

Friendship Force Manitoba meets monthly September through June. We usually meet the first Wednesday of each month; check our events listings for date and location.

Guests are always welcome. Call Peggy Smith at 204-224-1480 or Gail Keeley at 204-257-9837.

2019 Board Members

President: Gail Keeley 204-257-9837 gailke@hotmail.ca

Vice President: Peggy Smith phsmith448@gmail.com

Secretary: Jean Hyrich jhyrich@shaw.ca

Treasurer: Denise Lawson frdelaws@mts.net

Friendship Force Manitoba
friendshipforcemanitoba.org

2019 Calendar

Membership Meetings and Dinners: First Wednesdays. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m. Viscount Gort Hotel, 1670 Portage Avenue. Admission: \$20 at the door. Remember to wear your membership badge!

For restaurant dinners, please **reserve or cancel** your reservation by the Thursday evening before the dinner. We have to pay for dinners that have been ordered. Thank you for your cooperation!

April

Wednesday, April 3 Membership meeting and dinner C.M. (Merle) Klyne will introduce his new book *The Gratitude of Wasps*, a historical novel set during the Winnipeg General Strike, which changed the history of our city 100 years ago. He will have copies available for sale of this and his earlier novel, *The Silent March*.

May

Wednesday, May 1 Membership meeting and dinner Doreen Pendgracs will speak about her adventures travelling and leading groups to almost 20 countries to research and sample the world's most flavourful chocolate. Doreen will bring a few copies of her latest book, *Chocolatour: A Quest for the World's Best Chocolate*, and she invites pre-orders to make sure she has enough. Visit her website at chocolatour.net.

June

Wednesday, June 5 Membership meeting and dinner Our FF Manitoba members who journeyed to Thailand, Cambodia and Laos in February will present an illustrated talk on their visit, led by Denise Lawson.

June 8-14 Inbound Journey from FF Central Montana Journey Directors: Helen Norrie & Ruth Clare. Details on Page 6.

August

August 8-14 Inbound Journey from FF South Sydney, Australia Journey Directors: Lynda Walker & Elizabeth Schirmer. Details on Page 6.

September to December

The Program committee is lining up interesting speakers for the fall. November: board elections

FF Basics & Beyond

Membership renewals

Memberships run from January to December.

Renewing member: \$55

New member: \$55

Associate member: \$30

— Denise Lawson, Treasurer

frdelaws@mts.net

Address changes

Have you changed your address, email address or phone number? Please tell our Vice President right away so she can update our membership list: Peggy Smith, phsmith448@gmail.com

Club website

Check our website anytime for upcoming events, past journeys, issues of this newsletter, and useful links: friendshipforcemanitoba.org

Club property

If you have any items belonging to the club (books, paper records, etc.), please tell our Secretary (contacts above)

canffex.ca

Interested in joining up with another Canadian club to travel? Visit the **Canadian FF Clubs Journey Site** at canffex.ca for undersubscribed journeys from across Canada. You can sign up for monthly updates and immediate notices of new journeys. Canffex also posts messages from regional representatives and has contact information for Canadian clubs.

FFI travel updates

Go to friendshipforce.org and find “Sign up for email alerts.” There are many options for travel destinations.

President’s Message

We are already into spring. The change in venue for our club meetings to the Viscount Gort Hotel is working out well. Our first club meeting was in January this year instead of February to accommodate our outbound ambassadors who were leaving at the end of January for Thailand. It sounds like everyone had a great trip and we will be hearing more about it with a presentation led by Denise Lawson in June.

Our “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner” event in February was a success thanks to our dinner hosts and Vi Hultin’s organization. My group had a delicious lunch and leisurely afternoon at the home of Susan Finlay. Even though the day was extremely cold and the roads filled with snow we were able to forget our long, chilly winter with appetizing dishes and lively conversation that went well into the afternoon.

World Friendship Day was celebrated on March 6 at the Holiday Inn South hosted by the FF Winnipeg club. Two members from the FF Brandon club, Hugh McRuer and Joan Ferris, were also able to join us. The bingo mixer at the beginning of the evening was a fun way to get the crowd of about 80 people to learn more about each other. The presentation by Justin Eisinga from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank gave us an overview of Canada’s role in combatting world hunger.

