

Inland Valley Storytellers

Tales told on 12/10/19

We were 13 storytellers and listeners gathered to hear and tell stories on Dec. 10, 2019: Barbara Rugeley, Chris and John St. Clair, Elisabeth Anghel, Janice Baskin, Jayne Sjodin, Lillian & Louis Sergio, Ron Chick, Ron Evans, Tom and Aynn Freeman. We welcomed new member Hector Itzeps.

Thank you to our hosts, Tom and Aynn Freeman, who provided a true feast for the holidays: Tom's homemade meringues and his "eggnog" (Recipe: milk, vanilla ice cream and vanilla instant pudding, fresh ground nutmeg: Yum!), plus macaroni compotes, Scotty shortbread on Scottish plates, with upscale cutlery, tablecloth with plaid Christmas runner (also Scottish?). It was grand!

Elisabeth Anghel volunteered to host the January meeting and bring refreshments.

Ron Chick enjoyed a chance to tell a "Christian Christmas tale" about a peasant, Bernardo, who worshipped the usual Roman Gods, but really, he worshipped the land because it fed him. One day he saw a thin, hungry man and nursed him back to health. From him he learned the tale of a wonderful man, born in Jerusalem, who promised such light and love that Bernardo determined to save his coins to go to this wondrous land. Just as he finally had the money to go on the voyage, he heard a moaning and found a child, an escaped slave, beaten terribly. He nursed him back to health. To the adopted child the peasant told of the wondrous man from Jerusalem and they both planned to voyage there. But then many men came to the land to build a church to honor the disciple, so Bernardo stayed to help the monks build the church. He created nativity scenes for the church.

Aynn Freeman brought 2 little petunias and told the tale of the pretentious widow with 2 daughters who sought a second husband to support her. There were only 5 chairs at her new house, but the woman spread out her skirts and used two chairs! And her daughters used 2 chairs. Well the widower's daughters squeezed together on one chair, but the new husband had to eat in the cellar! They finally took him some food. He sat with his feet in a blue bucket for warmth. When she took his bucket away, there was a little drop of water. As each chair is taken, Aynn pulled a petal from the petunia.

Ron Evans discoursed on reading versus telling, then told and read "A Child's Christmas in Wales," by Dylan Thomas. Indeed, there is a time when the exact words are needed. Ron spoke Welsh in his growing up years and met Dylan Thomas once in New York.

Jayne Sjodin told the story "Socks for Christmas" about a poor couple who traded socks for milk and cheese, then remade a sweater into socks to trade again and again,

until there was only yarn for one sock. But the woman accepted that one sock for milk and cheese. Then the woman returned the yarn in the form of a sweater.

Barbara Rugeley told a tale from Nasreddin Hodja, using her puppet, about the sound of a robe falling down the stairs.

Hector Itzeps shared a story told to him by an elderly woman about her experience at age 8 of a full eclipse all alone in her yard in Guadalajara. She clung to a tree and was comforted by the birds. After 10 minutes, when she returned to her house, she never spoke of that experience with her family. She didn't feel free to talk about it with them.

Ron Chick invited us all to attend his Twelfth Night Celebration, bringing stories and side dishes to compliment his meats on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2020, 4:00-8:30 PM. The stories don't have to be religious, but they do need to be upbeat. RSVP to Ron at 951-536-6617 or a.chain.unbroken@gmail.com or Robin at 909-754-4785.

Ron Chick also told us about the FREE holiday program at the Muckenthaler on December 22 <<https://themuck.org/programing/2019/12/22/holiday-festival>>.

Ron Evans invites us to hear his "Christmas Carol" at Pilgrim Place on Wednesday, Dec. 18, 7:00 pm, at Decker Hall. It's lovely!