

The Rodkey Reader

To be taken in the morning with a grain of salt

February 25, 2011 Vol. 5 No. 1



Grand Opening of Remodeled Kitchen!

The Rodkey domicile has seen radical transformation in 2010: the small but serviceable 60's-era kitchen has been expanded and upgraded to a room of such grandeur that declining interviews with home decor magazine reporters has become a regular chore. Those who know the Rodkeys will not be surprised at their hands-on approach, demolishing concrete and plaster, framing, painting cabinets, roofing, and lay-



ing wood flooring with gusto and blind determination. Undaunted by their experience of turning a 2 hour paint job into a 2 week re-plastering, they soldiered on to lay wood floor in two more rooms and are now turning their attention to the sadly neglected exterior and landscaping.

Meanwhile, the household is already reaping the rewards of the remodeled guestroom. Grandparents from both sides of the family have taken advantage of the cheerful room: Penz grandparents enjoyed the space during Thanksgiving, and Rodkey grandparents have booked it for February.

Newly Discovered Aerial Photographer Takes Art World by Storm



Less than a month after the discovery of amateur Street Photographer Vivian Maier's remarkable work, the Art world was rocked once again when the work of amateur aerial photographer Jeanne Rodkey was shown in exhibition for the first time last Friday at the Monarch Museum of Modern Art (MoMMA)

"It's remarkable, really, that such amazing talent has gone unrecognised for so long," said the curator in charge of the exhibit. **See Aerial Artist, page 4**



'Reader' Marks 5 Years Consecutive Publication

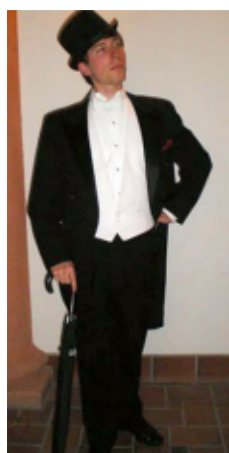
Like most important Rodkey anniversaries, the 2009 commemoration of Five Years of the Reader passed unnoticed. Also typical of Rodkey anniversaries, once the occasion was brought to their attention, members of the editorial staff were quick to suggest justification for the delayed celebration. The 2010 edition marks the 5th consecutive year of publication, a remarkable achievement for such a democratic, unpredictable, and perfectionistic family. To share the joy of this landmark with our readership, the Reader is pleased to announce its first 'Write like a Rodkey' Contest. Write an article with similar style and vocabulary as the typical Reader content, with as liberal a dose of imagination and biting wit. Winner to be awarded five fabulous prizes: an autographed aerial photo, a reprint of the McCosh article, an Oxford memento, a bag of Starbucks Coffee, and a complimentary gentleman's fashion tip. The runner-up will receive a rare copy of John's Field Guide to Identifying Dry vs. Muddy Lakebeds. Winner to be announced in the 2011 Rodkey Reader: Submit entries to rodkey@westmont.edu



What the Well-Dressed Gentleman is Wearing ... and Singing!

Inspired by the dapper appearance of Erik Rodkey, a music major at Westmont College in his senior year, the Reader provides an up-to-date guide to developing your own retro wardrobe, including examples of outfits modeled by the young gentleman at various gala events in the 2010 season.

White tie, tails, and topper are a must for a trip to the Opera, as Erik demonstrated during the summer production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella).



flowed effortlessly from him. <http://bit.ly/ernS53>

For other musical concerts, black tie attire will suffice. Countless performances of the Westmont Concert Choir and Chamber Singers keep Erik's tuxedo in constant demand. In April, the Chamber Singers sang '*Passio Secundum Johannem*', ('The Passion according to John'), in the historic Santa Barbara Presidio, filling the sacred space with the sacred text. Later in the academic year, Erik explored the theological significance of proper dress during his class 'Music in the Worshipping Church'.

