

Friendship Force of Manitoba Newsletter December 2022

Summer and Fall Activities

At our June meeting, we wound up the 2021/2022 year at a fun social event.



In September, our club Historian Jacky Molyneux invited past presidents to speak about their years leading FF Manitoba. See Page 2.

In late September, 20 FFM members and friends enjoyed a slow ride on the Prairie Dog Central steam train and a delicious fall supper at Grosse Isle. This was a special treat, as both the train and fall supper were suspended during the pandemic. It was great getting back to a Manitoba autumn tradition.



There's plenty of time to relax and chat on the Prairie Dog Central!

In October, we were treated to a slide show on the FFI cruise in the North Atlantic. See Page 3.

November's meeting featured our Annual General Meeting and Board elections. See Page 5.

Contributed by Lynne Foley

Holiday Celebration!

Membership Dinner
Wednesday, December 7
Norwood Hotel

5:30 Cocktail hour / 6:30 Dinner
Please wear your FFM membership badge!

Bake Sale
Trivia Contest
Bring a Tin for the Bin for Harvest Manitoba

Upcoming Events

January: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner – home-hosted dinners, coordinated by Carol De Baets. Dates, times and locations will be chosen by participants.

February: Membership Dinner
"Book Ahead!"
Bring your used books – fact or fiction – to our February 1, 2023 FFM dinner meeting.

Unsold items will be donated to the Children's Hospital Book Sale.

FFM 25th Anniversary Project

This year marked my first year as Historian for FFM and the 25th anniversary of the Club charter in 1997. To celebrate and document our rich history, over the summer I interviewed and videotaped anniversary messages from our past presidents. I began with Peggy Smith, our current president, and worked my way back to the beginning. Each president was asked to share highlights and insights from their club involvement over the years, share a special memory and give a wish for the future.

At the September 7 dinner meeting, seven of our members shared their messages in person. Members enjoyed hearing about our club history. Big bouquets to Gail Keeley, Lynda Walker, Kathy Hansell (on behalf of her late husband Rick), Dallas Bagby, Esther and Clare McKenty, Barbara Main and Shirley Twerdun for so eloquently sharing their experiences. I look forward to sharing all of the messages with you in the future.

Here is the transcription of the video message from Kay Douglas. I was fortunate enough to catch up with her on her visit to Winnipeg.

“Hi, I’m Kay Douglas, currently living in St. Albert, Alberta. I joined FFM many years ago. After hearing about Shirley Twerdun’s travel experiences I decided to join the club. I also liked the FF motto: A world of friends is a world of peace. I served as Club President in 2001 and 2002. I have travelled to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Russia, Ukraine, British Isles, Ireland, Germany and the US. The situation in Ukraine today brings memories of being hosted by a wonderful woman and her 16-year-old twins in Lugansk, which has so recently suffered damage and loss of life due to the war. The boys often accompanied me on day excursions. Every exchange was an enjoyable and unique experience. I hope that FFI continues to thrive and provide travel experiences. Happy 25th Anniversary, Friendship Force Manitoba.”



Kay Douglas

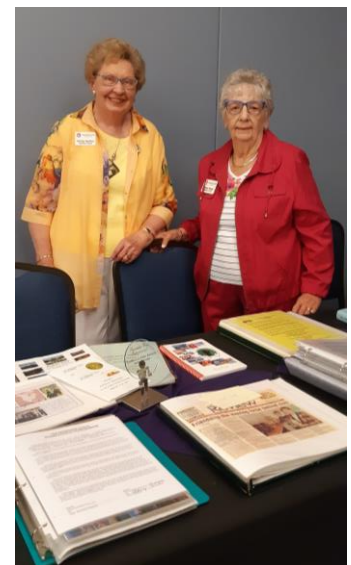
This project has afforded me wonderful opportunities to tap into our stories and history. Happy 25th anniversary and many more.

In friendship,

Jacky Molyneux, FFM Historian



Past President speakers: Esther McKenty, Barbara Main, Gail Keeley, Lynda Walker, Jacky Molyneux, Dallas Bagby, Kathy Hansell, Shirley Twerdun, Clare McKenty



Shirley Twerdun and Doreen Weight, founding members of Friendship Force Manitoba in 1997

FFI Festival at Sea

August 28 – September 11

On August 25, Kristina and Jim Ryan, my sister Jeanne and I boarded an Air Canada flight for Amsterdam, where we spent a few days exploring the sights of the city. Then we made our way to Rotterdam to board the ship the “Rotterdam.” Eighty-five FFI members were on board, including three office staff and 12 Canadians. Everyone else was from the US.

