

Let's Get Together Again!

Dinner Meeting, Wednesday, April 6

Masonic Centre, Confusion Corner (Pembina & Osborne)

5:30 Doors open for cocktail hour

**Admission \$35 (pay at the door or etransfer to
thelma@escape.ca)**

6:30 Dinner followed by Meeting & Presentation

Two staff members from CAA (Canadian Automobile Association) will discuss road trips in Manitoba and nearby provinces, car insurance, bus tours and other travel options.

Please wear your FFM membership badge!

Save the dates

Same times and admission as April 6

**Dinner Meeting, Wednesday, May 4
Masonic Centre**

Presenter: Gale Simpson, world traveller and photographer, on planning your own trip to Churchill

Friday, May 27

**World Friendship Day and
Farewell to FF Winnipeg's
Inbound Guests from Los Angeles
Norwood Hotel, 112 Marion**

Presenter: John Einarson,
Music Historian

Celebrating Hanukkah and Dutch Christmas

The holiday party held on December 9 at the Norwood Hotel was a great success as everyone was glad to be able to meet in person while public health restrictions were relaxed. Festive decorations set the tone for the bake sale of Christmas desserts donated by members. The meeting was followed by presentations on Christmas in the Netherlands by Paul van Leeuwen and Diane Schipper and the History of



Getting into the swing of the Ugly Sweater Parade!

Hanukkah by Thelma Sures. Just for fun, some of our members marched around the room for the ugly sweater contest. The evening ended with a Christmas/Hanukkah trivia contest where members competed to win prizes donated by Shirley Twerdun (a poinsettia), Don Greig (a hand-crafted cheese board) and Vi and Carl Hultin (a gift basket).
Contributed by Gail Keeley

Travel

With the fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic on the wane (or at least we all hope it is on the wane), Friendship Force International and FF Manitoba are making plans for Friendship Force journeys to resume.

As you know, the Omicron variant meant our March/April 2022 outbound journey to Japan didn't happen. FF Manitoba has now applied for its 2023 outbound journey. The usual FFI schedule for journey applications and journey confirmations has been upended by the pandemic, but we have again asked for Japan as our first choice. We expect to have a reasonable chance of being assigned to Japan as it was a previously postponed trip, and the Ehime (Shikoku) club is lobbying on our behalf.

Unfortunately, the Koriyama club has already committed to accepting another inbound journey in 2023, and therefore will not be able to accommodate us. If our request for two to three weeks with FF clubs in Japan is not feasible for any number of reasons, our second submitted choice was Australia. It has a large number of clubs, and has had a less severe Covid-19 trajectory than much of the rest of the world. In addition, it is far from the conflict zone in Ukraine.

You will remember that we had previously been assigned an outbound journey to Turkey, a journey that was also derailed by the pandemic. In light of Turkey's proximity to Ukraine, and the fact that Turkey has only a few clubs, we stand a much better chance of going to Australia if Japan falls through. This year Japan's cherry blossom season officially began on March 20 when flowers opened on a Somei Yoshino variety of cherry tree in Tokyo. Keep your fingers crossed for experiencing cherry blossom season in spring 2023 in person!

Our longstanding Japan Journey Director, Denise Lawson, continues to be in regular contact with various clubs in Japan. We are grateful that Denise is willing to be Journey Director for the FF Koriyama club's stay here August 16-23 AND Journey Director for the FF Manitoba outbound journey to Japan – when that happens. The Koriyama participants are flying all the way from Japan just to visit us. It's a LONG journey for a one-week stay so we will really need to make it worthwhile. Please say "yes" when

Denise asks for volunteers for her inbound journey committee.

FF Lower Columbia (including any Ketchikan, Alaska ambassadors invited from a previous journey) is planning to visit FF Manitoba September 20-27. As noted in the last newsletter, FF Lower Columbia's club policy is that all of their ambassadors are fully vaccinated, and they will only stay with hosts who are fully vaccinated. That group is also travelling just to visit us. Some of the Lower Columbia ambassadors already have friends here as our sister club, FF Winnipeg, visited their club shortly before the pandemic.

To avoid confusion between the two FF Manitoba inbound journeys only a month apart, Denise will strike her FF Koriyama committee first. Then work will commence on the plans to welcome FF Lower Columbia. A Journey Director and all of the other positions Denise outlined in a recent email will be needed.

