Across from the small round table in Avi Bernstein’s Old South Street office, a poster for Brandeis’s Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts takes center stage: “Imagine the Impossible,” it reads. A fitting description for a day in the life of BOLLI’s director.

Avi’s schedule runs, he says, “from the prosaic to the sublime.” His agenda includes operational meetings with BOLLI staff members Megan Curtis and Matt Medeiros, who “keep things going at Turner Street.” Regular administrative meetings with Karen Muncaster, VP for the Raab School, and development meetings with potential third party fund-raising sources are also listed. His frequent meetings with BOLLI committee and working group leaders as well as with both new and potential members push him to imaginative leaps about how the program might stretch and grow. “I’m a talent scout in some ways,” says Avi. “You can’t encourage and recruit without listening.” Thus, working to find ways to match talent and opportunity takes much of his time and, he explains, provides tremendous satisfaction for all.

“When I think about Brandeis’s reputation as a university,” Avi muses, “two areas have always come to mind: the arts and social justice.” The array of BOLLI’s course offerings and special interest groups suggests that program members feel that way too. Thus, much of his energy has been focused on creating more faculty seminars (such as those with Gil Harel and Billy Flesch) and lecture series (like those with Craig Smith and Jared Redmond). New fine arts ventures in the works will be kicked off with a digital photography studio course slated for this coming January.

Avi credits his high school debate experience for helping to ignite his passion for social justice. This led him to connecting BOLLI with the Brandeis debate team and the Boston Debate League who co-sponsor an annual contest for middle school students from Boston’s inner-city schools. “Debate can change lives,” Avi says, and some of the kids in this program end up going on to higher education as a result.” Collaborating with the International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life, the BOLLI Social Justice Working Group is also generating ideas for global environmental projects, intergenerational dialogue, and more.

Finally, when asked about being an SGL, Avi beams. “I never feel quite as ‘at home’ as I do there. It keeps me in touch with what it’s all about.”

A pair of dark blue and bright neon green sneakers rests on the floor to the left of the small round table in Avi’s second-floor office. Clearly a professional necessity for a day in the life of BOLLI’s director!
A Note from the Managing Editor

By Phil Radoff

This issue of *The Banner* will be our final publication of the current semester. As most readers know, *The Banner* typically publishes three times per semester, but this fall’s schedule--only one week after the Thanksgiving holiday--would have made it difficult to squeeze in a third issue. We do expect to publish three times in the spring semester.

**New Feature:** With this issue, we begin a new feature--“What’s Up in Waltham”--an occasional column on events and sights in and around the Brandeis host community. This month’s column by Sam and Na’ama Ansell describes the history of the celebrated Waltham Watch Company.

**Notices:** Neither the September issue nor this issue includes notices of activities such as Lunch & Learn and Enhancement speakers. We believe that these activities receive timely and more appropriate coverage in *The Bulletin*, and they will not be covered on a regular basis in future issues of *The Banner*.

**Brandeis 100:** Brandeis is planning to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Louis Brandeis’s nomination to the Supreme Court in 1916 with a series of programs. The celebration will kick off on Thursday, January 28, 2016, with an on-campus seminar featuring remarks by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Panelists will include Ralph D. Gants, chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court; Philippa Strum ‘59, senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; Jeffrey Toobin, a staff writer for *The New Yorker*; and Mark Wolf, senior judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. There is no charge for admission, but tickets will be required. Following this initial event, the university will host a series of discussions in March and April that highlight the thought and impact of Justice Brandeis and the continuing relevance of his ideas to the United States of the 21st century. Details about location and time as well as ticket information will be made available later this fall and will be published in *The Bulletin*.

**Write to Us:** If you are inclined to share your thoughts with us about any aspect of *The Banner*’s operations, please do not hesitate to do so. We’d welcome BOLLI members’ opinions on format, content, and style of *The Banner* or other items of general interest. What are we doing right? What could we do better? We’d also welcome your suggestions for future articles and authors. The aim of *The Banner* staff, after all, is to give BOLLI members a product that they find interesting and informative. You are welcome to provide your comments or suggestions in person, or send an email to any of the editors. We may not publish all the letters we receive, but we promise to read them!

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The BOLLI BANNER is published by the Banner Committee: Phil Radoff, *Managing Editor*

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Your grandpa owned a Waltham watch, and you didn’t inherit it? That’s a pity, because Waltham watches are popular and valuable collectibles today. Well, all is not lost. You can visit the intriguing, enormous, perfectly preserved landmark where these watches were made and see the small museum there that is chock full of fascinating information.

