

The Canadian Templar



December 2014
Newsletter



News and Report from our Grand Prior

There has been much activity in our Order this fall, both locally and internationally. That continues with many of our Knights and Dames preparing to assist the needy as the season of greatest need is fast approaching. Be sure to get involved, the need is great and we can help.

The Priory of St James in Toronto had a very successful Investiture in September and I welcome the newest Knights and Dames into our Order. During the ceremony I installed Nick Migliore as their new Prior. I congratulate Prior Nick on his new appointment and wish him and his new leadership team all the best in their work. Newcomer Kim Derry is already making a positive contribution by giving a presentation on Human Trafficking, an important problem recognised by the UN and OSMTH. I am sure that if you are interested in this topic and want to help, please contact Sir Kim.



OSMTH was recently elected to the Board of CoNGO (Conference of Non Governmental Organisations). This body oversees and facilitates the over 500 NGOs at the United Nations. This is a very momentous occasion and a prestigious recognition of our

Order. HSH Prince Hans George zu Ysenburg and Budinggen , was chosen to sit on the Board as our Templar representative.

There was a good contingent of Canadians at the OSMTH International meetings in Bristol, a total of eight from Windsor, Toronto, and Ottawa. These meetings were probably one of the best and most productive we've had. Our Statutes and Regulations were brought up to date in order to meet our rapid growth and challenges. Perhaps tedious but nonetheless necessary and allows some framework for the Grand Priorities to follow. The next international meeting will be held in Tomar Portugal April 15-19, 2015. The meetings will be preceded by an optional 3 day spiritual retreat at the Templar Castle in Tomar starting Sunday April 12, led by our Vicar General, The Venerable Ronald Matthewman. Space for the retreat is limited so if you are interested contact me quickly for more details.

And finally, in the hustle and bustle of daily life and the wrappings of Christmas, I hope you are able to take time and quieten your heart and embrace the glory of Christmas. It is truly a wonderful time of the year and we are truly blessed. Theresa and I wish you and yours a very Blessed Christmas.

H.E. Commander (Ret'd) Peter L. Kelly CD, GCTJ,
Grand Prior of Canada

Editors Letter

There is of course an ongoing crisis in the Middle East and Africa with Christians still under threat. In past newsletters I've tried to provide educational articles on the conflicts and the main players which I hope have helped you to understand the issues and the tremendous threat Christians are under. At this special time of year I hope you'll offer up prayers for them and for those that are doing their very best to help bring sides together and especially those in our own order who are doing an outstanding job in very difficult circumstances.

If you wish to read past editions of the newsletter they can be download from the main OSMTH web site under the Member's Area. Copies can also be downloaded from <http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/kt.htm>

In this issue we bring you information on what is happening in our own Canadian Pories. International news in this issue is focused on happenings within the wider OSMTH order and our Chancellor has provided a report on the Bristol meeting. Have also included a feature on how to solve the Syrian situation which is well worth considering and included information on the Pope's visit to Turkey.

We have continued with the Canadian Update to bring you significant International news which in this issue means the recent visit to Canada by the French President and our Prime Minister's visit to China. I've also done a feature article on Oil prices and how it is likely to affect Canada and the rest of the world. Also reflected on the Ottawa terrorist attack.

Our History feature in this issue is about Fruit Farming in British Columbia and the efforts of a UK family to settle, purchase land and then get that land ready for the planting of fruit trees and all the adventures they have in the process. I've also provided a book about the role of Canadians in Flanders in WWI and a more light hearted book about a Christmas Party in which are a couple of Canadian stories.

I've also selected five YouTube videos that hopefully will educate and entertain you along with three short stories from a Knight in Windsor that have a moral to them. Of course we have added a little bit of humour to lighten your load.

To this have also added the story of the 'Last Post' and other contributions from our own Knights and Dames added to which I've included an article on the Canadian author of the famous poem "In Flanders Field".

Also added is a contribution from our own Vicar General and our Chancellors Corner.

