

NEWSLETTER



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am sitting by the fire nursing a sore rib and looking through the glass at a spectacular winter wonderland. In a few minutes Linda and I will don our snow shoes and explore some small area in our neighbourhood. Everything around us has changed. The flower beds are blanketed with a soft cold cover denying the sight of the dormant life below. The trees have taken on a mysterious ghost-like wardrobe and creatures, great and small, have left their mark of a visit seen or unseen. Time to go!

The jaunt through the silver layered woods allowed for a unique perspective as only viewed by our naked eyes. Some trees were now dwarfed by our presence where previously we stood with our heads raised upward to admire the green foliage. The creatures of the night left a tale one could only imagine. Perhaps the coyote caught the fleet footed hare, perhaps not. Maybe the hawk swooped down and captured the small mouse whose tracks suddenly disappeared without a sign of retreat. For sure, deer slept under the large pine riddled with evidence that a family of raccoons lived nearby. The hollows and trenches were no longer visible but they tried to swallow our very beings as we stepped into their domain. Every sound from the depths of the interior would startle and thus arouse our curiosity. Was there a fox, raccoon, or lynx nearby watching our every move, or maybe a disgruntled owl losing sleep because of our intrusion? We were certain, though, that many pairs of curious eyes observed us as we trudged through the mostly unblemished snow. The bright sunshine found its way to the mattress of softened ivory to guide us through the many paths of least resistance.

Upon our return I can only imagine their thoughts, those of the nocturnal world, when they notice the imprints of the journey we undertook. Will we be deemed as monsters or just trespassers in their world? Will our tracks be so intimidating that fear from the unknown presence will forever bother their understanding of our disturbance? I do know the wily raccoons will figure the mystery of the checkered indentations in the snow. How do I know? Well, I've yet to solve their trickery in our summertime battle over the seeds in our bird adobes. They always emerge the victors despite my ploys to thwart their cunning.

As you know, I believe the small treasures we encounter from day to day make our lives full. Yes, it is great to travel and see the world, but please, don't miss the opportunities and joys of daily life in the valley.

...Neil MacNeil

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING



Wendy Rodda was the winner of a travel knapsack

November 4 seems a long time ago, but that was the day of one of our best-attended general meetings. On September’s survey, many of you recommended the End-of-the-Line Pub in Bridgetown as a place to have our lunch meeting and what a great suggestion! It was so convenient having our own dining room away from the other customers. It was also a treat being able to pre-order our meals so that interruptions could be avoided during the meeting. But best of all, we were able to eat together at the same time. The staff at the pub were definitely efficient as well as helpful in arranging the lunch.



Gordon Mac Donald (Treasurer), Albert Johnson (Pensions), Angela Sproule-Morton (Guest Speaker)

Our guest speaker was Angela Sproule-Morton, Travel Consultant and Agent for Maritime Travel in Bridgetown. She gave information

Next general meeting will be in June. Details will be passed along to you when they have been confirmed. Hope to see you there!!

WHO’S YOUR GRANDDADDY?



Many people think that documenting their family tree is a difficult undertaking, but it is actually a very straightforward process. First I recommend that you purchase a reputable genealogy software program to install in your computer. It will help you create a print-ready document. I use the **Family Tree Maker** program, but others are available.

1. Begin recording with yourself and then “branch” out from there.
2. Keep a notebook of the information and **always** document the source. It could be a publication, on-line vital records, census records, or a person’s firsthand knowledge. Record it immediately - you’ll forget later. Also, give the source in your computer records.
3. Take time to meet or phone living relatives while they can share knowledge and memories. Scan old photos and have them help identify the people.
4. Check family Bibles. Carefully copy names and dates and record name of present owner of Bible.
5. Photograph family gravestones making a record of graveyards’ locations.
6. Visit your local museum which often houses valuable records in the Genealogical Research area. Some museums have the vital records of early settlers available on site or on sale in book form. They are also on loan in public libraries. Examples are **Granville Township Book**, **Annapolis Township Book**, **Barrington, NS Township Book**, and **Vital Records of Yarmouth, NS 1762-1811**.

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Valuable free websites include:

<https://automatedgenealogy.com> This gives access to many early Canadian Census Records.

<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com> This site provides users with scans of actual records and they are available to purchase through email or regular mail.

<https://familysearch.org> Sometimes I use this site as a starting point and then try to prove it in a primary source of information.

Two sites with fees:

<https://americanancestors.org> The New England Historical Genealogical Society, the oldest and largest US genealogical society has this following site, a favourite of mine.

<https://www.ancestry.com> This site has many historical records, census, naturalization, military, etc. It also has a connection to the Family Tree Maker software offering the user suggestions with those little leaves you see on television ads. **Caution:** Do not get caught up in accepting all of those suggestions on the Ancestry site. Sadly, some people who post inaccurate material do not go back and correct it leaving their errors for others to copy to their own work. ALWAYS CHECK!

