

Professor traces North American trek of Dickens

➤ Attitude towards slavery and copyright protection for authors

John Sayers
Special to the Advance

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Dickens Fellowship welcomed a renowned

Dickens expert, Professor Leon Litvack from Queen's University in Belfast, to address their group.

Litvack spoke on Dickens in North America - Journey with a Celebrity in 1842.

In his introduction, Fellowship president Paul Catling reminisced about meeting Prof. Litvack in the U.K. last year at a Buckingham Palace reception to honour the 200th anniversary of the birth

of Charles Dickens.

The 30-plus people in attendance at the Rotary Room in the NOTL Public Library were treated to a fascinating PowerPoint presentation that traced the author's North American exploits from his landing in New York in 1842, west as far as Cairo, Illinois, north through Niagara Falls and Toronto, to Quebec City, and then back to New York for his departure in June, 1842

after a stay of some five months.

This wasn't just a set of readings — Litvack explored the author's attitude toward slavery, to an American casualness about copyright protection for authors, and to other aspects of the America of 1842.

What had begun as a journey by Dickens to reveal in American independence and lack of class structure became clouded with issues that Dickens had not entirely anticipated, Litvack said.



Prof. Leon Litvack, of Queen's University, Belfast, noted Dickens expert.

Photo provided