Not all performances require the prince's ostentatious valet, musical 'Precious Nonsense', Erik sported both a pirate costume and a dress, in the fine far-cical tradition of Gilbert & Sullivan. Being in simultaneous productions and their rehearsals seriously interfered with his summer wardrobe development program. "Not recommended for the gentleman dedicated to notes that fashion," Erik sniffed.

For daily life around campus, a trench coat and a fedora are

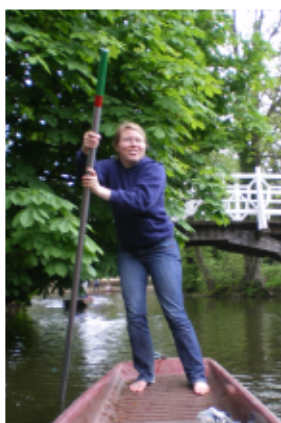
highly fashionable outdoor-wear for braving the extreme Santa Barbara weather. Nothing exhibits academic prowess like a self-tied bow-tie, as Erik demonstrated in a discussion of 'Primitive Art'. Research conducted on bow-tie wearing reveals that the bow-tie increases test scores and may even ward off Senior-itis. Strangely, this effect does not generalize to introductory psychology classes. In the home, a simple argyle sweater-vest lends a nonchalant yet well-groomed look. Erik recommends this as the perfect attire for in-stalling old-fashioned doors and doorknobs.

Late spring fashion is expected to include graduation gown and mortar board, adjusted at



— Adelle

Eyewitness To Oxford Oddities



Faithful readers will recall we last left Krista in England, in Oxford's illustrious halls, a fitting setting for her study of ancient philosophy. By the time our intrepid RR correspondent, Elissa, visited in the spring (braving great plumes of volcanic ash), Krista had become so proficient at punting up and down the river that tourists turned to her for advice.

Together the sisters enjoyed the English spring, tramping through spacious green fields and wandering along pleasant Oxford canals. Krista and Elissa made sure to enhance their travel adventures by neglecting to consult bus schedules before venturing into the countryside, so as to be later confounded by British signage, necessitating forced marches over deserted country roads, and thus simulating the traditional Rodkey road-trip breakdown experience. After riding atop a doubledecker bus, the sisters decided that the next big amusement park hit will be *Rural England: The Ride*, featuring narrowly missed pedestrians and barely made hairpin turns through tiny village streets.

Elissa's minute-by-minute correspondent reports reveal Krista as living a life both international and antique in flavor. With friends hearkening from countries throughout the world—England, Ireland, Australia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, China, Russia, Italy—even watching the World Cup is a more dramatic experience. The archaic Oxford atmosphere was evident

in the local slang: scout, MCR, trashing, bop, and Oriel Street penny-ing. Krista's involvement in the Hertford College choir was also an occasion for much pomp and ceremony: following a beautiful chapel service, the choir adjourned to a traditional candlelit Formal Hall dinner. Moreover, as choir members, wearing their traditional academic gowns, headed through town to chapel, Elissa witnessed the unique Oxford celebrity experience: Harry Potter-crazed Oxford tourists typically turn paparazzi as soon as any Oxford student so much as ventures outdoors in a robe. A pleasing end to Elissa's visit was the chance to see the traditional May Day festivities. Getting up at five in the morning, the sisters joined the Oxford populace in listening to a choir sing atop Magdalen Tower (although 'listening' might be

Reasonably Priced Haircuts:

Jeanne's Hair Salon

Satisfaction Not Guaranteed

See Oddities, Page 4

Research Uncovers Relative

Emerging from a veritable hibernation imposed during her spring semester of graduate work at York University in Toronto, Elissa wrote a flurry of academic papers, then tore up California's roads in a grueling trip that encompassed a presentation on Eleanor Gibson at a conference in San Diego, followed by travel to northern California to research Milicent Shinn, a developmental psychologist from the 1880s and the subject of her dissertation. In her week of visits to five archives scattered about Berkeley and Sacramento where Shinn's personal communication is archived, she was surprised and gratified to find that the Rodkeys are related to Shinn, albeit distantly — through a common Mayflower ancestor. Perhaps this accounts for the Shinn family's eerily familiar bibliophilia and mania for knowledge. On other academic fronts, Elissa is now a



published author: her article on James McCosh, early psychologist and president of Princeton, has been accepted by the journal *History of Psychology*! When teaching certain stubborn Westmont seniors the intricacies of APA style in-text citation, she can now use herself as an example (Rodkey, 2011).

