

Chez Timpko News

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*Chateau Frontenac
in old Quebec*

American Gypsies Hit the Road

NONPARTIAL OBSERVER EXCLUSIVE TO TIMPKO NEWS

A blue Buick pulls up to the extremely posh and beautiful Chateau Frontenac hotel in old Quebec city. Chuck emerges and hands over his keys to the doorman. Trained to avoid showing

St. Lawrence River. After Chuck tips the bellman and he leaves, she says "This is a hotel room." Chuck agrees. After setting down the paraphernalia acquired in a long trip, they unpack and arrange to meet Marcelle and Marie at their room.

Marcelle and Marie praise Chuck for calling the hotel the day before to get reservations (previous

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adverse reactions to the overstuffed car, the doorman politely opens the doors of the car for the three women inside. Struggling beneath bags or boxes of booty, Chuck's mom Marcelle Timpko, their cousin Marie Link, and his wife Denise slowly emerge.

Minutes later, laden with an overload of Canadian treasures, the party enter the chateau. Gypsies, Denise thinks, we're American gypsies. Looking at the beautiful decor, she hopes she'll make it to the hotel room without tripping, falling, or doing something else awkward or embarrassing. Following the bellman who leads the way confidently to their room pushing a cart full of a collection of luggage, boxes of books, and the bags of provisions, including the two bottles of liquor, for the 14-day vacation, Denise worries again what would happen if the Americans at the border they'll cross in 3 days discover the liquor. Of course, she always worries.

But she is very definitely impressed, even more so when Chuck and she reach their hotel

room. The room overlooks the hill to the fort and has a wonderful view of the wide hotel boardwalk above the



Scenes from the Timpko family trip to Canada: Reenactors at Old Fort York in Toronto, Canada, fire muskets (right).

*Chez Timpko News
21348 Small Branch
Place
Ashburn, VA 20148
Tel. 703.723.3005*

To All Those Who Enter Chez Timpko

You are NOT welcome here. I repeat you are NOT welcome to my house. Please leave. Immediately. Now. Right away. Forever.

Indeed, I must protest this huge crowd. How could you be so fooled by the invitations you mistakenly received from my pets? For those of you who are owned by felines, shame on you for deserting them. Shame! The only people for whom I feel sorry are those who are owned by dogs. Dogs, of course, NEVER adequately train their humans.

Do NOT sit on any of my chairs. Be warned: If you dare to sit on me, you will know the torment of my hiss.

Cinnamon, the Beautiful, Timpko

The Truth Behind the Party:

Rare Interview with Chef Charles Michael and His Wife



Chef Charles Michael on Friday afternoon just beginning to prepare a dish

"Organization is the answer to everything," says Chef Charles Michael on the evening of December 12, 2003, only 22 hours before the Timpko holiday party begins.

Calm and collected, Chef Charles Michael checks his schedule, which is meticulously arranged according to day, time, and recipe. He presorts the photocopies of the recipes he collected during the past year or the ones that met his criteria for inclusion: his own taste, popularity among guests, and, most important, success in preparing. Of course, the number of guests who said they would attend the party factors greatly into the choice of recipes.

For example, it determines how many times he makes a recipe. If the number of guests is high, he may prepare a particular dish two or more times. In addition, the recipes he

prepares also depend on whether or how frequently the items appeared in the menus for the last couple of years.

"Being delicious and popular with guests does not guarantee that a recipe will appear on this year's menu," the chef remarks, "After all, the menu must vary to avoid boredom. The only reoccurring item on the menu is ham, which we purchase deboned and sliced."

Chef Charles Michael keeps a year-by-year log of menu items so that he know which year he made an item. "I'm not a meat and potatoes kind of guy. I like to eat new dishes, and I certainly like to make new dishes."

Preparations for the party begin in earnest a week before the party when the chef makes his final menu choices, the Christmas tree is purchased and decorated, and all the holiday decorations are unearthed. On the Thursday before the party this year, his wife came downstairs to find that the dining room table, which had been moved into the family room the previous night, held a vast collection of serving dishes and pots and pans each labeled very neatly with printed signs indicating the menu item it would be used for.

