. But despite not receiving evidence the tapes had actually been destroyed, the bank did not tell customers there was a potential problem. The breach is the latest scandal involving Australia's largest lender.

David drove off at 08:00 for a 09:00 appointment. He had to leave so early because traffic on the 401 is so unpredictable, especially when the road is wet. The trip as far as the 401 went well. But, from an overpass David could see that the 401 was a parking lot so he continued north to Sheppard. The traffic west on Sheppard was slow as many people had bailed on the 401. David got to the appointment right on schedule at 09:00 hrs. He was there only 20 minutes. He sailed home eastbound on the 401,

looking at the traffic stuck in the molasses of the westbound traffic.

The radio in the van said it was going to rain. So, as soon as David got home we went for a stroll. The forsythia was blooming. In general, spring comes to Louisville about two months earlier than Toronto.

We cooked Knorr's broccoli soup for lunch. Louise added some leftover raw broccoli which we zapped in the microwave before stirring it into the mix. Delicious.

Louise was deep in Kenya with Elspeth Huxley so it took some prodding to tear her away. We drove down to the Toronto Public Library just as the drizzle started. We picked up our book and then slipped over to the LCBO where we liberated four empty boxes to make our charity packing easier.

David started on a new/old book about Newfoundland. "The Colony of Unrequited Dream" by Wayne Johnston, a mystery and a love story spanning five decades, is an epic portrait of passion and ambition, set against the beautiful, brutal landscape of Newfoundland. In this widely acclaimed novel, Johnston has created two of the most memorable characters in recent fiction: Joey Smallwood, who claws his way up from poverty to become Newfoundland's first premier; and Sheilagh Fielding, who renounces her father's wealth to become a popular columnist and writer, a gifted satirist who casts a haunting shadow on Smallwood's life and career.

It showered off and on all afternoon. About 16:15 Louise ducked out with Maisie for a biological break. David started stripping his closets of clothing that had not been worn for decades, a lot of it too small for his enhanced frame – it go to "Goodwill".

We had our favourite split supper. Louise had her salmon, reflecting her Scottish roots, while David had his Montreal Smoked Meat that he used to have far too often when doing his MBA at night at McGill University, in Montreal 1974-78.

Netflix would not connect to "Broadchurch". Therefore, we watched one episode of "Gilmore Girls" - it was better than most. After that we were able to get back to "Broadchurch". We stopped watching around 21:50, saving the final slice for Friday night (remember Elwy Yost and 'Friday Night at the Movies'?).

## **Friday May 4th 2018**

### **The Oaks in Louisville, Kentucky**

It was pouring rain – again – still – at dawn. It really is getting to be a bit much.

Weather: Toronto 50F to 65F showers    Louisville 73F to 82F cloudy  
NYTX: David one minute and 49 seconds

Today was the 144th running of "The Oaks". The Kentucky Oaks is a Grade I stakes race for three-year-old Thoroughbred fillies staged annually in Louisville, Kentucky, United States. The race currently covers 1 1/8 miles (1,800 m) at Churchill Downs; the horses carry 121 pounds (55 kg). The Kentucky Oaks is held on the Friday before the Kentucky Derby each year. The winner gets \$600,000 of the \$1M purse and a large garland of lilies, affectionately called the "Lillies for the Fillies." A silver

Kentucky Oaks Trophy is presented to the winner. The Kentucky Oaks was modelled after the British Epsom Oaks which has been run annually at Epsom Downs, Epsom in Surrey since 1779. The event is named after 'The Oaks', an estate located to the east of Epsom which was leased to the 12th Earl of Derby in the 18th century.

Toronto Star: Bombardier Inc. is selling its sprawling Downsview manufacturing site to a public sector pension board for a whopping \$816 million, prompting local officials to demand assurances that lost jobs will be replaced by new ones at the site. But Canada's biggest aerospace firm isn't packing up just yet. Its sale of the 148-hectare site to the Public Sector Pension Investment Board includes a lease agreement that will see Bombardier remain there for up to three years after completion of the sale, plus two optional one-year extensions. Bombardier, which has about 3,500 workers at Downsview, also revealed Tuesday it has signed an agreement with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority for long-term lease of a site at Pearson International Airport to build an assembly plant for Global business jets. The Public Sector Pension Investment Board, which manages almost \$140 billion in assets for retired federal employees including Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP personnel, is keeping any plans for the Downsview property, north of Wilson Blvd., under wraps.

