



SILVER LIGHTS CLUB

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR HYDRO
A Nalcor Energy Company

President's Message

How a Bad Act Evolved into Something Good.

It all began during one of our Silver Lights executive meetings. Cindy, our vice president, was outraged that someone could and did steal the childrens' toys that the Salvation Army in Conception Bay South (CBS) had acquired as Christmas presents. We all agreed it was terrible and something had to be done. Yes, someone had to do something and it would be us. It started as a \$500 donation to the Salvation Army in CBS. A lively discussion followed. Why stop there? Vern, our Treasurer, made a motion that we up the ante to \$2000. The motion was passed. Reg suggested that we not put all our fish in one barrel so to speak. It was agreed that four donations of \$500 was respectable, so now we had to boil down all of our suggestions to another three charities.

City council in St. John's had recently refused to donate \$5000 to Daffodil Place for cancer patients because their request was deemed to be an operating expense and not a capital expense. So we decided to give them some money in spite of City Hall.

Next in the news was the Gathering Place which had just undergone a major renovation and expansion. They serve a hot meal to between 140 to 175 people-in-need from Monday to Friday. The need was apparent so we added them to our list.

So much for the St. John's area, what about the other parts of the province? Who fit that bill especially around Christmas? It seemed to us that the annual turkey drive by

CBC for the Community Food Sharing Association fit the bill, so we arranged with Eg Walters to accept our \$500 donation.

Now we had our four organizations for a total donation amounting to \$2,000. Not bad right! But wait it gets better. The concept of leverage was upon us, so we decided to approach Nalcor to match our donations. Aime Eigloliorte, our liaison contact in Nalcor's corporate communications department, confirmed the proposal was agreed to. Nalcor's contribution however was not communicated to the four charities when I arranged to make the presentation of our cheque. During each of the presentations, I explained the connection between Silver Lights and Nalcor, and then the matching cheque was revealed to their surprise and appreciation.

The following letter was read and given to each of the charities we visited:

*Silver Lights
Nalcor Energy
500 Columbus Drive
St. John's, NL.
A1B 0C9*

November 2014

Dear Sir;

The executive members of the Silver Lights Club, on behalf of our 900 members, are pleased to donate an amount of \$500 to your organization. Membership in our social club consists of retirees and employees of the Nalcor group of Companies who have achieved 25 years of employment service.

We approached Nalcor to provide some

leverage to our offer and the corporation has agreed to match our donation to you.

Our social club distributes a quarterly newsletter to roughly 900 members and as such would appreciate your consent to including a photo of your representative receiving our gift.

Yours truly,

*Gerry Bowers
President
722-6471
gcb2855@yahoo.com*

Other executives include:

*Cindy Morgan, Vice President
Denis Jones, Past President
Reg White, Ex Officio
Vern Penney, Secretary Treasurer
Janet Calver, Newsletter Editor*

Editor's Message

Janet Calver

What do you think of our winter so far? I love it, but for the snow enthusiasts it's been dismal for sure. As I look out our windows, the gardens and lawn are still snow free and although the lack of snow certainly makes it easy to get around, I have to admit I missed the white stuff on Christmas Eve. The outdoor Christmas lights and decorations look

beautiful but they really need that little bit of snow to make them twinkle. I'm sure we'll get several good dumps of snow before long, so don't despair snow-lovers!

By the time you read this newsletter, Christmas of 2014 will have come and gone and we'll be looking forward to a brand new year, 2015. I think back to when we were kids growing up and the fun we used to have around the Christmas season - the wonder of the decorated Christmas tree, the excitement of Santa Claus, the yummy turkey dinner, the visits of friends and family, and just the silly little special things you would do only at Christmas time. I guess as we get older we tend to appreciate those memories more and more and realize that it's not the presents that matter most but the people in your life. As you read our Christmas newsletter, I hope you'll carry that thought with you.

Ken is back!! I was thrilled when he said he would write a column for our Christmas newsletter. He has such great stories to tell of life in Rencontre West, especially around Christmas. It's a wonderful read! As Gerry mentioned in his President's message, the Silver Lights club, on your behalf, made several donations to help out those who need it the most. We have some pictures of the cheque presentations to share with you. Keeping in the Christmas spirit, we have a Christmas story - one that most of us can relate to - and an archive article, compliments of Dr. Hans Rollman, on a Moravian Christmas in Labrador. This is a fascinating article and well worth the read!

We have new 25-year club members and of course new retirees! Congratulations to all!

For those of you planning a vacation in 2015 or an extended stay down south over the next few months, you might want to check out the article on travel insurance from the Travel Health Insurance Association of Canada.

And of course, there has to be some fun and games in everyone's life, so check out the Christmas song picture game and see how many you can guess.

As 2014 comes to a close, we have much to be thankful for - health and friends being right at the top! I want to say a special Thank-you to everyone who helped me throughout the past year putting our newsletters together: our contributors, Nalcor HR, (yes, that's you Kelsey!), our executive - Gerry, Cindy, Dennis, Reg and Vern - who always support me (even when I'm late!) and to you, our members and readers for taking the time to read the newsletter and support our different activities throughout the year. A toast to you, your families and to 2015! May there be many special memories made and cherished!