In the meantime don't forget about the FFI Virtual Experiences <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/> Past presentations are still available. The latest session is "Music Festival for World Peace" hosted by Japanese and Taiwanese members. Enjoy!

Susan Finlay, Journey Coordinator

Time to Check Your Passport!

Our passports have been tucked away for the last two years. If your passport is within six months of expiring, start the renewal process now. With lots of people needing to renew passports all at once, waits at Service Canada are much longer than usual. So, check that expiry date!



FFM: Brought to you by...

President's Message

As I write this report, it has been one month since the beginning of the war waged by Russia against Ukraine. It is very sad to see the destruction that one man can inflict on a country fighting for its freedom. It was especially heartwarming to read the joint letter written by Tanya Zgodinskaya from FF Ukraine, Elena Parubochaya from FF Russia and Jeremy Snook from FF International to Presidents Biden and Putin urging peace between their two countries. This certainly gave me a renewed appreciation for our FF tagline "A World of Friends is a World of Peace."

I am pleased to report that all FFM members are now registered with FFI through the Member Portal. Thank you, everyone.

Jim Kubas from FF Winnipeg has been working hard to get the Canadian website ready. He will send us a notice when it is up and running, and I will forward the information and website address to all members. All Canadian clubs will be profiled on the site, and lots of other information will be posted.

I would like to thank Jacky Molyneux for volunteering to fill the position of Historian for our club. She has lots of unique ideas and will do a great job.

One of my duties as Past President in 2023 is to chair the Nomination Committee which will consist of up to five members. Please consider volunteering for this committee and let me know if you are interested. We will present a slate of nominees for the four officers one month prior to elections.

Finally, we are looking forward to travelling again. We submitted our 2023 Outbound Destination Request form listing Japan as our first choice and Australia as our second choice. We look forward to hosting Japan in August and Lower Columbia/Ketchikan in September. Please consider volunteering for these inbound journeys – to me, being involved with journeys is an important part of what FF is all about.

We are all looking forward to our in-person meeting on April 6. Hope to see you there.

Peggy Smith

Meet FFM's New Historian

Jacky Molyneux, our new Historian, joined FF Manitoba in 2017. After retiring from a 40-year career in the public school system, she was eager to travel and meet friends from around the world.

Since joining, she has participated in the only two outbound journeys that happened before the pandemic. Jacky thoroughly enjoyed the sights, sounds, food and people she met in both New Zealand and Thailand.

Back here at home she has been an active member of the program and phoning committees. A diligent researcher, she participated in the official walking tour of St. Boniface several times to be fully prepared for leading our very own tour.

Her enjoyment of nature, and just being out in the fresh air, have made it easy for her to assist with other walks and garden events. Jacky likes to write stories, so she is excited about taking on the challenge of documenting FF Manitoba's first 25 years. She envisions producing both static (photographs, stories, etc.) and interactive (interviews, etc.) records of our club's first quarter century. To accomplish that goal she will need the assistance and cooperation of members and club officers from the present day back to the beginning of FF Manitoba. Welcome to our official Historian, Jacky!

Susan Finlay

Board Members 2022

President: Peggy Smith *phsmith448@gmail.com*

Vice President: Denise Lawson *frdelaws@mts.net*

Secretary: Lynda Walker *lyndadawnwalker@gmail.com*

Treasurer: Thelma Sures *thelma@escape.ca*

Committee Chairs and Members

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

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

Program Committee: Lynne Foley *lynne_foley007@hotmail.com*, Dallas Bagby, Brenda Barbour, Joan Boyd, Marina Grinko, Kathy Hansell, Diane Schipper, Gail Shimonek

Communications Committee: Gail Keeley, Doug Jackson, Helen Norrie, Marilyn Ouimet (website), Bev Phillips (newsletter), Lynne Roberts, Shirley Twerdun, Lynda Walker

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

Website: Marilyn Ouimet *mouimet1@me.com*

Historian: Jacky Molyneux

Journey Director: Denise Lawson, Koriyama (inbound) *frdelaws@mts.net*

FFM Members on the Road



Cycling in Prince Edward Island

Frustrated with not being able to travel due to the pandemic, we decided to explore Canada. Our research found that Prince Edward Island was the safest place in North America, and its Confederation Trail was a very tempting cycling adventure. We quickly discovered why PEI was so safe. To visit we had to get a PEI Pass via an online registry that confirmed our full vaccination status. When we got off the plane everyone lined up to show our PEI Pass then lined up again for a nose swab. We would get a call within three hours if we tested positive for Covid.