The FFI World Conference this year will be held in Boulder, Colorado, on July 23 to 26. Doug and I will be staying at the university campus. Out of the many optional activities, we have signed up for a sightseeing bike ride and a canoe trip. We hope to see some of you there.

I would like to thank our journey directors Helen Norrie and Ruth Clare and their committee members for putting together what looks like an interesting and fun week for the inbound journey from Great Falls, Montana, in June. Those of us who went to Great Falls in September 2017 are looking forward to meeting up with friends we stayed with while we were there. Thanks also to Lynda Walker and Elizabeth Schirmer for agreeing to co-direct the inbound journey from South Sydney, Australia, this August.

— Gail Keeley



2019 Board: Secretary Jean Hyrich, President Gail Keeley, Treasurer Denise Lawson, Past President Lynda Walker, Vice President Peggy Smith



In December, Susan Finlay hosted a year-end board meeting and potluck lunch at her beautiful home in West Kildonan. This annual event is a chance for the outgoing and incoming board and committee members to work together for a smooth transition into the new year.

(Standing) Doug Jackson, Gail Keeley, Ruth Clare, Lynda Walker, Peggy Smith, Bev Phillips, Susan Finlay
(Seated) Helen Whetter, Helen Norrie, Kazuko Nomura, Denise Lawson



In December we enjoyed Christmas dinner with a barbershop quartet, the Old Time Chord Production Company



The Prairie Fiddlers entertained us at our January meeting



Two of the Guess Who's Coming to Dinner groups who met in February



World Friendship Day, March 6

Three club presidents: Gail Keeley (Manitoba), Paul Van Leeuwen (Winnipeg) and Hugh McRuer (Brandon)

Our guest speaker Justin Eisinga of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank with FFM president Gail Keeley

Journey to Thailand, Cambodia and Laos

Our journey to Thailand had an auspicious beginning, as we were able to solve some major problems. When the second host club cancelled, the 29 people on the list decided to forge ahead and make our own plans for the second and third weeks. Our regional support manager at FFI was unable to find a second host club anywhere in southeast Asia so our journey coordinator started looking for alternatives to the week in Nakhon Ratchasima. The 29 became 12, then we picked up four ambassadors from FF Winnipeg. When the dust finally settled, we had 12 ambassadors.



The Chiang Mai club offered a one-night home stay on our way to Lamphun from Bangkok and gave us a warm welcome.

On arrival at the Chiang Mai airport, we were met by our home hosts and the coordinator of the Chiang Mai club; five of our home hosts were not even members but had stepped up to the plate to welcome us into their homes.

We were then picked up by the Lamphun club for our welcome lunch, complete with speeches

and introductions to our host families. Our week with them included the flower festival, a visit to an elephant sanctuary, a day at the Buddhist University, temple visits and more.

The Chiang Mai Flower Festival was a three-hour parade of some of the most beautiful floats we have ever seen. (Spoiler alert – apparently some of the flowers were artificial.) Marching bands, moving formations of Thai dancers and more for as far as the eye could see!



Our day at the Buddhist University began with a presentation and an opportunity for the students – lay students and monks alike – to converse with us one to one in English. In the afternoon, the students studying English took turns explaining to us the significance of each temple and its history.

The Lamphun club arranged an additional three-day tour of Chiang Rai province. We saw a tea plantation, rice fields, the amazing white palace temple, the Golden Triangle where Myanmar, Laos and Thailand meet, and the Rubber Triangle.



The most solemn occasion was our visit to the site of the cave rescue of the boys' soccer team last summer, and seeing the billboard honouring the Thai Navy SEAL who died during the planning stage and the rest of the international team who eventually rescued all of the boys and their coach.

Conversations with the coordinator in Chiang Mai led us to a two-day cruise down the Mekong River into Laos with visits to two villages in the hills above the river, an overnight in Pakbeng and a visit to the Buddha caves.



The subsequent two-day visit in Luang Prabang, Laos on a more relaxed schedule was just what we needed!