TRAVEL TIPS

1. Travelling outside Canada and not sure what precautions to take? The VON operates a Travel Clinic in the Kentville Industrial Park, 46 Chipman Dr. They provide you with up-to-date information - political and medical - and often have the medication you need to have or can advise your doctor about what prescriptions should be given. There is a cost - \$85, although this can be less depending on how much help you need, plus the cost of the meds if you get them there. Appointments are necessary so they can prepare for your visit. Contact - 1-800-411-9646

2. Driving to Ontario and hate the nightmare of going through Montreal? No problem anymore. Autoroute 30 is now open. It skirts the city taking a southerly route through farm country reconnecting with the Trans-Canada (40) on the west side. There is a small toll.

3. Protect yourself from identity theft. NEVER carry your Social Insurance Card, Birth Certificate, or Passport (unless using it.). Credit cards and Passports should be protected from RDIF scanners. Foil sleeves or containers can be found at **Bentleys**, and some banks give them away.

COMING EVENTS

"Mystery Cafe Murder"
Dinner Theatre
Annapolis Royal Fire Hall
Sunday, February 10
Drinks & refreshments - 5:15 p.m.
Dinner & performance - 6 p.m.
Tickets - \$30

This should be a lot of fun. Retired teachers Jane DeWolfe, Fran Rafuse, and Doug Glennan are part of the cast, and Elizabeth Pelham is part of the directing team.

REMINDER

The provincial newsletter will be out in February. Don't forget to enter the "PUN" contest. The prizes are excellent!

WHAT NEXT...

The transition from working full-time to no-time is often an issue for newly retired teachers. Many substitute for a while until other interests and activities fill their extra time. Others try something different and challenging. Here are some stories of what a few of our members did to keep busy.

BYRON MORSE -Funeral Director



Why would you want to do that? How can you face them? Doesn't it bother you? How can you keep your emotions under control?" All these questions were asked of me when I decided to become a funeral director - definitely NOT something I planned to do after retiring. To keep myself busy I subbed and worked with at-risk students, but I wanted to experience something new, out of my comfort zone. A simple phone call gave me the opening I needed. An insurance company wanted me to become an agent. Knocking on doors to sell insurance was not appealing so I declined, but a week later, when they called again, I relented and decided to give it a try.

After hours of studying and a major exam, I was allowed to sell insurance for pre-funded funerals. Then another door opened. A funeral director asked if I would help out during their busy times, and eventually encouraged me to get my Funeral Director's License. More studying and another major exam and I was officially able to sign documents, deal with the bereaved families, and yes, transport and work with the remains.

Skills used and honed as a teacher were in demand in my new profession - the ability to listen, to read emotions, to empathize, to organize, to attend to details, to adapt to any situation, and even smile - or not. These skills were vital. Funerals are complicated, and helping the families make necessary choices in a comfortable and supportive environment while dealing with their grief, stress, and sometimes tension, demanded patience and diligent use of tact and professional knowledge.

Preparation, just like in planning lessons, is the key when organizing a funeral. Every detail must be checked and double-checked from the placement of flower arrangements to the seating of the mourners and the proximity of the tissue boxes. Problems must be anticipated and provided for. Vehicles must be shined, paperwork handled, and while dealing with one funeral, other clients must be slated into the schedule.

Retirement has proven to be just as exciting as teaching. I have gained so much from working with families in mourning and families dealing with the prospect of death. The skills learned and utilized everyday as a teacher were essential in the funeral business and I certainly had the opportunity to continue using them.



Good Luck, Bob Tumilty

In last year's municipal elections no one was nominated for School Board representative in District 3 which includes Champlain and Cornwallis elementary schools, Annapolis Academy, and AWEC. A special election will be held February 16 and this time there are four nominees including RTO member, Bob Tumilty. Bob has been on the School Board for several years since he retired. With

Congratulations, and Good Sweeping!

Those of you who know RTO member, Julie Morley, know she is a great curler. At the end of January, she and her valley team, skipped by Jocelyn Nix, tied for first place after the round robin in the Women's Provincial Curling Championship. Despite an excellent performance, they lost to the Halifax team in the championship game. But now, they have a second chance. The NS Seniors Championship is being held in Digby as I type, and Julie's team is playing in this competition as well. (They won it in 2010.) Good luck, Julie from all of us!!!

ELIZABETH PELHAM - JEWELLERY

The idea of making jewellery never occurred to me until the late 70's seeing necklaces of antique African beads made by a Quebec craftsman. During a visit to the archeological site of Mont Alban in Mexico in 1980, I purchased my first semi-precious beads of amethyst and jade, hand carved by local artisans, irregular, imperfect, and absolutely beautiful. There were few places to purchase beads at that time, so I bought vintage and antique necklaces to take apart with their sterling and gold-filled beads and clasps, and started making one-of-a-kind pieces in my spare time.