We had decided to spend 16 days in PEI, strictly cycling. This decision may have been influenced by the astronomical car rental costs. We rented bikes through a wonderful bike store, MacQueen's Bike Shop & Island Tours, at a reasonable cost and with professional help. They took one look at our backpacks and added panniers to our bike rental at no additional cost. Later we would find out how helpful these folks could be.

The Confederation Trail is the old rail line that travels from one tip of the island to the other. Because it is a rail line it has a very low gradation, a delight for cyclists. We soon discovered how hilly PEI can be. We set off from Charlottetown to the heart of Anne of Green Gables territory. We had to leave the Confederation Trail to get to this beautiful coastal area. For us prairie cyclists, some of the hills were too much no matter how low we geared down, so we walked up several hills. While we enjoyed our time, we decided to stick to the Confederation Trail from then on – and what a delight.

We covered an average of 60 kilometres a day on this gravelled path, cycling between tall trees and farmers' fields. The bright red soils contrasted with Manitoba's sandy brown soils. Someone had wisely planted apple trees all along the trail so we were able to pick apples as we wished, very tart apples, but just the sight of red apples on the edge of the trail was a pleasure.

We encountered a few challenges along the way. We had assumed there would be many bed and breakfasts to stay at along the trail so had not made reservations. Due to Covid and a major reduction in tourists most of the B&Bs were closed. We ended up setting our daily travel goals according to where we could sleep that night, varying from 40 to 80 kilometres a day.



We found some lovely places and met nothing but kindness as we bumbled along on our unplanned trip. We stayed in everything from a high-end private golf club to a shanty which was basically a small garage-like structure. Our hosts included a Métis woman from Manitoba to a Chinese woman who provided us with fresh garden tomatoes. There is so much history in PEI that it would take an entire article. We ate seafood every chance we could, everything from mussels to a shrimp sandwich. As we cycled along the coast, we could see the mussel farms spread out on the ocean surface. We did eat at a couple of Tim Hortons when we couldn't find any other place.

The forecast had been for rain but it kept getting pushed back until we felt we had a charmed life and would experience nothing but sunny days. That is until Hurricane Allen's tail hit PEI. We planned to overnight in an isolated coastal area. Several hours before we got there the torrential rains began. With no other option we just kept going until we arrived at our destination, soaking wet and chilled. It was a rustic set of cabins miles from anywhere. No restaurants within cycling distance, no grocery stores and a hurricane

threatening a couple of days where we would be unable to cycle.

We quickly decided to ask for help, so we called MacQueen's Bike Shop. An hour later a wonderful fellow arrived in a van and whipped us back to Charlottetown, windshield wipers barely keeping our vision clear. Two days of experiencing one of the most historic cities in Canada was an unexpected bonus. The food was great and we did take a break from seafood to try Himalayan curry.

Back on the Confederation Trail we gloriously cycled along just enjoying the changing flora. I didn't expect to find birch forests in PEI. Potato farms everywhere. We lucked out one night. We had booked a cabin sight unseen. When we couldn't find it, the owner cycled out to meet us and guided us to his charming seaside cabin overlooking the Confederation Bridge, an engineering marvel that was wonderful to watch as the sunset faded.



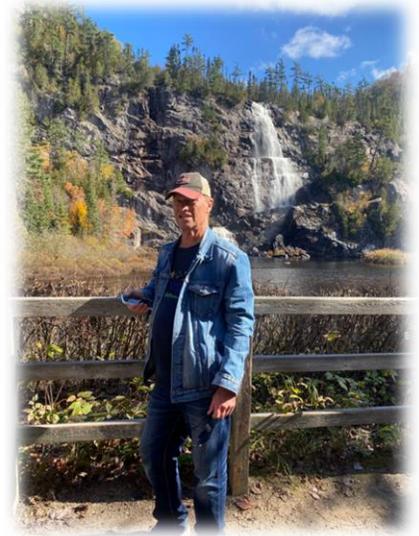
Our last days cycling added a new adventure. The maps of the Confederation Trail had been marvellous until we discovered we had an out-of-date copy of the map. Cycling back to Charlottetown we decided to take a scenic sub-route of the Trail. We soon realized we were lost and must have bypassed the trail turn-off. After a few confusing attempts we asked a local farmer who informed us that sub-trail had been closed and instead we would have to go up a hill that appeared insurmountable to our prairie eyes. Rejecting the hill, we cycled back 20 kilometres and carried on, making our last day our longest. We were pretty tough by this point but our aging muscles were complaining. Even adding the extra kilometres, we were able to enjoy our last day cycling in PEI as we headed slightly downhill and made it to our hotel before dark.