SilverLights News

Out and About with Ken Ball

Remembering Christmas

This is not my idea to write something to entertain you, although I know good writing always does. I'm doing this as a favour to Janet Calver, our Silver Lights Newsletter Editor who felt you needed something classical to perk you up. Janet felt I was just the tonic you needed and I have two loyal fans out there I wanted to please. If you got a gripe, you call Janet, but you can call me if you just want to chat about our Hydro days together and I'd love to know what each of you are doing these days.

Here goes!

First, let me set you straight to what Christmas actually was during my time growing up in Rencontre West. It was a time for celebrating the birth of Christ and it went from December 25th to January 6th. It was much different from our present day Christmas that starts around November 1st to January 2nd.

Of course I'm talking about life before Walmart and Canadian Tire, Rudolph, Charlie Brown or the Grinch. In my time, Santa was "King of all the Children" and never was his existence questioned.. To us kids he was the fat old man in the red suit who came to your house on Christmas Eve.

Preparing for Christmas was half the fun. The men from up-along were home and the fisherman had their dories moored. The

dories would not be used for the full 12 days of Christmas and the fishermen only got aboard their dories to scoop out the water.

These hardworking men now had some leisure time on their hands after the water buckets and coal scuttles were full and the wood chopped. There was a little time for having an odd nip of grog during the days and nights before Christmas.

Women were busy in the kitchen baking up the traditional grub. This consisted of dark and light boiled fruit cakes. These were the first to be baked because they could be kept longer. Remember, we had no refrigerators.

Later on before Christmas day, lady fingers, jam jams, lassy buns, sweet bread and all kinds of cookies, whose names have long since been removed from my memory. But they were some good!

The eggs that mother used for baking were kept in flour in the flour barrel in the hall so they wouldn't freeze. We had a stove in the kitchen to heat our house and a fancy stove in the inside place that was never lit so we had to keep the eggs from freezing and the flour was the best place. They were hand washed from the hens before going in the flour. We were not that stun that we would spoil our winter's flour.

More than once I had to break ice in the bucket to get water for a friend who needed a drink and neither one of the clubs in Rencontre was open. Clubs ha! We were not in Hr. Buffett!

The other staples in our house every Christmas that I recall were caribou head brawn, blood pudding and blueberry wine, wild berry jam of every description and lots

of dry salt cod.

On Christmas Eve, mom baked her apricot and partridgeberry and lemon pies. Our figgy pudding was boiled with the jiggs dinner. We did not call it jiggs dinner. In those days it was just cabbage, tadies, turnip and figgy pudding. I guess it was too long to say that carrots, parsnips, salt pork and beef made up the meal - this part was just taken for granted.

I don't ever remember having turkey cooked for Christmas; it was usually a hen, mutton or wild meat. I guess before we moved from Rencontre we may have had turkey or chicke. (By now they were no longer referred to as hens. See how far I've come!)

There were now 2 things left in the planning: get our Lodge Times (Dance and Soup Supper) planned and get the Christmas tree.

Planning meetings were held in November, when menus were planned and tasks were assigned.

The coal had to be brought to the Lodge, a barrel of water brought from the brook, somebody assigned to light the lamps and fire on Time night, and somebody had to get the fiddler. We always danced to accordion music. This may not sound too important but it was vital. Can you imagine women and children coming to the Lodge and no lamps or fire lit and nobody to play for the dances?

Meals in the SUF Lodge were served from a kitchen built off from the dance floor. Man, the soup that was served!! Everything from mutton, caribou, fresh beef and some we couldn't identify but all was mighty tasty. You got a cup of tea and some cake and cook-

ies on the table and that made up your 25 cent meal.

The Christmas tree was usually cut in the woods known as Greepsnest, this was approximately 2 miles from the harbour and had to be dragged all the way home. Some years on Christmas morning we had a pretty rough looking tree by today's standards but to us it was terrific. We didn't have any lights on the tree and presents under the tree were scarce, but to us as children Santy Clause had come and we were truly blessed.

The houses were decorated, inside only, and the tree trimmed on Christmas or Tipps Eve. The floors had to be scrubbed and waxed in anticipation of the Christmas Eve visitors, who consisted of 15-20, three-parts drunk, young and old men! They came, exchanged greetings, sang a few songs, told stories of Christmas past, had a couple of drinks, usually all from the same glass, and went next door.

It was then that the lady of the house went to work mopping and cleaning in anticipation of the next batch. No boots were ever removed no matter the snow, rocks or mud. It was Christmas and nothing could dull the Christmas spirit.

There is one last reminder of my Christmases in Rencontre. That was the Christmas grog. We were lucky, we lived only 28 miles by sea from Miquelon, so cheap French liquor was very easy to come by. We bought cans of alcohol, cases of rum and Cassis (pronounced locally as Cassey). We always had a keg of homemade beer and bottles of wine. There are a few funny stories associated with drinking home brew.