Back at Toronto, Elissa can often be seen escaping the worries of grad school by running long distances with friends, even in the depths of Canadian winters. The speed and endurance thus developed put her in good stead for running her first 10K, held at the picturesque Toronto Zoo. Her athletic abilities have earned her renown beyond the frozen north: Confused scouts for the Green Bay Packers negotiated rights to recruit Elissa as their second round draft pick until they discovered her expertise at punting was limited to the waterways near Oxford, gained on her visit to Krista at Oriel College.

— John

Airborne Adventurer Becomes Stick-In-The-Mud

2010 was eventful for Tacky and his pilot. November represented the one-year anniversary of the rebuild, and John surpassed the 1000 hour mark as pilot in command. Nor did he neglect honing his bombing skills: throughout the year many an overripe pumpkin was dropped on the airport windsock with a meticulous precision only possible with a miraculous combination of skill and OCD. But by far the most adventurous flight occurred when a confluence of questionable weather and a 'dry' lake bed turned a weekend jaunt to Arizona into a 5-day marathon and rescue operation. Here's the harrowing tale: upon returning from Casa Grande, making a precautionary landing to wait out bad weather seemed prudent, but the uniform smoothness of the dried lake bed turned out to be the result of muddiness. Upon landing, Tacky's wheels became tacky with mud, immobilizing the en-

tire plane and stranding the chagrined pilot in the middle of the desert. Fortunately the aviation community stepped in to help: several days later, fellow pilots drove out and tamped down the sand into a makeshift runway so that Tacky could be flown safely away before predicted high winds involved

Tacky in flight plans of their own.



This year also found John soaring in song with the Santa Barbara Choral Society. John enjoyed having his

See Soaring, Page 4

Goddess of Neatness and Order Astounds

Astute readers will have doubtless gathered from previous years that the youngest Rodkey girl never does things by half. Adelle's year was full of challenging work in many roles: 134 days opening Starbucks at 4:30 a.m. (that's more than every third day!), establishing a 'cherub choir' at First Presbyterian Church, and teaching oboe and piano students. Because having only three dozen marketable skills was clearly under par, Adelle embraced the remodel as an opportunity for professional development. Turning her hand to construction, she discovered the arts are indeed applicable.... when singing gaily while applying paint. Certainly demolition and rebuild skills are apt for the goddess of neatness and order, who deigns to bestow her blessings of organization upon the mere mortals who comprise the rest of the Rodkey household.

To treat the inevitable Post-Remodel Stress Syndrome, Adelle sought refuge at a Suzuki conference in San Francisco (baby half. Adelle's year was full of challenging work in many nerds) where she honed her teaching skills. Returning with fresh enthusiasm, Adelle determined the living room *cum* music studio lacked an essential element: a second piano! With the newly acquired piano joining the antique pump organ and the family's piano, the room gives new meaning to 'surround sound'.

— Elissa

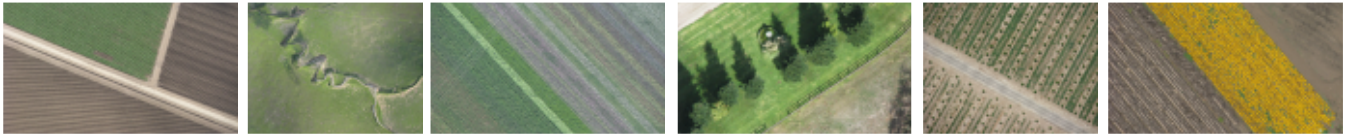


Goddess of Neatness and Order, niece of Thor, pictured here with her sledghehammer.