We had Scottish gruel for breakfast in keeping with the wet and grey offering from Nature.

Louise had made an appointment for Maisie to go to the dog groomer for a bath. So, we drove her ladyship over to her spa and then went on to Home Depot to review our choices for the main floor powder room.

A dense fog had descended since Louise & Maisie went out earlier. We "brailled" our way to Home Depot. The 401, as expected, had slowed to a crawl. The designers in the 1950s put in a special surface – whenever there is moisture of any variety, the road surface sticks to tires and slows traffic.

At Home Depot we confirmed our choices of sink, taps and toilet and had the special order desk write it all up for delivery on May 11<sup>th</sup>. The moonlighting plumber was booked for Mother's Day on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Louise checked her bank to make sure her Jeep account was working. By some miracle, there was no screw up this month.

We picked up Maisie from the groomer and had spring rolls for lunch - the ones with soy sauce and plum sauce. The groomer did a beautiful job for Maisie. He said that she's a sweetheart, but she wouldn't let him work on her head, as Louise requested. She is a terrier and she's not getting any younger, so these behaviours are to be expected.

About 13:15 we drove over to Louise's Hair Twister in Pickering (next town east). That is always a good experience for Louise. She learns of good Netflix possibilities and she has pleasing results on her coiffure.

BBC: Approximately 500,000 people around the world are killed by guns each year. In terms of developed countries, the biggest losses are in the US, where citizens own 300 to 350 million guns in total. In the US, gun homicide rates are more than 25 times higher than the combined rate of other high-income nations.

David found this quote in “The Comfort of Strangers” by Ian McEwan. David thinks all tour operators need to be aware of the disruptive forces at play when travelling.

***“Travelling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and to lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things – air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky – all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it.” Cesare Pavese.*** Cesare Pavese was an Italian poet, novelist, literary critic and translator. He is widely considered among the major authors of the 20th century in his home country.

When Louise came back from the hairdresser there was a wall of black clouds coming in from the west. The radio was warning of a major windstorm. Throwing caution to the wind we took Maisie for a quick walk.

Along the ridge of our road there was a carpet of purple flowers, with a sweet perfume, sort of Dutchmen's Breeches. We got home and Louise cooked popcorn just as the wall of wind and rain swept in. The gusts were very powerful. Environment Canada meteorologists were tracking an area of dangerous thunderstorms capable of producing damaging wind gusts up to 120 km/h (74 mph).

The wind storm was horrific. The sound alone was most unsettling. Maisie, who normally snoozes away much of the day, was on alert facing the ravine. Her ears were twitching and swivelling like miniature sonic detectors. It was most 'exhausticating'.

We had leftover spaghetti and a green salad for supper. We ate a bit early in that the power could have gone out at any point with the wind being so fierce. At 18:05 the power went down and we had a quiet evening, reading until the light failed. Hydro One reported power was out for more than 160,000 customers throughout southern and central Ontario due to both winds and thunderstorms. Crews were mobilized throughout Toronto and the GTA, with additional crews responding to the hardest hit areas.

### **Saturday May 5th 2018**

#### **The 144<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Derby in Louisville**

No weather or NYTX due to power outage and no Internet

David bet that “Firenze Fire” [odds 66 to 1] (thinking of our visit to Florence) would win. Louise picked Lone Sailor [odds 50 to 1] (in memory of her Tallahassee Hobie Cat).

The power was out all night so the gas furnace and the gas water heater would not run as both needed electrical power to vent fumes outdoors. But, we were able to heat water for the plunge coffee pot. The drip peculator, our usual choice, needed electricity.

We went for a walk about 07:15 to survey the damage. It was more extensive than we thought. There were yellow tapes across the road about 200 yards NW on our street – a tree was leaning very badly and a power line had been torn down. Getting around the first tape, we could see another one about 100 yards from Highway 2A. We turned into our normal route along Bonacres and saw two more trees down. The lawns and street were littered with storm debris.

Back home we used the gas cook top to have a lovely breakfast of prosciutto and fried eggs.

The temperature in the house was a reasonable 68F but we started to run out of hot water when we showered.

We read, David really eating up the novel about Newfoundland's first premier, one Joey Smallwood.

At 12:05 the power came back on – the outage was almost exactly 18 hours. To celebrate we had Habitant pea soup.

Then we went for a walk in another direction to look for further damage on our street. Four trees were down. Lakeside Tree Service [<http://www.lakesidetreeservice.ca/>] had already reduced two trees to wooden cylinders. One house on CDT, not on the ravine side, had a huge tree resting on its roof with four or five trees in the row along the side of the house leaning on each other, root balls out of the ground. What a massive clean up that will be.