I recall two such stories that happened in Rencontre and Parsons Hr. where Sam Stickland and Jerry Wells both drank beer from a barrel that a kitten had drowned in. This happened when the kitten jumped on the white cloth that covered the beer and the cat and cloth both went in the barrel. It only enhanced the flavour!

I won't go into too much detail here because I have in recent years given you the total picture and I'm sure you remember every word I've written.

Looking back on those glorious days I have often wondered about the drinking aspect of Christmas. I have seen and been part of going from door to door and having several drinks. I can recall clearly a 26 oz. bottle of rum being put on the table and after all the men had their drinks the bottle would still be three parts full. I sometimes think that we were not drunk on liquor but the true spirit of Christmas. Old friends and acquaintances were together for the first time since the previous Christmas and the joy of just being home was something really special to us all.

To make a bit of money for the Lodge, tickets were sold for 5 cents each, auctions were held on fruit cakes and such and some years they went around the Harbour selling chances on a "guess" cake. This was a cake baked and an object placed under the cake. You paid your 25 cents and if you guessed the object you won the cake. Only one year I recall the cake didn't go and that was the year they had a Pie Ducks Bill as the mystery item. I can't understand why it wasn't guessed. Can you?

I will finish with this; we were so beat out after 12 days and nights of partying, dancing

and mummering that we were in a state of sorrow and relief that another Christmas had come and gone!

I want to wish my hoard of readers, all 2 of you, and all Hydro employees and their families a very joyous, safe Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please remember all the safe things Hydro taught you and don't do anything you could regret.

Pleasant Surprise for Gerry Bowers

Gerry didn't tell you everything in his President's Message. He failed to mention that he won \$500.00 from HB Group Insurance in the Fall. Yes, \$500.00 a nice little sum indeed! Gerry has his insurance with the Co-operators, like a good number of people from Nalcor. But what he didn't know, and a lot of us don't know, is that if you call the Co-operators or go online and get a quote for auto or home insurance, your name is automatically entered to win one of four quarterly prizes of \$500.00 (in the Atlantic region) and a grand prize of \$15,000.00 (awarded nationally, once a year). Who knew? Anne Smith from the co-operators, said that this was started way back in 1986 by Don Barrett. Anne also said that the quarterly winners of the \$500.00 cash prize for 2014 included 3 Nalcor employees, one of which was Gerry! Congratulations and good luck to the rest of you out there who are currently in the running!



Gerry receiving his \$500 cheque from the Co-operators



Canadian Cancer Society Cheque Presentation Nicole Penney accepts a \$1000.00 cheque from members of Silver Lights and the Nalcor Group of Companies (left to right: Dennis Jones, Past President, Silver Lights; Reg White, Ex Officio, Silver Lights; Nicole Penney, Canadian Cancer Society; Gerry Bowers, President, Silver Lights, Vern Penney, Treasurer, Silver Lights)

Donations

As you all know, two of our fall and winter activities were not able to go ahead this year for one reason or another. The Team Gushue Highway Cleanup was cancelled because of lack of development of new safety protocols for volunteer workers and Silver Lights participation in several Santa Claus parades had to be cancelled because we could not find adequate facilities to build our Christmas float. To say the least, it was a bit of a downer for the executive. If you read Gerry's President's Message, you know exactly what we did to revive some of that good old-fashioned Christmas spirit.

Below, are some pictures taken during the different cheque presentations. Share the moment with us!



Community Food Sharing Association
Cheque Presentation Eg Walters accepts
two cheques, \$500.00 each, from members
of Silver Lights and the Nalcor Group of
Companies (left to right: Gerry Bowers,
President, Silver Lights, Eg Walters,
Community Food Sharing Association;
Vern Penney, Treasurer, Silver Lights,
Reg White, Ex Officio, Silver Lights)



The Gathering Place Cheque
Presentation Sister Charlotte accepts two
cheques, \$500.00 each, from members of
Silver Lights and the Nalcor Group of
Companies (left to right: Dennis Jones,
Past President, Silver Lights; Reg White,
Ex Officio, Silver Lights; Sister Charlotte,
The Gathering Place; Gerry Bowers,
President, Silver Lights; Vern Penney,
Treasurer, Silver Lights)



Salvation Army Conception Bay South
Cheque Presentation Captain Lorne
Pritchett accepts two cheques, \$500.00
each, from members of Silver Lights and
the Nalcor Group of Companies (left to
right: Vern Penney, Treasurer Silver
Lights; Captain Lorne Pritchett,
Salvation Army, CBS; Cindy Morgan,
Vice President, Silver Lights; Gerry
Bowers, President, Silver Lights)

Fall Trip 2015

It's never too early to plan for a trip and that's exactly what we are doing. Next year, 2015, the Silver Lights executive is planning to organize a trip in early September to the Great Northern Peninsula around the Gros Morne area. We need your help. We are looking for input on places to stay for a few days and activities that would be of interest to our members. Where have you stayed while in or around Gros Morne? What hiking trails did you try? What activities and other attrac-

tions were of interest to you? This is such a spectacular area of our province and we're sure that this will be a trip to remember!