As it's the Christmas season I included a children's story for the wee ones in your families and the video and songs below should put you in the mood.

Hope you all have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Canadian Jingle Bells
<http://youtu.be/yi8MRUMKatI>

Top 10 Canadian Christmas Songs
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fSgVI5LzoE&list=PL-yqalvjeh5zqqx1UQywNnysFH-cP2Hti>

Christmas Devotion - The Road to Bethlehem - 2014

By The Vicar General of OSMTH-I Archdeacon Ron Matthewman

On our way to Christmas 2014 let us examine our own spirituality, faith and devotion as it relates to our Christmas experience; because that is what Christmas is all about, the acceptance of God in our life.

In the prophecy of Isaiah Chapter 7 verse 14 we see these very familiar Pre-Christmas words "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son". The word "Behold" is key to our understanding of what Christmas is all about, it means "be aware". And we need to be aware this Christmas and at all times of what God has done and is doing, in the world, and in our life. Isn't that the problem of our time: So many people celebrate Christmas as a Season of the year, without being aware of what Christ's birth means to them in the present day.

After telling the people to "be aware" Isaiah goes on to tell us about the state of the world in his time, about the conditions of people, and why it was necessary for God to intervene in world affairs. Fast forward and we find ourselves in that same situation.

Isaiah is reminding people of all ages that God is not only the God who was, He is the God who is, and the God who is to come, the God of all time and space, our God. God waiting to be born in us.

Christmas begins by celebrating and thinking about times past; but we like Isaiah have to be very much aware of the conditions in our time, the conditions of our life, and what is going on all around us. Christmas 2014 is telling us that God, is seeking to be recognized as being with us in the here and now.

We have to be aware and know that God is seeking a place in the lives of people, in our life. We have to be persuaded and know that the recognition of God in our life can make a difference not only to us, but to the world

That is what Jesus is saying to us in Luke's Gospel Chapter 21 verse 8 "Look up, lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing night". Look above the nightmare through which the world is living at the present time and see what God is calling us to be and to do. In these Advent days before Christmas the world is pregnant with God waiting to be born and reborn into the hearts and minds of people, we are His maternity ward.

God did not, and is not coming into the world as a Political Leader, or a Philosopher from Academia, or a Military General to fight for our rights or to seek a solution: He came as a Saviour with the power to forgive and to restore – then he sent you to be a follower of Jesus, you are part of the plan to restore the world. This yearly celebration of Christ is all part of the plan to refuel your spirituality and response to God.

God's answer to the weakness of humanity was, and is, to enter the world weaker than the weak; so he comes in the form of an helpless child, to win the hearts and minds of people who can not only be loved, but who will love others. To love and to be loved, is the pattern of God - "God so loved the world that he gave Jesus to show us how to love. The power of and extent of God's love does not finish with a Christmas Gift; He goes on to Calvary's Crucifixion and Jerusalem's Resurrection. The power of God's love lives on forever, seeking to meet humanity at it's weakest, lowest point until his Kingdom is on earth as it is in heaven."

Christmas decorations and celebrations in the home, the town, and the world is more than a dress-up, it is a reminder that God is seeking to be acknowledged with us. The joy of Christmas is to show and share the amazing proclamation that with God all things are possible – and to see

yourself as God's greatest possibility.

The mission and mystery of Christmas for over two thousand years has been and is to show the world the 'Glory of God'. We are the manger of God's love in the world of our time.

How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far – it is within you.

Will we find a stable lit by a star, yes if you open your heart to God's love.

If we touch his tiny hand will he awake, will he know we have come from far just for his sake?

The answer is Yes if you are ready to receive Him.

A Blessed Christmas to all.

News from the Priory of Ascension of Our Lord, Windsor







Interfaith Symposium – Sunday, October 26, 2014
By Sir Norm King

Our annual Interfaith symposium was highly successful, with over 80 persons attending. We had informed and excellent presentations from representatives of seven traditions, with a lively and stimulating discussion. The seven traditions were First Nations, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh.