In 1985 we moved to Annapolis Royal from the Yarmouth area, but because of lay-offs I was only able to substitute. I opened **Sun Porch Antiques and Crafts** in the sun porch of our heritage home. When it was closed during the winter months, I became a term teacher.

During these years more sources for high quality gem stones were found and I continued to enjoy using unusual beads to create unique necklaces and earrings. Even after happily returning to full-time teaching, I continued to make jewellery.

Making jewellery continues to be a great adventure. Looking for interesting beads in my travels and creating something beautiful from them is too much fun to give up!!



KARL WEST - Teaching English in Spain

This past fall my daughter and I took part in a program called *Pueblo Ingles* that uses volunteer Anglos to work with Spanish professionals wanting to improve their fluency in English.

It was an experience, not a leisurely vacation. We worked for seven days in a most interesting environment. Volunteers pay for their flight to Madrid but all other expenses are covered once you join up with the program. We were encouraged to do our touring before the program began as the week would be tiring. Good advice!

After an orientation on Thursday, we were off early the next morning on a bus heading to La Alberca, an ancient town in the mountains about four hours out of Madrid. We were housed in a beautiful resort, staying in chalets. Each Anglo had the main floor of the chalet and the Spaniard was in the upper floor. The rooms were separate and locked like hotel rooms, but we shared a living room. (Pablo and I never did run into each other there.)



Every day followed the same pattern. Breakfast was at 9:00 and each table had two Anglos and two Spaniards. All meals had the same seating arrangement. After breakfast we had one hour sessions working one-to-one or two-to-two in mock situations such as telephone conversations or conference calls. After the first few minutes it was quite easy to find things to talk about. We were there to correct their English - which was very good - and explain idioms, etc. that would improve their understanding of our language. Lunch was at 2:00 followed by a siesta from 3 - 5:00 when sessions began again until dinner time at 9:00. From 10:00 on was free time usually spent at the bar still only speaking English. there were also group activities, group presentations, and a day in a nearby, centuries old village. The food was good and wine was served with both lunch and dinner.

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The Spanish students' backgrounds included an anesthesiologist, software developers, bankers, investment brokers, a publisher - all wanting to improve their English skills. Many were motivated because they planned to expand their businesses into North America. They were ambitious and driven people who worked hard and partied hard.

It was a great time but we did put in long hours. I would recommend the experience and hope to go again. They also offer programs in other countries and I have my eye set on Germany for my second kick at the can.

Contact web address: www.diverbo.com

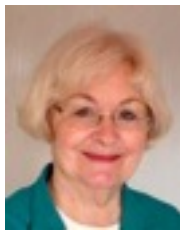


Spanish village

JUNE TRIMPER

Four years ago the Clements Historical Society put out a calendar with an old school picture. The interest in the photograph encouraged us to produce calendars for the following three years with monthly vintage school photos. These photos came from a number of sources in the old Clements Township which extended from Alain's Creek to Milford to Bear River - stashed away in old boxes or albums. Not all are traditional class pictures. Some show outdoor activities like picnics and Arbour Day. Identifying them involved visiting older citizens and phone calls between retired teachers. Everyone helped with the editing or in finding mistakes! Sales were done by word of mouth. (Requests came from all over Canada.) If any reader has school photos from Clements Township, we would love to see, scan, and save them. Of the more than 20 schools that once existed here, only one remains - Clark Rutherford Memorial in Cornwallis Park.

Off shoots from this project have included a reunion of students from the two-room Deep Brook School and a book about the well-known school photographer, E.M. Harris. These three calendars have have been a "labour of love" reaching out to the community as well as raising funds. This year we are considering a calendar about early transportation. Local railway bridges were demolished last year - the passing of another important part of our history.



Don't Make Me Beg - PLEASE!!

Well, here's the second newsletter and special thanks must be given to the contributors - Byron Morse, Elizabeth Pelham, June Trimper, and Karl West who all shared their "work" experience AFTER retirement. Not only do they deserve credit for writing the articles but also allowing me to edit them so that they fit in the newsletter. Cheryl Anderson has written the second and final piece on genealogical research, but will continue to answer any questions that come in. The next issue (May) will feature members and the organizations in which they volunteer. I NEED YOUR HELP! If you know someone who deserves recognition for all the work they do as a volunteer, please submit his or her name and information. President Neil's message reminding us that we don't have to travel to exotic places to find wonderful treasures because they might be right under our noses is very true, but many of those "treasures" are the incredible people in our RTO. With your help, let's celebrate them in our next newsletter.

- Vicky Parker, V.P. Annapolis RTO