Contact any of the Silver Lights executive with your ideas.

Volunteer Drivers for Canadian Cancer Society

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that Nalcor would like to partner with us to provide transportation for cancer patients requiring treatment in the St. John's area. Although response was encouraging, the numbers required to make it work were just not enough. But all is not lost for those who wanted to volunteer. The Canadian Cancer Society is more than happy to have individuals apply on their own to become drivers. All that you have to do is either go to their website and fill out the form online or else download the pdf file from their website, fill it out and return it to the Society at Daffodil Place, Ropewalk Lane. If you become a driver, your name goes on "the list". Whenever a patient needs a drive, someone from the society will start calling people on the list until a driver is found. If you are not available on a particular day, all you have to do is say so and they'll try you next time.

For more information, please have a look at the following website: <http://www.cancer.ca/en/get-involved/volunteering/ways-to-volunteer/drive-people-nl/?region=nl>

Blackberries for Sale

Hydro has upgraded its cell phone system, and has given the Silver Lights club the old phones to dispose of. These phones are all Blackberries, and all have a hardware keyboard. All phones are unlocked, and have been cleaned, tested, and have working batteries. The most recent phones are Blackberry Bold 9900, Blackberry Torch 9800 and Blackberry Torch 9810, all with touch screens. These are available for \$50. The 9900 is available from the Blackberry website <http://shop.blackberry.com> for \$430, so the \$50 is a pretty good bargain. The remainder of the phones are slightly older, slightly smaller and do not have touch screens. These are selling for \$40.

All phones will need a SIM (Subscriber Identity Module)card with a payment plan to activate. If you're only an occasional user, you can get a prepaid plan from Bell for as low as \$100/year. Since these phones are unlocked, they're also good for travellers. In most places, you can buy a local SIM card at your destination, and avoid roaming and long distance charges while on holiday..

These phones are an excellent bargain for our members. If you are interested in acquiring a phone, please contact the Silver Lights office or one of the executive.

Congratulations to all!

Patricia Thornhill	Hydro Place
Arthur Weir	Little Bay Islands
Robert Hickman	Bishop's Falls
Maxwell Brown	Cartwright
Ivan Budden	Sops Arm
Lynn Snelgrove	Hydro Place
Glen Adams	Hydro Place
Terrance O'Rielly	Hydro Place
Catherine Penney	Bishop's Falls
Ronald Wade	Happy Valley
Dean Chaulk	Makkovik
Robert Curnew	Stephenville

25 Year Club

Below are the names of the employees who have joined the ranks of the 25 Year Club.

Everyday Life

The First Christmas

Nain 1771

Christmas From the Archives

Every year for our Christmas newsletter, I try to include an article from times past. For me, it's a way of grounding myself again amidst all the hussle and bussle of our commercialized Christmas and re-focusing on what's really important - family, friends, traditions, music, food, laughter. I've come to appreciate that you don't need a lot of "stuff" around you to enjoy Christmas and checking out Christmas from the past only reinforces that thought. I was fortunate to take in a presentation by Dr. Hans Rollman, at the Rooms in early December. Dr. Rollman is a Professor of Religious Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He talked about Moravian Christmases in Labrador. It was absolutely fascinating! Moravians, members of the oldest Protestant Church, came to Labrador from various parts of Europe more than 200 years ago. They brought their traditions and customs with them. Dr. Hans Rollman has done extensive research on the Moravians and he agreed to let me share some of his writings and pictures with you. I know this will give you a better insight into what Christmas was like in Labrador in the 1700's. Thank-you Dr. Rollman! Enjoy!



Nain, Labrador (Courtesy Hans Rollman)

The temperature has fallen to 36 below and the wind howls along the palisades, yet inside the sturdy wooden building fourteen Moravians thank their Lord for the warmth of Christmas. The little band - six Germans, four Danes, and four Britons, including three women - is celebrating its first Christmas Eve at Nain, having arrived in the bay in August of 1771. In haste they built their mission house. One Inuit, Manuina, settled near the Europeans with his two wives and three children, but the family is presently in Aupaluktuk with his brother-in-law in search of whales.

Alternating between German and English, the Moravians sing familiar Christmas hymns, but also remember Christ's crucifixion, the two focal points of their piety. Jens Haven, the Danish carpenter, sings with fervour. Once a missionary in Greenland, he has kept alive the idea of a Labrador mission after a first effort in 1752 by Johann Christian Erhardt failed. Now he has become the driving force behind the settlement in Nain after three previous explorations. Next to

him stands his wife, Mary Butterworth, a good-natured Yorkshire woman who joined the Moravians at Fulneck. She married “little Jens,” as he is affectionately known among the Inuit, in May, only a month before their departure for Labrador. Tonight, the Christmas story with the child in the manger resonates with a special meaning for this Mary in Labrador. While she sings, she feels the movement of her first child within her. John Benjamin will be born in February 1772 and will later follow in his parents’ footsteps as a missionary.