Our theme for this year was Violence and Non-Violence. Attention was drawn to the difference forms of violence, such as may occur on the personal level, as quite distinct from institutional or structural violence. Causes of violence, such as injustice, poverty, prejudice, fear, helplessness, and the like. There was an overall agreement that the heart of these traditions advocates non-violence, and seeks to find peaceful solutions to difficult issues.

A recent joint statement by a Jewish Rabbi and Muslim Imam states in part: “We urge our brothers and sisters in the Middle East to seek a solution that protects the self while fostering compassion for the other.” Perhaps the issue is best summed up by Martin Luther King: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

On Thursday, November 27, 2014, Norman King presented his annual lecture for the Assumption University Stephen Jarislowsky Chair. The talk focused upon the conviction of the worth, value, or sacredness of the human person, as a foundation for contributing to a vision of life, acceptable to all traditions and worldviews, that illumines and sustains the struggle to fashion a world in which personal integrity, human friendship, and social justice, are honoured and fostered.

Our Interfaith Group of Windsor and Essex County also meets monthly. Our next meeting, on January 21, 2015, will feature a presentation on Buddhist meditation. Fellow Knights and Dames are urged to support such activities, as part of our worldwide involvements, as exemplified by Evangelical Lutheran Bishop Munib Younan of Jordan and the Holy Land. Aside from our monthly meetings, you may wish to receive information about our group and reports of our meetings and other activities, or look at our Facebook page.



Prior Roy, Sir Terry Pearce, the Chancellor and Reverend Mike Rovers of Second Chance Ministry who is receiving the cheque.

This year has been a busy one. Many of our Knights and Dames and their spouses attended the Jordan River Project in January and made a presentation to the members of our Priory in March. We also had some of our members attend the Bristol England meetings. We held our second annual auction of The Knight Before Christmas and raised \$500 for the Welcome Centre (Women's Shelter).

Our annual Convent and Investiture, while somewhat smaller than in previous years, was nevertheless very successful and we invested three new Knights into our Priory and The Order.

I have received several requests for applications for membership so that shows that our members are committed to growing our Priory and we look forward to several more Knights and Dames being invested next November 07 2015.



Negotiations are happening to secure the dates for our dinner meetings which will happen in February, April and June of 2015. When we have settled on the dates you will receive confirmation of those dates. We try to have speakers talk to us about relevant subjects pertaining to our mission in the world, so please plan to attend.

As a heads-up to our Naval members we are trying to work in at least one Wednesday evening, which should give you an opportunity to attend.

To all Canadian and indeed all International members of the Order, My Wife and I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a New Year which surpasses all others!

Major (ret) Roy Embury CD, GOTJ,
Prior, Priory Of The Ascension Of Our Lord

News from St James Priory, Toronto

Dear Knights and Dames

This year marked the 10th Anniversary of the Priory of St James in Toronto. Our Investiture was well attended with over 80 Knights, Dames and Guests. A new Executive has taken over and we are committed to improving communication and organizing events to engage everyone.

The New Executive committee consists of the following;

The Treasurer, Chevalier Eugenio Bortoluzzi
The Chancellor, Chevalier George Jackowski
The Secretary, Chevalier Vince Nigro
The Inspector, Chevalier Neven Bozovic
The Registrar (membership), Chevalier Jerry Jackowski
Deputy Secretary General, Chevalier Stuart W. Ross
Grand Chancellor, Rev Nola Crewe

Please take note and try to attend the upcoming events:

Thursday December 11th Christmas Social at the RCMI (see invitation below).



Also...

Annual General Meeting
Monday January 19, 2015

form: 5:30pm to 6:30pm...AGM
followed by a
Templar History Presentation
by Sir Ed Rayment
Then to the bar for cocktails
RSVP
nick.migliore@Reillysecurity.com
Location RCMI
426 University Avenue

Also Chevalier Cesare Fazari (Chair of the Social) has confirmed and secured a date for our Templar Valentine Dinner Dance Social on Sat Feb 28th. Please "hold the date" for this event as a invite will follow soon. It will be at the <http://thecapitoleventtheatre.com/> The Capitol Event Theatre 2492 Yonge St Toronto, ON with the proceeds supporting the Holy Land.