When we walked down off our ridge we spotted three more downed trees. It was as if a mini-tornado had cut a swath. Three people died in the Greater Toronto Area as a direct result of the storm.

Back home we had the task of getting all the electronics back in order and recharging devices that had run out of juice.

BBC: The US Navy has said it will re-establish its Second Fleet, as Russia becomes more assertive. Chief of Naval Operations Adm John Richardson said the fleet, disbanded in 2011, would oversee forces on the US East Coast and North Atlantic. He said the National Defense Strategy, published earlier this year, made it clear that the era of great power competition had returned. The strategy makes countering Russia and China a priority. The fleet, which was disbanded for cost-saving and structural reasons, will be based in its previous home - Norfolk, Virginia.

The burglar alarm system was reporting nasty things. Using the system on-line trouble shooting was of no value. A call to a technician in Fredericton, New Brunswick popped up the answer that the 18 hour power outage has messed up the software on the master box. Similarly, the outage has resulted in a loss of pairing to a rules-based dimmable light switch. The technician gave the steps to rectify that problem. So, with thirty minutes of fussing about all was back to normal.

We read until about 18:45 hrs. Louise cooked up a marinated steak dinner in nothing flat that she served with an avocado salad topped with sour cream.

We then tried to watch the final episode of “Broadchurch” but Netflix blocked us. We messed around and finally got other programs to run and then were able to get back to “Broadchurch”. The ending was something that we had not anticipated.

We then watched a Part 1 of a documentary on “Bhagwan”. Rajneesh (born Chandra Mohan Jain, 11 December 1931 – 19 January 1990), also known as Osho, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Acharya Rajneesh, or simply Bhagwan (Hindi for god), was an Indian godman and leader of the Rajneesh movement. During his lifetime he was viewed as a controversial new religious movement leader and mystic. In

1981, Rajneesh relocated to a facility known as Rajneeshpuram in Wasco County, Oregon. This is a short documentary series recommended by Louise's hairdresser. Louise was very much aware of this craziness; David was unaware. It is quite an incredible story. What makes people vulnerable to this kind of dominance? (Funny thing, Louise just finished reading Ian McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers* which addresses the phenomenon of dominance within sexual relationships.

We did not do well at the Kentucky Derby. It had rained 2.5 inches in Louisville and the track was very sloppy. The Derby was won by "Justify", the favourite, "Good Magic" was second and "Audible" third. Louise's "Lone Sailor" came 8<sup>th</sup> and David's "Firenze Fire" was 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sunday May 6th 2018**

Having lost Friday and much of Saturday to the Wind Storm, Sunday became Laundry Day. When the first load was in the tub, we went for an early morning walk. Just north of us on our street we saw yet another downed tree. Then, on Kimbolton, to the east, we saw another tree down, resting on the house. It seems that about a dozen trees came down on our neighbourhood walking routes alone. The local trades are going to be busy repairing the wind damage mess.

Weather: Toronto 56F to 60F cloudy Louisville 59F to 81F cloudy  
NYTX: David one minute 53 seconds

We had a simple cheese scrambled eggs and toast for breakfast.

Then Louise decided to wrestle the Husky Sucker. David worked on the new Ring doorbell to eliminate a camera blind spot in the porch area.

David installed a security camera on the upper balcony deck railing outside Louise's Studio. It points down to cover the two main deck walkouts. The blinking red light should alert prowlers.

We keep scanning the various rooms to determine how to get rid of clutter. David was trying hard to get rid of "useful junk".

We had the salmon & Montreal smoked meat for lunch.

We read an did e-mail in the afternoon until the 16:00 neighbourhood walk. There was a total stillness, the calm before the storm type of dull overcast scene.

People were out clearing away storm debris, planting out some perennials (three weeks too soon), washing cars, playing street hockey. The kicker was the guy pushing his gas mower for the first grass cut of the season – the stink of exhaust gas fumes and freshly mowed hay blended.

The first tulips were showing their brazen colours.

Back home we had a hot chocolate.

Louise came up with a spread of vegetables to enhance BBQ chicken - green peas, carrots, shallots,

snow peas and Brussels sprouts all in a cream sauce.

We watched the second episode of the Baghwan in Wasco County, Oregon. The locals pushed back when the red shirts bought up the village of Antelope.