We spent the next 14 days travelling on the North Sea, making stops in Bergen and Molde in Norway, Akureyri, Isafjordur and Reykjavik in Iceland and Invergordon and South Queensferry in Scotland. Unfortunately, we were unable to dock in Lerwick in the Shetland Islands because the sea was too rough.

We very much enjoyed all the sights, the delicious food and the entertainment but the highlight of the trip was the whale watching tour that we took on September 3 in Isafjordur. The weather was excellent with the sun shining brightly and there must have been hundreds of whales surrounding the boat. Kristina said she has been on numerous whale watching tours and this was by far the best. Also, being in Edinburgh the day after Queen Elizabeth died was memorable. Everywhere you looked there were pictures of the Queen. We weren't able to visit Edinburgh Castle but we were told to make our way



Kristina and Jim Ryan, Diane Schipper and Diane's sister Jeanne

to Princes Street where there was a 96-gun salute to honour the Queen. It was very moving to see hundreds of people stand still in complete silence for 15 minutes.



On sea days, we gathered in the morning for a meeting which covered topics such as the FFI Mission, recruiting and retaining members and the future of Friendship Force. The message is that FFI's mission is to build international relationships for a peaceful world by building our clubs and memberships. To do this, we need to renew ourselves by reaching out to younger members.

Jeremi Snook spoke about the future of FFI. In 2020, FFI had its most profitable year with a surplus of \$100,000. Then in March 2020 things came tumbling down. Jeremi quoted Winston Churchill: "Never let a good crisis go to waste." The pandemic disrupted business as usual, with 80% of revenue gone, so the organization needed to change to survive. During the first 30 days of the pandemic, FFI was getting ready to close its doors. Then an unsolicited gift from a long-time member gave them a bit of hope. They started fundraising and received \$500,000 from members across the world. Of course, there are other challenges ahead that we need to overcome. Members are aging out of FF; it's expected that about 4,000 members will leave in the next few years.

Jeremi reminded us that FFI now has a brand-new website in eight languages to attract new members. There is still work to do to increase membership and invest in the future. We need to remind ourselves why we do this. Friendship Force is so much more than a cool travel group. There is a purpose to what we are doing. We need to start a movement of opening the minds of our children and grandchildren as to what FF means. FF is not about places but rather about people!

Overall, we found the "Festival at Sea" cruise enjoyable and informative, with many memorable moments.

Contributed by Diane Schipper

Travel

I am excited to share information about both inbound and outbound journeys for 2023 and beyond. It has been almost four years since our last outbound journey (Thailand in early 2019), and almost as long since our last inbound journey (Central Montana in June 2019). After a long hiatus we are eager to travel to, and to welcome ambassadors from, other clubs around the world!

Inbound journey news

2022 FF Lower Columbia's planned visit to FF Manitoba September 20-27, 2022 was cancelled as the number of participants dwindled from 16 down to 6. Despite the journey itself being cancelled, 20 FF members and friends enjoyed the planned ride on the Prairie Dog Central to the fall supper in Grosse Isle. Reports were that they had a fun trip and a delicious meal.

2023 In the last newsletter I asked FF Manitoba members to gear up for three inbound journeys instead of our usual two. As FF Lamphun Thailand has now requested that their journey to FF Manitoba be postponed to 2024, we are back down to two inbound journeys for 2023. **Journey directors and committee members are needed for planning both of these inbound groups' experiences.**

FF Mid-Willamette is scheduled to visit FF Manitoba June 17 to 23, 2023. From here they will continue to FF Edmonton. Although no formal planning has occurred yet it is worth noting that their visit will overlap with the Winnipeg International Jazz Festival June 14-24 and National Aboriginal Day June 21.

The FF Koriyama Japan club rescheduled its August 2022 inbound journey to 2023. Specific dates for that journey are still being narrowed down. Early communication indicated they wanted to come from mid-July to mid-August, but those dates did not work for them because of Obon being in August, and high airfares in the month of August. (According to Google,

Obon is a fusion of the ancient Japanese belief in ancestral spirits and a Japanese Buddhist custom to honour the spirits of one's ancestors.) Then the club asked to come in late June. We had to say no to June dates because their visit would then be overlapping with FF Mid-Willamette's. Stay tuned for more details.