"This is why I rarely cook," she comments, "although Chef Charles Michael has allowed or even asked me to cook some items for the party in previous years. My sense of organization comes into play during writing, not in preparing food for an increasingly larger party. This would be a sad holiday party if I had to organize and cook the feast."

When asked what she does for the party, the chef's wife admits, "Sometimes I wonder."

"Pick up the ham and turkey and buy ice," she muses. "Of course, there's always the menu and newsletter thing. I excel at silliness. Actually, this is my thirty-eighth year of writing newsletters. The first newsletter I created for friends when I was thirteen, which must have been the reason I've ended up writing several newsletters in my career. It was destiny."

Chef Charles Michael points out that there are frequently proofreading errors in the *Chez Timpko News*. "You left out a couple of dishes in previous years."

"Which is why you proofread the newsletter now."

"Hmm."

Opposites, they say, attract: the extremely organized chef and his less organized wife would appear to be opposites except for their mutual attraction to art, books, and each other.



The clearly labeled serving dishes and cake pans Chef Charles Michael's wife found Thursday morning

Touch Not the Books!



Vacation Highlights: Because of the great force of the Canadian falls at Niagara, you can see for miles the water that jets into the air (left). A close-up view of the American falls (below). Chuck in front of a stained glass window by Tiffany in the Coming Museum of Glass, Coming, New York.



AMERICAN GYPSIES / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

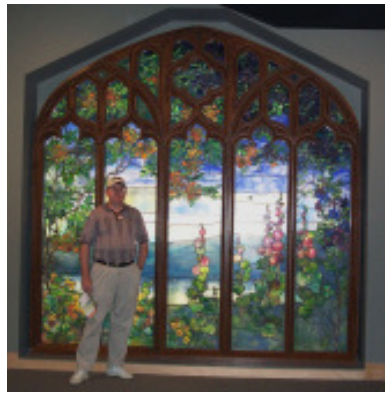
reservations elsewhere had been mistakenly canceled) and for discovering the deep discount offered to guests who are members of American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

"I'm a member of AARP, too," Denise mentions, "but I don't have my card with me."

"Well, we did get the AAA discount," Chuck replies. "That's not as great, but it is a discount."

Denise nods her head. "The first thing I'm going to do when we get back is find my AARP card and put it in my wallet."

"You know," Marcelle changes the topic, "this hotel is the icing on the cake. We've loved everything on this trip: the Coming Museum of Glass, Niagara Falls, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, but Quebec is absolutely the best."



"You are so right," Denise says, "and I've been to everything except Ottawa before. But I've seen lots more and done much more than the first time. And we didn't stay at the Chateau Frontenac when I was 17."

Three days later as they crossed into the United States burdened with even more booty, Denise thought about the wonderful lithograph of Quebec (in science fiction and fantasy circles, a

mundane piece of art) packaged securely on top of the boxes between Marcelle and Marie, the tile of the Chateau Frontenac, and the stained glass with a scene of the old city, who the hell cares about looking like American gypsies? I can live with that.



Mary Jemison, subject of "The Taking of Mary Jemison" print by Robert Griffing in the upstairs

Denise Leads a Pilgrimage

Inspired by her fascination with Indians and particularly with the story of Mary Jemison, Denise led Chuck, Marcelle, and Marie on a pilgrimage to Letchworth State Park in the Genessee River valley, New York. At this park is a statue and the grave of Deh-he-wa-mis, otherwise known as the White Woman of the Genessee.

Mary Jemison's family immigrated to America in 1743. Mary was born on board ship as her Irish parents and siblings neared the coasts of America. They later settled along March Creek Hollow outside what is now Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. In 1755 during the French American war, a band of Seneca Indians captured Mary's family, kept Mary, and butchered her parents and siblings except for two older brothers who escaped capture.

Adopted by the Indians, Mary lived seventy-eight years with the Senecas, married twice, and had several children. As an old woman she told

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Rosemary Addiction Leads to Broken Ankle

Denise and her friend Karen Smith breathed the fresh morning air on Sunday, April 13, 2003, and felt energized, never guessing that the day would turn sour. They headed off for the nursery in Fairfax where Karen had purchased plants in the past. Denise wanted to plant rosemary, basil, dill, and thyme, especially rosemary, in her enlarged front garden.