A few of us got up at dawn to witness the monks collecting alms (food for the day) from the public as they walk through Luang Prabang at 6:00 every morning.

Discussions about a visit to Cambodia and a search for information about Angkor Wat led to the discovery of Ponheary Ly, winner of the 2010 CNN

Woman of the Year Award and the 2016 World of Children Education Award. We booked into the Ponheary Ly Foundation's Seven Candles Guest House and were fortunate to have her put aside her other obligations to be our tour guide for Angkor Wat and the Floating Village on Tonle Sap Lake. Our two days with her were highly educational and inspirational. We left humbled and very appreciative of our lives in Canada.



A few days to decompress in Bangkok and we were on our way home! Consensus seems to be that a good time was had by all. It is possible that some of us may return as volunteer English tutors at the Buddhist University or teachers at the schools run by the Ponheary Ly Foundation.

— Denise Lawson



Friendship Force 2019 World Conference
Williams Village Campus, University of Colorado Boulder
Visit friendshipforce.org for the link to the Conference website



Japanese for Travellers

FFM's Kazuko Nomura will be teaching "Japanese for Travellers" this spring at Creative Retirement Manitoba. If you are considering our recently assigned 2020 trip to Japan and have no background in the language, this course may interest you.

Date: 10 Tuesdays: April 23 - June 25

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Fees: Members \$150 / Guests: \$195

Creative Retirement Manitoba, 101-1075 Portage Avenue

Contacts: 204-949-2565, creativeretirementmanitoba.ca

にほんご (nihongo)
日本語
Japanese

2019 Committee chairs and members

Journey Coordinator: Susan Finlay sufinlay@shaw.ca, 204-339-7956

Past President: Lynda Walker

lyndadawnwalker@gmail.com or 204-995-8344

Program Committee: Program Committee: Kazuko

Nomura nomura@mts.net, Helen Norrie

[honorrie1@mymts.net](mailto:hnorrie1@mymts.net), Miriam Fenster

mifenster@shaw.ca

Communications Assistant: available

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster: Bev Phillips 204-942-5453, phillipb@mymts.net

Editorial

The new year is a good time to usher in some changes. The *Keystone Klippings* has a new look. Our new board has exciting ideas for improving how our club functions. And we definitely are looking for new volunteers to help with committees, in a variety of tasks, short-term or long-term.

We especially need a new webmaster. I have been doing double duty tending the website along with the newsletter for a couple of years. My family situation has changed recently and I need to reduce my FFM duties. Our website is hosted by Wix, so it is easy to use and requires only basic computer skills. Please email or phone me to find out more!

— Bev Phillips, Editor (phillipb@mts.net, 204-942-5453)

Journey Coordinator Report

2019 Inbound Journeys

June 8-14 FF Central Montana, USA

Journey Directors: Helen Norrie (honorrie1@mymts.net) and Ruth Clare (rem5clare@hotmail.com)

We are expecting 10 ambassadors from Great Falls, Montana, June 8-14. We have some exciting events planned including a trip to a Hutterite colony and a canoe trip at La Barriere Park. We welcome any of our members to join us during the week. Please contact Helen Norrie or Ruth Clare.

August 8-14 FF South Sydney, Australia

Journey Directors: Lynda Walker

(lyndadawnwalker@gmail.com) and Elizabeth Schirmer (schirmer@mymts.net)

Plans are underway for the South Sydney inbound journey. We are expecting five couples and seven singles. Please consider being a home host, day host, dinner host or just come out and join us in the planned activities. Let's show the Aussies a good time. Your participation is appreciated. For further information contact Lynda Walker or Elizabeth Schirmer.

New Journeys just announced for 2020

2020 Inbound Journeys

July Date TBA FF Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley

September Date TBA Taupo and Marlborough, New Zealand to Manitoba and Niagara, Canada

2020 Outbound Journey

October Date TBA Koriyama and Ehime, Japan

— Susan Finlay, Journey Coordinator, sufinlay@shaw.ca



friendship force

INTERNATIONAL

Experience different views. Discover common ground.