Superintendent Christoph Brasen, a Danish barber surgeon married to an Alsatian wife, records this first Christmas Eve service in the Nain diary. “We offered Him our poor and sinful hearts including life and soul,” he writes, “to serve him willingly and stand at his command, whatever he wants to use us for in this rough and cold land.” He only regrets that Manuina and his family cannot be with them. He knows that song and celebration are much more effective in communicating the Moravian religious message than their theology or doctrine. He also knows that Manuina loves to sing about the Christ child.

While they now sing in unison with their brothers and sisters, in three years time the superintendent and Gottfried Lehmann, a weaver from Saxony, will no longer be with their brethren. The two will perish when their sloop founders north of Nain on an exploration journey to establish a northern missionary outpost, the future Okak. Okak in turn will be devastated by the Spanish influenza epidemic in 1918 and disappear as a

community. Only the rhubarb is still a silent witness to the Moravian presence.

On Christmas Day, Larsen Drachardt preaches a sermon about the little child in the manger who was also God. In the sermon, the 60-year-old theologian revisits his childhood days in Denmark and reflects perhaps about his later life as a journey in grace, especially the Lutheran missionary service in Greenland that changed his life forever. In Greenland, Drachardt learned the language of the Inuit during his twelve-year stay and eventually became a Moravian. After a mystical experience of Christ’s presence in Greenland, he later joined Jens Haven on two of his exploratory journeys to Labrador. In 1765, he interpreted for Governor Palliser at Chateau Bay, becoming a bridge between the Europeans and Inuit.

The third day of Christmas is celebrated with joy and solemnity. The temperature has now fallen to 40 degrees below zero. At dusk when the Europeans sit together, reminiscing and reading, they are suddenly startled by a loud scream from outside. The dogs start barking furiously. When they run to see what has disrupted the quiet of their holiday evening, they discover Manuina, their Inuit neighbour. Fearing the dogs that run in front of the palisades, he wields a large knife. He is alone, but his wives are not far behind. He has merely run ahead of them to arrive before it is too dark to be recognized outside. An hour later, the two women follow. Since it is so cold and the family has not lived in their dwelling near the station for some time, the Moravians prepare them sleeping quarters in the little hall of the mission building.

The Inuit also take part in the missionaries' evening service as well as in their morning blessing of 28 December. A deep bond unites European and Inuit during this first Christmas season. "We all feel a special love for the man and his family," Brasen writes in the communal diary, "and they definitely also trust us."

Okak 1776



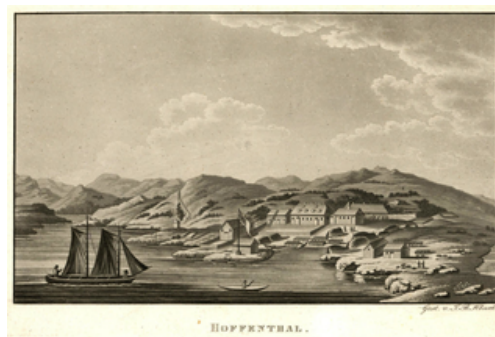
Okak, Labrador (Courtesy Hans Rollman)

The Okak Moravians celebrate their first Christmas Eve in 1776 with a so-called love feast, a simple shared meal amidst singing and prayers, restoring an early Christian practice adopted also by the Methodists, who celebrate lovefeasts in the 1770s in Conception Bay. Jens Haven, who is part of the first Christmas at Okak, writes in the diary that they keep a night watch and pray to the child in the manger in front of his creche. Similar religious celebrations continue the next day, Christmas.

The Okak diary records the mixed feelings of solidarity and isolation of those labouring in such a remote location. The nearby Inuit visitors are also told the good news of Christmas, a message to be repeated the follow-

ing days at nearby Uvibak and Kivertlok by Haven and Johann Ludwig Beck, a missionary with Greenland experience who joined the Moravians in Labrador in 1773.

Hopedale 1782



Hopedale, Labrador (Courtesy Hans Rollman)

Hopedale celebrates its first Christmas in 1782. At this station south of Nain, the children are the centre of the Christmas Eve festivities. Thirty-three of them meet and are read the story of Jesus birth. Each child is given some bread as a gift. Afterwards they are also shown a nativity scene and a representation of the crucifixion. The children and mothers are particularly drawn to these artistic images. Later, the Europeans celebrate a love feast and pray in front of the nativity scene and - according to Haven, their chronicler - welcome the dear child and ask him to come into their midst and remain with them. Christmas Day is spent in praise of the incarnation and with thanks that Jesus has come as their brother.

On 26 December, the good news story of

Christmas is recounted to the Inuit, but here the diary reveals the difficulties of the entire missionary enterprise. The drama in the encounter of the two cultures - European and Aboriginal - can still be sensed in the casual remark of Jens Haven, who feels that communicating the message of the saviour's birth "is not as easy to make clear as one would wish." Today Moravians retain their distinctive Christmas celebrations and remain a mission-oriented church, although Labrador Moravians are now administratively on their own.