The crowded nursery didn't warn them. Nurseries are always busy on beautiful spring days. Denise and Karen each took one of the little red wagons the nursery made available to customers and explored temptingly healthy new plants. Soon Denise found the herbs she was desperate to purchase and the lamb's wool she wanted to plant to discourage rabbits from eating newly emerged tulips in the garden. As she gathered the plants, the smell of rosemary inspired dreams of fresh rosemary bread that she would make in her breadmaker.

I could eat rosemary bread every week, she told herself.

She and Karen purchased the plants and arranged them in Karen's jeep. Late that afternoon, under the last rays of the brilliantly blooming sun, Denise began cheerfully planting the herbs and lamb's wool.

The first thing to do is to plant the rosemary, Denise thought. I need to make sure it's in a good spot where it will receive lots of sun. She sank to her knees in her typical klutzy manner and began digging. If only I didn't sing like a frog and off key, singing would fit my mood. She placed the first rosemary plant into the hole, dug two more holes, and positioned the second and third rosemary plants.

She looked at her watch. It was nearly 7 p.m. Chuck invited Karen for dinner tonight. Oh, good grief, I've got to get cleaned up.

"So hi there!" Karen said as she walked across the grass from her house.

"Hi!"

"Need a hand up?"

"Sure," Denise said and stretched one hand to meet Karen's.

She began to rise and tried to get her feet in standing position. She felt unsteady, something that was always happening these days. Denise tried to get a firmer hold on her friend's arm. She very nearly got up. But her left leg seemed not to go where she wanted it to go. This is irritating, she told herself. What the hell is the matter with my left leg? Her ankle kept turning in. As she grabbed at Karen's hand, her ankle turned in again. She

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Touch NOT the Bookies

Roman Cow Invades

BY DEHATIM TIMPKO

A Roman gladiator cow invaded the once sacred haven of Egyptian faux artifacts in late December 2002, assuming a position on the house god sanctuary.

"It's like history repeating itself," Tutankcowmon, the Egyptian cow, comments (or would comment if he had brains and were alive). "It's those Klaus. They have to give Chuck a Christmas present of the cow. It's downright heretical."

"I'm sure you don't know what 'heer-eat-tickle' means," the Roman cow responds (or would if, like the Egyptian cow, he had the requisite brains and health).

"You can't even pronounce it,"

Tutankcowmon jeers (or would if he had the requisite brains and health). "Besides, I'm the best-dressed cow."

"And your point is . . ."

At this juncture, this journalist gave up imagining the rest of the conversation. It's hard, actually, to know what cows talk about, or would—well, you know the rest. However, the fact that Walter and Kitty Klaus were involved has been verified by the hostess of this party.

"Their names were on the gift tag," she confirms.

So, that's it in a nutshell. Imagine your own cow conversations. You don't need a journalist for that.



Roman gladiator cow edging out Tutankcowmon

Klingon Bears Gang Up

Sometime in the spring, probably when she was home nursing a broken ankle, Denise purchased four Klingon



bears over the internet from Star Trek: The Experience in Las Vegas, Nevada. One she sent off as a gift for a friend, one Chuck and

Denise are keeping, and the remaining two she's keeping as upcoming presents for her grandnephews and grandniece.

Until just recently, the Klingon bears inhabited the rocking chair. Now, however, they're residing on the window sill in the family room. Stop by to say hello.

People You May Meet If You're Sociable

Gee Gee & David Annunziata
Marc & Andrea Beck
Annie Bienvenue
John & Vanessa Callebaut
David & Marie Clem
Antonella da Camara
Katie Dokken
Bruce Eels
Daryl Gamett
Jon Gelber
Todd Gerken
Agnes Guerrero & Lawrence Feinstein
Colin & Fran Helmer
Al & Linda Himler
Angelique Hollister
Chris & Vicky Glaslow
Danny & Sally Ingram
Jill Johnson
Tom Hrdy & Judy Schramm
Cindy Hruska
Shanta & Saman Karunaratne
Ruth & Keith Kistler
Walter & Kitty Klaus
Richard & Kim Labash
Veronique Lagrange & Benoit Blarel
Kevin Leonard
Brenda & Joe Nardone
Leah Noonan
P. Cameron Nyhen
Paul & Aly Parsons
Tom & Nancy Polesnak
Roy Pettis & Beverley Nichols
Marianne & Vijay Reddy
Tony & Denice Santangelo
Carl & Suzy Serger
Karen Smith
Tom Suber & Cary Griffin
Keith & Diane Thomburg
Ginny Thiersch
Erika Thirkill-Lowther
Chuck Timpko (aka Chef Charles Michael)
Denise Timpko
Bobbi & Stephanie Yi