As Prior I asked the Rev. Nola Crewe to create a special prayer for us at this special time of year which you can read below. I'd also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I hope to see you at our Christmas Social.

Sir Nick Migliore
Prior of St James Priory, Toronto.

A Christmas Templar Prayer

Holy Creator of All, at this most blessed time of year,
when we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child,
whom you sent to live and be one with us,
we turn to you and count our many blessings.

We give you thanks that we may worship you without fear;
that we are not alone, but ever in your care.
We give thanks for our families, our colleagues,
our friends and our communities,
and the gift of life in Canada.

And we give you thanks that you have brought us to be Templars to serve your Kingdom on Earth as defenders of our faith and our neighbours.

As those to whom so much has been given, we offer our love at this most joyous Christmas time, we offer our hearts that you may rule therein and we offer our souls that the Holy Spirit may ever guide us home to you. Ever shine Your light of life on us; help us to walk in it.

AMEN.



For the third time in three years 500 plus t-shirts which were not sold at various Relay for Life events, were collected by Knight Commander William Upper and delivered on behalf of the Priory of St. James to the Wells of Hope.

The Wells of Hope annually travel to remote villages in South America to drill and thus provide clean drinking water to the local residences. Simultaneously the t-shirts are distributed to the residences on our behalf.

“Together Let’s Stop Traffick’ is an anti-Human Trafficking initiative led by the IPTI (International Police Training Institute), supported by the FBI NAA (National Academy Associates) and hosted by the American Military University.



Sir Kim Derry, KTJ, Priory of St James, OSMTH, Co-chair, The IPTI (The International Training Institute); FBINAA Past President; Deputy Chief (Ret), Toronto Police Service. On November 10th he gave a presentation to our Knights and Dames on Human Trafficking at the Peach Gallery in Toronto

Sir Kim Derry joined the Toronto Police Service in 1973 and as Deputy Chief was in charge of Divisional Policing Command where he was responsible for 4,000 uniform officers assigned to the 17 Policing Divisions throughout the City of Toronto.

He holds a Certificate in Criminal Justice and Administration from Quantico–FBI Academy, University of Virginia and a Certificate in Police Leadership Program from the University of Toronto, Rotman School of Business Management. In 1994 he was awarded the Canadian Police Exemplary Service Medal for Meritorious Service to Policing and in 2002 was awarded the Chief of Police Award for Community Service. Sir Kim was invested as Knight of the Temple of Jerusalem, Priory of St James, OSMTH in September 2014.

Holiday Tree

Thanks to Sir Neven Božovic for sending in this article.

Apparently the White House referred to Christmas Trees as Holiday Trees for the first time this year which prompted CBS presenter, Steven Levy, to present this piece which I would like to share with you. I think it applies just as much to many countries as it does to America.

A little sanity please...

The following was written by Steven Levy and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary.

My confession:

I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from, that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat.

Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.

In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking.

In light of recent events... terrorists attack, school shootings, etc.. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found a few years ago) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school... The Bible says thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.

Then Dr. Steven Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about.. And we said okay.

Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves.

Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with 'WE REAP WHAT WE SOW.'

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and

workplace.

Are you laughing yet?

Funny how when you forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it.

Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.

Pass it on if you think it has merit.

If not, then just discard it... no one will know you did. But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in.

News from the Priory of Simon Peter, Ottawa

The fall has been a very busy season for the Priory of Simon Peter, both from the viewpoint of our long-term plans, but also for short-term activities. We are more than ever convinced that our support of Kiva, the small-loans operation, is 100% worthwhile. Its borrowers not only seem to have decided to make a living for themselves, but also to have committed themselves to undertake the necessary hard work. The reports we get are very special, and extraordinary credit must go to these entrepreneurs, in our case all women, from the Third World who work very hard but who apparently always have time to stay abreast of opportunities. See <http://www.kiva.org/about/how> for more information on how it works.