Waltham Watch was the first company in the world to make and use interchangeable parts in a mechanical product, and it was also the first to create an assembly line--ideas pinched by Henry Ford. Waltham Watch was the outfit that kicked off this country’s rise as an industrial power.

Waltham watches made the trains run on schedule and kept them from colliding on single tracks. They gave Northern soldiers a tremendous advantage coordinating military operations in the Civil War, and after giving the Gettysburg address, Lincoln was presented with a Waltham watch. During its one hundred year existence, the watch factory produced forty million watches.

To visit the museum, park across from the downtown railroad station in one of Cafe Brelundi’s allotted spaces. (A cappuccino or gelato will earn you the right to stay for the next hour or so.) Turn the corner and walk along the Charles River Conservancy bikeway. In less than a mile, you will reach the newly restored Waltham Watch factory. Leave the bikeway, walk along the front of the old building, and enter the museum at 221 Crescent Street. It is open weekdays and is free to the public.

Aaron Dennison selected the site in 1851 because the land was cheap and the air was clean. The factory’s design reflected the need for light and clean air for the highly skilled Yankee workers. That required a long building with narrow wings and tall windows.

Dennison, a Swedenborgian whose religion stressed human dignity, treated his workers well. Their benefits included spacious boarding houses with meals, baby and child care for working women, and health care for all workers, as well as various clubs, sports teams, and company outings. In other words, Waltham became a benevolent company town, earning the name “Watch City,” which it retains to this day. When Royal Robbins acquired the company, he left the amenities in place lest he lose his highly skilled work force.

In the early 1950s, “disruptive technology” put the Waltham Watch Company out of business. The Swiss had developed much cheaper battery-operated watches. In a nod to Waltham watch fame, a Swiss company now makes several luxury model watches with the Waltham name.

Finished perusing the museum? Round the building, go through a large parking lot, and finish your walk along the riverside. Returning to your starting point, you’ll admire the trees reflected in the river, the kiddies feeding the ducks, and every example of Waltham’s diverse population relaxing on its many conveniently placed benches. And be sure to check your watch!
Back-to-School Brunch
Photos by Len Heier, Arthur Sharenow, and Harris Traiger
Cartoon by Sam Ansell

It was a festive occasion at 60 Turner Street when the BOLLI community arrived in the gathering space to kick off the beginning of a new term. After sampling the Green Room brunch spread, old and new members mingled for greeting, meeting, and eating. A terrific start to the year!
Enhancement Committee: Ed Goldberg, Myrna Cohen, Steve Messinger, Iris Kingsbury, Sandi Levy, Beth Davis, Patty Goldman, Charlie Raskin

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Slavery in America

By Carole Grossman

On four successive September Thursday mornings, Brandeis history Ph.D. Craig Bruce Smith led a seminar titled American Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War. This complimentary series marked the popular lecturer’s second seminar offering for BOLLI members.

Craig began by noting that, where tobacco, rice, and indigo were the main crops and farms were small, slaves augmented indentured servants. After Eli Whitney’s invention of the cotton gin, cotton became the most important crop in the Deep South, increasing the demand for slave labor to lower the cost of production. Cotton soon comprised three-fifths of all exports. Prominent men such as Lafayette and Franklin opposed slavery while Jefferson, Madison, and Washington displayed conflicting views. As a compromise, the Constitution expressly permitted the continuation of the slave trade until 1808.

With the aid of period maps, Craig discussed the changing divisions of the growing country into slave and free states and territories. We learned of the views of white abolitionist William Garrison, educated black leader Frederick Douglass, escaped slave Harriet Tubman, and writer Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose book Uncle Tom’s Cabin humanized the life of a slave. We also learned of slave revolts and an unsuccessful movement to send slaves back to Africa.

Craig described the various legislative acts that shifted the balance of free and slave states during the first half of the 19th century and noted that, with the Dred Scott decision of 1857, slavery was effectively legalized even in free states.

Smith emphasized that Abraham Lincoln had risen to prominence not as an abolitionist but as a leader concerned principally with stopping the spread of slavery and preserving the Union. In the Presidential election of 1860, Lincoln won only a plurality of the popular vote but a majority of the electoral vote. Consequently, many Southerners felt he was not “their President.” Suspicious of Lincoln’s unstated plans and fearing black insurrections, South Carolina and other states seceded.