Today Moravians also think of missions somewhat differently, emphasizing the need to change society not from without but from within. In the words of a Moravian from Africa during a recent conference on missions: "The example of the Apostle Paul who became 'to the Jews a Jew and to the Greeks a Greek,' deserves repeating more now than ever before."



Map of Moravian Settlements (Courtesy Hans Rollman)



Christmas Eve Service (Courtesy Hans Rollman)



Christmas in Labrador (Courtesy Hans Rollman)

Christmas Story

Last year, I printed a story by Rev. J.S.S. Armour, from a book he wrote in 1999, called "Twelve Tales for Christmas". Last year, the story was about, "Miss Burry's Christmas Dinner". This year, I have another story for you - "The Ghosts of Christmas Past". I

hope you enjoy it!

(Printed with permission of Rev. J.S.S. Armour. 199 The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul; ISBN 0-9685857-0-1)

The Ghosts of Christmas Past

The first ghost to visit Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" was the Ghost of Christmas Past. The scenes he invoked were, for the most part, happy ones when Scrooge was a young man, and when Christmas was the happiest day of the year, as it should be. I offer you some scenes from Christmas Past - personal reminiscences when my children were young - an incredibly hectic but wonderfully happy time of my life. Christmas is busy everywhere, but perhaps even more so in a manse - a minister's home.

On the day before Christmas, my wife, for some strange reason, felt that she could get on faster if there were no small children under her foot, and so my job was to put the kids into the car, and together with every other motorist in the city where we lived, deliver Christmas presents.

It was always a great day in and out of homes, admiring the Christmas tree, sampling the Christmas baking, laughing, talking, then bundling up the kids again, and with loud shouts of "Merry Christmas!" returning to the car.

Many of these visits were to elderly parishioners and shut-ins, for whom the church had arranged some small gift. And what a welcome we received particularly the children! It has never failed to amaze me that it is always the very old and the very young who get on best together.

It was a full afternoon and I returned confident that the children were ready to drop, but somehow the thought that Santa was on his way perked them up enormously. The children received a bath, and then clad in their pyjamas, carefully inspected the fireplace, hung up their stockings (several times) and after a few garbled prayers, addressed more to Santa Claus than to God, reluctantly went to bed, and against their most fervent wish, fell asleep.

It has always amazed me how many presents still have to be wrapped on Christmas Eve, and someone else always has the scotch tape!

Then, off to church for the midnight service. Strange, it is always snowing in my memory, although I know it seldom was. The little church was lit with over one hundred candles, and in those days you were allowed to bring real boughs and trees into the church, which the Scouts had cut in the woods just days before. The church was always crowded with sons and daughters home for the holidays.

When I think of Christmas Eve, it is the smell of candle wax and fresh evergreen that comes to mind, and the faint warm smell of good cheer from those who have stopped their partying to go to church. The quiet service with its familiar carols full of expectation and joy. I've always loved that magical moment when the bell rings out to herald the arrival of Christmas Day.

But the night is not over ... hurry home and go to the neighbour's and get the children's presents, stored in his garage, and be quick about it, for we must get to bed!

Alas, that is to forget (as we always did forget) that absolutely ideal tricycle, that perfect little table and chairs and that marvelous mechanical toy always came in a huge box, marked with words (never read until Christmas Eve) “easily assembled in your own home in a matter of minutes”.

These horrors came complete with instructions, roughly translated from the original Japanese, printed in light grey ink on tissue paper, with meaningless diagrams labelled A,B,C and D, and with lots of little plastic packages with screws, bolts, nuts, and washers - all with different names, all requiring a different screwdriver - many of them without any thread or discernible grooves at the top.

I think there is nothing so damaging to the Christmas spirit than to try to assemble such presents, sobbing with fatigue and frustration, often bleeding and swearing profusely at three o'clock on Christmas morning!

You finish, crawl into bed, turn over and then comes the cries: “Is it Christmas yet? Has Santa come? Can we go downstairs and see?”

How did we - how do any parents - survive?

And yet, you know, the happiest tiredness in the whole world is when you sit by the fire on Christmas night, watching a movie as old as Methuselah's goat - the house a complete shambles, the children blissfully asleep upstairs, after you have heard the words: “Thanks Mum. Thanks Dad. It was the bestest Christmas ever!”

Christmas is for children - your own or indeed any child. Anything you can do to make it happy for them must be seen as a labour of pure love, for it provides the stuff of wonder-

ful Christmases Past, which will sustain them later when the way gets steeper and the road rougher.

Happy Christmas to all boys and girls and to their parents; and to all for whom ‘memory holds the door’ this Christmastide.

Health & Wellness

Travel Insurance

We've all heard stories in the news of people who have been on vacation and have faced some unforeseen, unexpected illness. Now most of us will have some kind of travel insurance when we head off for that special trip or that vacation in the sun. But is your travel insurance adequate? The Travel Health Insurance Association of Canada has some pointers you might want to read before you take off in order to protect yourself and your family should the unexpected happen. Here they are.

What is travel insurance?