Holiday Party 2003 Menu

Appetizers

Red Bell Pepper & Feta Cheese Dip
Forest Mushroom Pastry Cups
BLT Ranch Dip
Chipotle Cheesecake
Roast Beef and Argula Crostini with Olive-Red Pepper
Relish
Apple Curry Chutney & Ham Spirals
Fiesta Baskets
Blue Cheese Appetizer Tart
Deviled Eggs (Courtesy Kitty Klaus)

Entrees

Lasagna with Pink Sauce, Leeks, & Sausage
Lasagna Florentine with Provolone & Portabella
Mushrooms
Chicken & Brown Rice Salad
Baked "Heavenly" Ham
Baked Turkey

Side Dishes

Lemon-Mint Tabbouleh Salad
Rice Salad with Feta, Citrus, & Mint
Kidney Bean Salad with Walnut & Cilantro

Desserts

Banana Nut Cake with Peanut Butter Frosting
Chocolate-Pecan Tart
Ginger-Molasses Cake
Lemon-Poppyseed Raspberry Coffee Cake
Lime Mousse Cake
Sour Cream Coffee Cake
Pumpkin Cheesecake with Bourbon Sour Cream
Topping
Butter Pecan Cheesecake with Chocolate Glaze
Apple Cinnamon Streusel Cheesecake

Things You May Need to Know

Coats may be placed in the Dinotopia Room (upstairs, up two steps, door straight ahead).

Cinnamon and Camouflage have retired to their boudoir (despite Cinnamon's protests).

Bathrooms are on every floor.

BEWARE: Rabid book collectors are here. Do NOT touch the books.

felt herself falling backward. Geez, I'm going to fall through the hollies; and, as that thought came to her, she was lying on the ground between two hollies.

Karen came closer and tried again to help her up. While she was doing that, an man across the street walked over and lent another hand. The klutzy Denise managed to get to her feet, which proved to be somewhat painful.

The man from across the street left as quickly as he came.

"Who is he?" Karen wondered.

Denise shook her head. "I don't know, but, thank God, he came over."

Karen agreed. "I'll help you walk up the stairs."

"I need to get my cane."

Karen picked the cane up from the ground a few feet away.

"This is the last time I don't use my cane," Denise winced.

"You've probably sprained your ankle. You need to put ice on it."

"Well, let's go in."

The ankle hurt a lot, and Denise stayed home the next day to keep ice on it.

Tuesday came around, and Denise felt she needed to go to work. It's just a bad sprain, she told herself. She repeated that again on Wednesday and Thursday morning. As she was very slowly walking to the Medical Center Metro station from her office, she came to a sudden realization. This couldn't be just a bad sprain.

"I think it might be broken," she spoke out loud. When she reached the Bethesda Metro station where she met David Clem for their ride back to Ashburn, she decided that it was time to go to the urgent care clinic and let them tell her it was just a sprain. When they reached Denise's house, she immediately got into her car and didn't even go inside the house.

A half hour later the doctor at the clinic returned with the news. The ankle was broken, in several places. It was a spiral break and Denise needed to go to the emergency room. The doctor mentioned something about osteoporosis and how Denise could die if a blood clot went to her heart.

Well, this is a mess, Denise thought as she walked to her car. I'd better call Chuck before I wander off to Loudoun Hospital Center.

"Uh, Chuck, you know my ankle? Well, I've just gone to the urgent care clinic and the doctor told me that I need to go to the emergency room and can't pass Go. I'll call you later."

Denise forgot where the hospital was when she got to the corner of Ashburn Road and Route 7. Instead of driving directly across Route 7, she turned left on Route 7. She finally realized what she had done when she reached Belmont Ridge Road. She managed to turn around.