2024 We have notified FFI that FF Manitoba would be able to host two inbound journeys in 2024. We anticipate that one of them will probably be FF Lamphun, Thailand. Ambassadors from FF Uganda and FF Guadeloupe participated in the same themed FFI journey I did in Washington, DC in October this year. Both clubs have expressed an interest in coming here for an inbound journey. 2024 journey assignments are still several months away so in the interim we will be kept in suspense.

Outbound journey news

2023 FF Manitoba's thrice-cancelled outbound journey to FF Ehime (Japan) #23112 is now scheduled for the end of March. Despite valiant efforts Journey Director Denise Lawson has only been able to confirm a much shorter journey than the original four-week trip from 2020. But she hasn't given up! The ambassadors participating in the journey are starting to meet to come up with a plan for extending their trip beyond the FF portion.

2024 Once FFI has compiled the list of clubs willing to host, with the accompanying number of weeks offered, clubs wishing to travel outbound will be asked for their destination requests. Where would YOU like to go?

Happy Holidays!

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Finlay, Journey Coordinator

FFM: Brought to you by...

President's Message

As I write this article for the Keystone Klippings, I am finishing up my four-year term on Friendship Force Manitoba's board. Many thanks to all the members I have worked with and who have helped and advised me along the way – too many to name. It has been a rewarding experience but has had its challenges – the main one being working through Covid. Thank goodness for Zoom.

Welcome to the new board members for 2023:

Denise Lawson, President
Lynne Foley, Vice President
Loretta Humeniuk, Secretary
Paul van Leeuwen, Treasurer

Please consider serving on one of our many committees for 2023. Our club thrives on your continued involvement.

Finally, we look forward to journeys in 2023! In March/April we anticipate our postponed journey to Japan – the ambassadors have been decided and plans are in the works. A huge thank you to Denise for being our Journey Director. FF Mid-Willamette and FF Koriyama will be visiting in the spring and summer. I believe the dates are still being decided. Consider getting involved by being a journey director, committee member, home host, day host, dinner host and attending the events that will be offered.

I look forward to travelling to Japan, home hosting, World Friendship Day with FFW and FFB, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, our upcoming Holiday Party and an exciting 2023.

Happy Holidays! Take care. It has been a pleasure and honour to serve as your Vice President and President.

Peggy Smith

What better gift to give at Christmas time than the gift of life!

It's been a while since our last blood drive and December is a good time to donate. FFM is a Partner for Life with Canadian Blood Services. If you want to donate, I will send you an email with a short instructional video on how to sign up. **I will reserve a group of appointments for December 15 and 16.** If you have any issues signing up or any other questions, please call me at 204-257-1101.

Please note there is no longer any upper age limit to donate. Call Blood Services at 1-888-236-6283 and have a screening done over the phone with a nurse to ensure you are able to donate before registering.

On behalf of thousands of patients across Canada, thank you!

Contributed by Diane Schipper

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.com, 204-257-9837
Program Committee: Lynne Foley lynne_foley007@hotmail.com, Dallas Bagby, Joan Boyd, Kathy Hansell, Diane Schipper, Gail Shimonek
Communications Committee: Gail Keeley, Doug Jackson, Helen Norrie, Marilyn Ouimet (website), Bev Phillips (newsletter), 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

African American History and Culture in Washington, DC

From October 16 to 23, I had the pleasure of joining 15 other FF ambassadors in a themed journey to Washington, DC. Three of the ambassadors hailed from Guadeloupe, one was from Uganda, two of us were from Canada and the other 10 were from nine FF clubs across the United States. Two other Ugandans and a Rwandan were unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances.



The National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Washington Monument

This was my first trip to Washington so it was all new to me. Autumn foliage hadn't quite reached its peak in the week I was there but I still saw some vibrant oranges and reds on the trees. The weather was bright and sunny throughout although the day we went to Mount Vernon, George Washington's home, was cool. (Julie, the Ugandan ambassador, was freezing the whole time as she is used to living on the equator.)

My host exemplified Friendship Force. She and her husband were charter members of the Washington club. They had been on many outbound journeys; they had hosted many ambassadors over the past 25+ years. Now at age 79, she is still working two to three days a week because she enjoys it.

She had offered to host three ambassadors but ended up with just the only Ugandan ambassador and me. In between providing crab imperial dinners and gluten-

free French toast breakfasts, she cared for her disabled husband in his hospital bed in the living room – and made it all look easy.