Sixteen days cycling in PEI provided such a beautiful trip. The little difficulties just added a bit of spice to our adventure.

Sel Burrows and Lynda Walker

Fall Colours in Western Ontario

Gail and I had heard about the vivid fall colours of the Ontario forests so we booked a six-day bus/train trip in early October last year. We left by bus with a group of 20 and arrived late in the day in Thunder Bay where we took a fascinating tour of a Great Lakes



icebreaker, which for me was the most memorable event of the trip. The second day saw us in Sault Ste. Marie where we enjoyed exploring an aircraft museum and the waterfront. The next day we boarded the Agawa Canyon Tour Train up into the spectacular and colourful northern Ontario deciduous forests!

The following couple of days were a full schedule of the giant Inco mine, an old car museum, a local farm machinery museum and a tour of CN vintage train equipment which was topped off with a delicious home-cooked meal in Capreol, a suburb of Sudbury. The last day we visited White River and began our long bus ride home.



Most days the distances between stops were long, and riding on the bus for many hours may not appeal to everyone. However, all in all, it was great to experience a breathtaking region of Canada.

Doug Jackson

The Back Page

FF Basics

Membership renewals Memberships run from January to December: **Renewing member:** \$60 / **New member:** \$60 / **Associate member:** \$30

All members are being asked to complete a membership renewal form at the time they pay their membership. Please see Vice President Denise Lawson if you have paid your membership and did not complete a renewal form. This will allow us to update our membership list. Also, contact Denise with any inquiries about membership.

Address changes Have you changed your address, email or phone number? Please tell our VP Denise Lawson right away so she can update our membership list.

Club website *friendshipforcemanitoba.org*

Club property If you have any items belonging to the club (books, paper records, etc.), please tell our Secretary, Lynda Walker.

FF International Go to **friendshipforce.org** for up-to-date information.

FFM and Canadian Blood Services' "Partners for Life" If you're planning to donate blood, please contact Diane Schipper at 204-257-1101 for details on our partnership with CBS.

Newsletter To contribute to the Keystone Klippings, contact Gail at *gailke@hotmail.ca*.

Barbara's Hike

On May 15, I will be hiking to help raise funds for Palliative Manitoba to provide for people who have life-limiting illnesses, as well as support to their families and their caregivers. The money raised stays right here in Manitoba.

You can donate at [canadahelps.org](https://www.canadahelps.org) (and receive an instant tax receipt) at my personal page: <https://www.canadahelps.org/me/457C3eg>. I will be at the April 6 meeting with pledge sheets, or you may phone me at 204-488-7645. On behalf of Palliative Manitoba, thank you for caring.

Barbara Main

Outreach Librarian Gives Us Tips

After the extremely positive response to his presentation, Chris Laurie, who spoke at our February meeting, agreed to give us more tips on finding travel-related material at the Winnipeg Public Library. Here are a few of his suggestions but he emphasizes "Please ask any of our staff for assistance if you need it. That's what we are there for."

One of the most valuable tools, he says, is a free app called Kanopy. After you unload this from the App Store, click on the Winnipeg Public Library and give your library card number. Click on Travel for access to all the materials in the library system relating to travel.

Another valuable resource online is PressReader. If you scroll down to Travel and Culture it will provide information on the materials available on the country you are researching.

Most of the travel-related books can be found in the 917 section of your public library. The section 900-999 is for History and Geography.

When you access the Winnipeg Public Library page you can also click on Search Catalogue for a specific book or Digital Library for access to e-books, movies, magazines and newspapers. Explora Canada, accessed with your library card, "provides easy-to-use features and reliable content from the world's leading magazines, reference books, news articles and Associated Press videos."

If you enjoy reading travel magazines, Chris recommends National Geographic Traveler, Travel and Leisure and Condé Nast Traveler. Many more magazines are available online. These are all available at the Millennium Library and may also be available at your nearby branch.

For more information Chris can be reached at CLaurie@Winnipeg.ca

Helen Norrie



friendship force

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