Travel insurance protects you in case of unexpected medical emergencies and related expenses that may happen while you are traveling outside your home province or country.

What does travel insurance cover?

Travel insurance plans are offered by many different insurance companies in Canada. They provide a variety of coverage, price and benefit options to a wide range of travelers.

Typical emergency medical services:

- Hospital care related to drug and diagnostic services;
- Outpatient services;
- Physician and laboratory costs;
- Prescription drugs;
- Direct payment to the hospitals and doctors caring for you;
- Assistance with bringing a family member to your bedside;
- Air ambulance or commercial repatriation home;
- Return of your vehicle if you are ill and have to come home.

What are the most important things I need to know?

Pre-existing medical conditions

Travel insurance policies, including those providing protection for unexpected medical costs, trip cancellation or trip interruption may cover claims relating to pre-existing conditions that are stable and controlled. It is essential to review your policy and understand how it defines pre-existing conditions and terms such as treatment and stable as they relate to your personal medical history.

Insurance companies may define these terms differently, but generally they will not cover conditions or symptoms that have, within a certain time frame prior to your departure:

- deteriorated or become more frequent;
- been treated by a medical professional;
- required change of medication type or dosage;

- been recommended for consultations or tests.

If you have any doubts about changes you may have experienced during these time frames, or don't understand terminology in the policy or your medical application for insurance, check with your doctor and insurance advisor.

Some policies will require you to declare all of your medical conditions and medications.

Others will define the eligibility criteria required for coverage. It's important that you understand your medical status and report it correctly to the insurance company as that information is used to determine your coverage and your premium. Be aware that if there are any changes in your medical status between the time you buy the policy and leave on your trip, you need to notify the insurance company as this may affect your eligibility and your rate. Remember, if you provide inaccurate or incomplete answers to the questions, your claim can be denied even if the question that is answered incorrectly is not related to the cause of the claim.

Eligibility, exclusions and limitations

All travel policies define their requirements for eligibility. They also have limits on benefits and maximum amounts for certain types of claims, such as trip cancellation or certain health conditions, including pregnancy-related conditions may not be covered or may be limited.

Claims generated by activities such as sky-diving, bungee jumping, alcohol or drug

abuse may also not be payable. It's important you read and understand the exclusions and limitations, as travel insurance covers unexpected emergencies only. It is not a substitute for your provincial health insurance.

Why do I need it?

Your provincial government health plan pays for only a very small portion of medical expenses incurred outside of Canada. Costs for medical care in the US and many places around the world can be very expensive. Travel insurance helps take care of you and your family and can protect your finances. Whether you're a cross-border shopper, business traveller, back-packer, snowbird or family on vacation, emergencies can happen at any time. From assistance if you're sick or stranded, to a trip cancelled as a result of volcanoes or earthquakes, travel insurance is a necessity and you should not leave home without it. Travel insurance is supported 24/7 emergency medical assistance. Specialists can help you navigate health care services outside of Canada and guide you in seeking and receiving proper treatment. Travel insurance provides peace of mind and if something unexpected happens, you will have someone to turn to for help.

Travel Health Insurance Association of Canada (THIA) is the national organization representing insurers, underwriters, reinsurers, emergency assistance companies, air ambulance companies and allied services in the travel insurance field. THIA is the leading voice for the travel insurance industry in Canada, working together for the pro-

tection of the travelling Canadian.

For more information on travel insurance plans, limitations, exclusions and how to make a claim, visit the Consumer Corner at www.thiaonline.com

NALCOR News

Retirees

The Silver Lights Executive would like to wish all our new retirees congratulations and all the best in your retirement!

Mike Flynn

Jul 8,1997-Hired as Maintenance Supervisor (temporary) in Thermal Generation

Mar 8,1999-Permanent appointment in position

Oct 31,2014-Retired

Bob Barnes

Nov 14,1977-Hired as Structural Design Engineer with Engineering Department, Projects Division

Sep 21,1979-Took a temporary assignment with Churchill Falls as Resident Engineer

Apr 1,1979-Took permanent position with CF(L) Co. as Civil Engineer

Sep 1,1982-Accepted position as Dyke Surveillance Engineer with Operations Division in St. John's

1988-Moved to Senior Civil Engineer Role

Jul 4,2006-Appointed to Manager, Engineering of Lower Churchill Project division in St. John's

Oct 31,2014-Retired on October 31, 2014

Clarence Way



Jul 24,1978-Hired as Line Worker Apprentice

Mar 14,1983-Permanent position as Line Worker A

Feb 19,2001-Promoted to Lines Supervisor

Benny Wells

Sep 16,1977-Hired as Lineman Apprentice in Churchill Falls

Feb 6,1989-Became Plant Operator

Oct 19,2009-Became temporary Senior Station Operator

Sep 10,2012-Promoted to Operations Supervisor

Dec 2014-Retired

Sherry McGrath



Dec 7,1992-Hired temporarily as Office Service Clerk

Sep 8,1997-Permanent Hire as Office Services Clerk with Administration Department