Fellow-Adventurer, Cody, with Tacky.

Arts & Letters



Aerial Artist, Continued

it "I guess you just never know when genius like this will show up."

Friends and family were shocked at the sudden shift in Jeanne's artistic focus. "I was aware of her abilities as collage artist and her skill in painting color-field Easter eggs, but this comes as quite a shock," said local art critic Silvia Rodarte. "Her work has taken a turn away from abstraction and towards representation, which simply panders to the culturally illiteracy of the day," said one critic, but others were kinder toward her new work, calling it "a breakthrough of textural abstraction" with "intriguing" composition, showing "the clash of ideals in our modern culture between natural and artificial beauty."

Over 200 of her works from the last year were exhibited, and are available in an online gallery at <http://picasaweb.com/jerodkey/FavoriteAerial-Photos>. The owner of the collection says there

is "more where that came from" including two undeveloped memory cards, and a camera phone used by Mrs. Rodkey in her day to day photography life. "And the best part is that she no longer falls asleep while flying," commented her long-suffering pilot husband. — Erik

Oddities, Continued

too generous for the rather sozzled crowds who'd stayed out all night). This was followed by a visit to Blenheim Palace, a beautiful estate surrounded by gardens filled with verdant box hedges and ancient trees, where they witnessed falconry, archery, and knights jousting on the palace lawns. From Elissa's reports, we, the RR, conclude that very little studying actually takes place in Oxford. <http://bit.ly/i7zpdv> Her degree completed and her English adventure at an end, Krista returned to Indiana University, where she received a warm welcome from people in her program and at church. When missing her Oxford friends and full social calendar, she takes comfort in singing in her church choir, and visiting her various college friends also in grad school in Indiana. Krista's choral background prepared her well for her new musical housemate: hearing hours of practicing piano simply makes her feel like she's at home in California. — Jeanne

Webster Dictionary of Essential Rodkeyisms

The RR is happy to announce the publication of this much-needed work. An excerpt follows:

Germ Caste: the hierarchical ranking of kitchen objects as to their cleanliness, the violation of which leaves family members horror-struck.

Rich Badness: Something that is so bad that it's good.

Stove-job: An overly-thorough cleaning project on one small part of the house while the rest of the house is a wreck.

No-Thank-You Helping: The small portion of food given to a child who has not yet developed good taste in order that he might.

Anti-fun: The definition of Anti-fun is really quite simple. And no, I won't tell it to you.

Will wake up at 4 a.m. for money - Contact Adelle

Soaring, Continued

abilities as talented tenor put to good use singing Vaughn Williams' A Sea Symphony, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, and Britten's Ceremony of Carols. These performances achieved such heights of excellence that, in deference to the plaudits of their adoring public who insisted their talents not be limited solely to Southern California, the choir will tour Spain this summer. Due to his recent negative experience with water landings, John has set aside his dreams of a trans-oceanic flight in Tacky, and will fly on a commercial airline. —Krista

Winner of the 2010 Hutch Honor Book "Abounding in Wisdom: One Rabbit's Meditations"

What reviewers are saying about Soames' "Wisdom":

"The most devastatingly hopeful book you'll read this year.

- New Hare Times

"Soames describes his experience...with compelling narrative and touching simplicity... This book will cause you to laugh, cry, and hop across the garden in search of more carrot-tops." - Peter Rabbit

Rodkeys Recommend Reading...

Home: A Short History of an Idea (Rybczynski)
Riddle of the Sands (Childers)
Biography of a Baby (Shinn)
The Talent Code (Coyle)
Howards End (Forster)
Awakening the Quieter Virtues (Spencer)

Rodkeys Recommend Watching...

Vitus	Offside
Lives of Others*	Sweet Land
Scent of a Woman*	La Cenerentola (1981)
Koyla*	Swallows and Amazons
Genèse (Mali, 1999)*	I've Loved You So Long
Cranford	*Not for the faint of heart

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