Our journey included some of the iconic sights like the Lincoln Memorial, but its focus was the African American experience. For example, the retired judge who was our guide at Mount Vernon is a descendant of one of the several hundred slaves who worked on Washington's estate. His tour provided a look at life on the estate from the perspective of a slave.

A highlight was the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the newest museum on the mall. By law no building in Washington can be built higher than the Washington Monument. From the outside the museum is three storeys. However, there are also three floors of exhibits below ground!



The Martin Luther King, Jr Memorial

I really enjoyed Planet Word, a museum devoted to language, its origins and its usage. It wasn't an official part of the tour but I think it fits with the spirit of Friendship Force perfectly.

This was the first time this journey had been offered. It had been planned before the pandemic so they were glad to finally have it happen. I learned lots, enjoyed the hospitality of wonderful hosts, and met interesting fellow ambassadors. Overall the journey was a great experience and I would recommend it to others.

Contributed by Susan Finlay

Safe Travel for Seniors

Good news: Covid travel restrictions have been lifted and once again we are able to travel. Bad news: Covid is still prevalent in most parts of the world. It is particularly important for older people who are more vulnerable to infection to exercise caution.

What can we as seniors do to lower our risk?

- Make sure you are fully vaccinated before leaving the country.
- Choose to travel in areas with high vaccination rates and low Covid rates.
- Wherever possible take direct flights.
- Bring a supply of K95 or N95 masks and hand sanitizer with you.
- Wear a mask when you are indoors in public places, and try to keep your mask on as much as possible during the flight.

With increased travel comes flight delays, cancellations and lost luggage. I only travel with a carry-on size bag and a backpack so I don't have to worry about lost luggage.

Your travel plans could be delayed or altered if you or your companions develop Covid. Check with your travel health insurance provider to see what coverage you have for Covid-related problems. You may wish to buy additional insurance.

Anyone travelling on flights over four hours can be at risk for DVT (deep vein thrombosis or blood clots). The longer you are immobile the greater your risk for developing blood clots. This risk increases after age 40, and if you have injured yourself. If you notice pain or swelling in your leg or painful or difficult breathing, seek medical attention.

You can reduce your risk of getting a blood clot by moving your legs frequently and exercising your calf muscles. I try to get up and move around every hour. It helps if you or your partner can get an aisle seat. I always wear compression stockings on a flight of four hours or more. Consult with your doctor for their recommendations. They can give you a prescription for compression stockings.

In Memoriam

June Adair

I am sad to announce the passing of my sister and former FFM member June Adair. For the past four years June fought thyroid cancer with courage and determination, losing that battle on August 21.

June was a member from 2003 to 2013 and enjoyed our monthly meetings, making many new friends with our members. June participated in all our local activities and Inbound Exchanges/Journeys. She and husband Tom joined the Outbound Exchange to Australia and New Zealand in 2004. They continued their journey to travel to Perth to visit with Tom's sister and family and relayed many stories of Western Australia, on the Indian Ocean, providing interest in many of us to explore that area. No Friendship Force clubs were in that area at the time.

I have many memories to cherish and will miss June, her love, and her warm and caring personality.

Contributed by Barbara Main

Stay hydrated and avoid alcohol or caffeine. Also, avoid taking sedatives or sleeping pills so you won't sleep in a cramped position for too long.

If you are taking medications, make a list of all prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and supplements you take, including the dose, what time you take the medications, and what they are for. Have your healthcare provider's contact information in writing as well.

Contributed by Lynda Walker with Gail Keeley

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 Canada website friendshipforce.ca

FF International Go to friendshipforce.org for up-to-date information. My.friendshipforce.org gives you access to the latest new messages and allows you to pay journey fees.

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.

Editorial

As most of you know, my husband Howard Curle passed away in August. Howard occasionally accompanied me to meetings and always enjoyed them. The members of FF Manitoba have been caring and considerate in so many ways. I thank you all for your cards and your thoughtful words. Your kindness has made this difficult time a little easier to get through.



*Bev Phillips and Howard Curle
7at World Friendship Day in March 2022
(Photo by Kiyoko Kent)*

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue, and to Gail Keeley for coordinating the content. We have a wealth of experience in our club and it's a pleasure to share it with our members.

Have wonderful holiday season, and enjoy every moment with family and friends.

Bev Phillips