Apr 28,2014-Became Receptionist - Switchboard Operator

Oct 31,2014-Retired

Roger Smith



Mar 4,1985-Hired as Senior Systems Analyst
1989-Moved to Production & Maintenance Supervisor

1997-Became Superintendent of diesel systems

Mar 1,1000-Became Support Services Administrator (Labrador)

May 10,2004-Promoted to Support Services Supervisor

Feb 16,2010-Team Lead, Support Services

Dec 31,2014-Retired

Terry Bouzane



Mar 26,1979-Hired as Driver/Clerk in Bishop's Falls

May 1,1989-Became a General Maintenance A

Jul 17,2006-Hired as Materials Control Clerk

Dec 31,2014-Retired

Fred Clarke



Oct 19,1987-Hired as Assistant Chemist with Holyrood Thermal Generating Plant

Jun 3, 1996-Became Technologist - Chemical with Holyrood Thermal Generating Plant

Dec 31,2014-Retired

David Jarvis



Sep 8,1981-Hired as Technician I with PDD Operations in St. John's
Feb 17,1986-Became a Technologist in Happy Valley - Goose Bay
Nov 10,1986-Moved back to St. John's
May 25,1987-Became a Diesel and Distribution Technologist
Sep 30,1991-Became a Metering Technologist in St. John's
May 15,2000-Became a Customer Service Technologist
Jan 14,2008-Became Instrumentation Technician with Holyrood Thermal Generating Plant
Apr 2,2012-Became Instrumentation Supervisor with Holyrood Thermal Generating Plant
Dec 31,2014-Retired

William F. Snow



Jun 2,1980-Hired as Graduate Engineer
Jan 4,1982-Permanent position as Engineer (Telecontrol)
1989-Became a Software Engineer
1991-Became a Senior Systems Engineer
Feb 2,2000-Appointed to Team Leader, Generation & Transmission Applications (Software)
2003-Became a Project Leader
2006-Became a Telecontrol Engineer
Aug 23,2013-Became a Communication Engineer
Dec 31,2014-Retired

Catherine Heffernan-Harris

Jan 11,1982-Hired as Grocery Clerk/Cashier in Churchill Falls
Nov 24,1998-Became a Stock/Sales Clerk
Dec 31,2014-Retired

Baxter Pinsent



Apr 19,1983-Hired as Assistant TP Operator

Dec 28,1988-Became Thermal Plant Operator

Jan 25,2010-Became Lead Thermal Plant Operator

Nov 30,2014-Retired

Moira Allured

Nov 11,1997-Program Coordinator

Jun 23,2003-Summer Program Coordinator

Sep 1,2003-Water Safety Instructor

Sep 25,2006-Utility Worker

May 15,2007-Warehouse Worker

Dec 31,2014-Retired

The Lighter Side

Below, you'll find a series of pictures, each of which denotes a familiar Christmas carol. See how many you can guess! (Answers are found on Page 25)



Answers to Christmas Song Pictures

1. Jingle Bells
2. Walking in a Winter Wonderland
3. Santa Claus is Coming to Town
4. Joy to the World
5. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer
6. O' Come All Ye Faithful
7. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas
8. Oh, Christmas Tree
9. What Child is This?
10. We Three Kings
11. Deck the Halls
12. I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In
13. O' Holy Night
14. Noel
15. Away In a Manger
16. The Twelve Days of Christmas
17. I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
18. All I Want For Christmas is My Two Front Teeth
19. Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire
20. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
21. Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow!
22. Silent Night
23. O' Little Town of Bethlehem
24. Silver Bells

Contacting the Silver Lights Club

The Silver Lights Office is located on the second level of Hydro Place. Our telephone number is 709-737-1378. You can also contact the Executive directly:

President Gerry Bowers 722-6471
Vice President Cindy Morgan 744-3700
Ex Officio Reg White 368-5200
Past President Dennis Jones 368-2351
Secretary Treasurer Vern Penney 745-0705
Silver Lights Editor Janet Calver 745-1343
Silver Lights Fax: 737-1231
Silver Lights Email: silverlights@nlh.nl.ca



Best Wishes for a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from your Silver Lights Executive Team, your Editor and their Husbands and Wives! From left to right: Glenn Morgan, Reg White, Phyllis White, Patricia Jones, Dennis Jones, Linda Penney, Vern Penney, Brian Gamberg, Janet Calver, Heather Bowers, Gerry Bowers, Cindy Morgan

Membership Fees

We remind any of you who have not paid your Silver Lights Club Membership fees that we have converted to a one-time lifetime membership of \$80, less any fees paid previously. Please send your cheque to the Secretary Treasurer at the address indicated on the letterhead of this Newsletter.

Also Available!! Silver Lights members who are still active employees can now pay their fees through payroll deductions. If this is of interest to you, please contact the Silver Lights Office for a form to have the deductions started.

Club Service and Support

Part of our mandate is to support club members when needed. If you have a family member in hospital and would like us to visit, please give us a call. Visitations and other help is extended to all club members and their families, but it will be done on a family request basis only.