Parking at the hospital and slowly walking in, Denise thought to herself, I haven't broken any bones before. Why must it happen when I'm 50? I've always thought of broken bones as being something you do as a kid or teenager, even though I know that adults break bones just as readily, perhaps even more, especially considering osteoporosis.

A volunteer greeted her in the hospital. "How can I help you?"

"Well," Denise responds, "I have a broken ankle."

A wheelchair emerged from the ether, and Denise enjoyed being wheeled around to various people in the admitting office.

Five hours later, Chuck and Karen showed up to bring Denise and her car home; Chuck to transport Denise, and Karen to drive her car.

"The doctor said I need to have surgery, so I need to make an appointment with an osteopathic surgeon he recommended."

After the installation of a 6-inch long titanium plate to hold her ankle together while it was healing and six long weeks, Denise returned to work.

What did she learn?

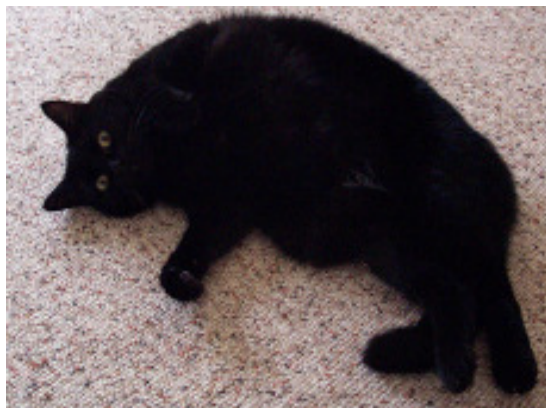
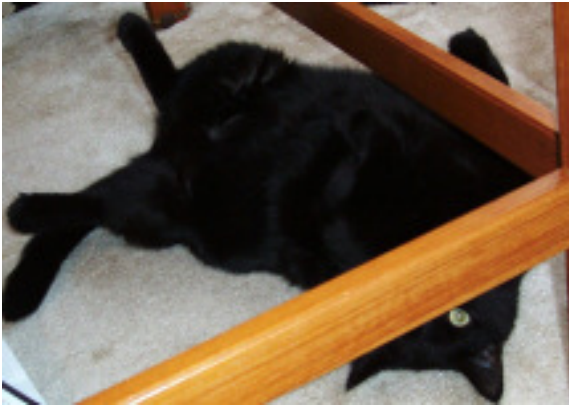
"I can't do crutches, and I need to use a bench to help me get up when I'm working in the garden.

"Also, I'm feeling rather robotic these days," she adds, "But the Stormtrooper boots were almost worth it all."



Denise received a Stormtrooper boot at separate appointments during the whole ankle fiasco.

Book collectors believe that eyetracks may damage special press editions.



King Obsidian Timpko at His Best: Rest in Peace

PILGRIMAGE / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

her story to James E. Seaver, who published it in 1824 as *The Life of Mary Jemison*. Mary died in 1833.

Why is Denise so interested in Mary and other Indian captive stories (her children's and adult library contains many books of such stories)? First, such stories are inherently dramatic; and, second, her great-grandmother was half Indian. Denise discovered recently that the tribe was Monacan, a tribe who lived in the mountains of southern Virginia and whose language was a Sioux-based dialect.

Some years ago Denise first read Mary Jemison's story in *Indian Captive*, a book by Lois Lenski, which was charmingly illustrated by the author. When Denise read about the statue of Mary in Letchworth State Park,

it became a must-see event on the Timpko family vacation. Fortunately, Chuck, Marcelle, and Marie did not mind going there. The sight of the Genesee River waterfall prepared them a bit for Niagara Falls.

And is Denise fulfilled by seeing the statue, grave, and park? Very definitely. Obsessive collectors of books, art, and memorable travel are, after all, completists. She couldn't travel through upstate New York without stopping to see the Genesee River valley. It puts everything she's read about Mary Jemison in perspective. Now she can envision her in the right environment.

In the upstairs hallway, a large print framed in green depicts Robert Griffing's painting called "The Taking of Mary Jemison," which Denise found in Madison, Wisconsin. When she saw it, she had to buy it of course. Such is the life of a collector.

Heap Big Snow in 2003: The Year of the Snow Shovel



The Timpko backyard in winter 2003