Craig explained that, when the Civil War broke out, the North, as the invading side, had the more difficult burden. However, it had the advantage when it came to the number of its rail and telegraph lines, naval strength for blockades, food-producing farms, and factories producing finished goods. The North also had four times as many free citizens as the South. Only forty-four percent of Northern men were in service, compared with ninety percent of Southerners.

Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 did not free slaves universally but was applied only to rebel states with many exceptions. In December 1865, eight months after Lee’s surrender, Congress was able to enact, by only a narrow margin, the Thirteenth Amendment prohibiting slavery.

With enthusiasm and wide-ranging knowledge, Craig encouraged members’ comments and questions while covering a complex subject encompassing a critical period in American history. Those who attended Craig’s seminar are eagerly awaiting his next one.
Aristotle’s maxim that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” certainly applies to team teaching at BOLLI. Working as a team can add value for the teachers by enabling an SGL to share ideas with someone from a different professional background and with a different skill set. Team teachers find that having backup can be reassuring if someone asks an unexpected question. Students also benefit from working with a second SGL who offers a different perspective or teaching style. The give-and-take between team members can make the class more enjoyable for all.

BOLLI has a long tradition of team teaching. Some members have led courses in partnerships of two, three, or even six people. Usually all team members participate in each session, but occasionally individual members have led one or more sessions alone. Four pairs who have presented courses in the past several years shared their insights about the process as they experienced it.

Even though Marjorie Roemer and Eleanor Jaffe have taught only one course together, they have fond memories of the experience. Their course explored how literature has reflected the changing picture of marriage. According to Eleanor, it was “the most exciting intellectual work I had done in years.” In their model, each took charge of a particular class while the other had a supporting role. Although Marjorie loved the experience, she admits it was more work than teaching alone. A new friendship that both women treasure developed from the experience.

Mark Alimansky and Susan Erdos also taught only one course together and also divided responsibility for each class. But, as a married couple, they never seemed to have a break. As Susan explained, “Preparing the course was all-encompassing,” especially when working late into the night at desks two feet apart. Their course was titled “The Age of Aging.” It was very successful and enabled Susan to teach it alone the following semester when Mark returned to another institution.

Richard and Harriet Kahn started team teaching at BOLLI 13 years ago. The Kahns proposed a short story-reading course, since no one else had offered one. They chose ten stories for the first course, and the rest is history. To select stories that will generate good discussions, they first read them aloud to each other. When the course begins, both actively participate in every session. Each brings a different perspective to the classroom: Dick has a medical background; Harriet’s field was English literature. Mutual respect defines this team, and neither would consider working alone. “It’s much more fun to work together.”

Naomi Schmidt and Tamara Chernow met while working on The Banner and have taught four courses together since 2010. They choose topics that interest them and let them use a variety of materials and media. The pair has explored The New York Experience, Utopias--Real and Imagined, and The 1920s: A Decade of Turmoil and Change. Currently, they are teaching The 1960s: A Divisive Decade That Shaped a Nation. As in other teams, each teacher has different strengths: Tamara is a former librarian and well versed in the humanities; Naomi has a scientific background and addresses technology issues. Together, they make a detailed lesson plan for each class and decide who will do what. They feel there is much less pressure when responsibility is shared in this way.

All teams stress the need to be flexible and open to one another’s ideas and are convinced that, in some cases, team teaching can be a good stepping stone to going it alone. Both the team and the learners reap intellectual rewards from the experience.
ROSE ART MUSEUM - CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Lisa Yuskavage: The Brood
Lisa Yuskavage: The Brood
“The Brood,” marking the artist’s first solo museum exhibition in the United States in fifteen years, surveys 25 years of her bold, figurative oil painting.

LA/MA: ‘60s Pop from Both Coasts

Also announcing Rosebud: a new satellite gallery featuring works from the Rose Art Museum’s collection of video art, located at 683 Main Street, Waltham.

SPINGOLD THEATRE CENTER

Macbeth
William Shakespeare’s play, adapted and directed by Zoe Golub-Sass ’16

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Brandeis Early Music Ensemble: 16th Century Sound-Scape
Directed by Sarah Mead, this program features early music played on early instruments.

Brandeis Early Music Ensemble
Second performance.

Lydian String Quartet: New Music Brandeis
An evening of string quartet works by Brandeis University graduate student composers.