Our Hockey Knights project continues to grow, to the point where we have accumulated a fairly large amount of serviceable hockey equipment, more than anyone should be asked to keep in his garage, and are now actively seeking some way to get it stored in Ottawa, preferably in a location where we can use a table for sorting what we receive. One very positive move was the receipt recently of a list of the most needed equipment from the Beaufort Delta, which is the region of the Northwest Territories spanning the edge of the Beaufort Sea and the Mackenzie Delta at the Western opening of the Northwest Passage. It's possible, but not easy, to live further north than there and still be Canadian.....

We have asked the Canadian Forces, who have supported us in the past, for further assistance and are waiting anxiously to see what, if anything, they can do for us. In the meantime, we are searching for any unused space in Ottawa where we might be able to open up some of the boxes we now have to make a more efficient job of packing. If anyone out there can help, pls drop a line to our Prior, Bill Megill, at (613) 234-4825, or Brock Heilman, our team leader for the Hockey Knights, at (613) 884-2349.

We are in the process of developing two new charitable activities, one involving veterans and one involving homeless women. These will require our Knights and Dames to care for and support these very deserving people in activities that take place sporadically rather than as an "every week" task. This follows the pattern of our support for the Aphasia Centre of Ottawa, which turns on the task of providing food for their annual "Walk 'n Talk for Aphasia", which happens once a year and is always well supported by our Knights and Dames.

We are going to sponsor one of the resident units of the Perley Rideau Veterans' Health Centre in Ottawa. Three of our Knights and Dames have volunteered at the Centre and have undergone the necessary training. Chev Frank Garbutt, the Priory Secretary, is the team leader for the Perley Centre project, and is in touch with the Centre. More details in our next update.

Our other project is in the embryo stage, and negotiations are still ongoing with all concerned to clarify our tasks and activities in support of a homeless women's shelter in Ottawa. It would appear that they are well staffed except on weekends, and they need some help with providing food for the women on weekends. We are looking at taking our turn with a number of other charitable organisations in Ottawa to handle a part of the requirement. Once again, more details will doubtless be available in the next update.

The Priory of Simon Peter would like to take this opportunity to wish all other Knights and Dames of the Grand Priory of Canada a Merry Christmas, full of happiness and goodwill towards all people. May the New Year bring you joy and comfort, and give us all reason to continue to hope for peace in our world.

News from the Commandry of Edmonton

A warm greeting from your frozen Knights and Dame in the North:

We are currently mired in a -30+ cold snap, with that said we have also just wrapped up our Christmas party on Sat Nov 27 in which we had good cheer and some interested parties for the order. As always Ian MacDonald and Jocelyn King graciously offered up their house for the festivities.

We have had a light quarter these past few months as one of our major charitable efforts moved the date of their event to May mere weeks before our investiture but we are still engaging in this effort as it is a great cause and a high profile event for the order. I have included the charity STAR's Annual fund raiser here in Edmonton, An Uplifting Affair at www.anupliftingaffair.com. Should any one be interested in attending or supporting this cause please don't hesitate to contact us.

Outside of that we have also participated in a fall clean up at St Luke's Church (Joanne Neal's Home Church). They have graciously accepted us into their facility as we had moved from All Saints Cathedral for our regular meetings, but will still be holding our investiture at All Saints.

We are still supporting Hope Mission through its meal service program and waiting on a date for the holidays to serve that community. Additionally, the shoe program is also still underway with All Saints Cathedral as well. We are still trying to determine the total number of shoes handed out through our efforts but we expect we are now pushing well over 300+ in the last 4 years.

Expect to get the details of our investiture date in the next newsletter but tentatively we are looking toward the end of May as usual with All Saints.

nnDnn

Rob MacMullen
Commander
Edmonton Commandry

Chancellors Corner

The seasons of the year tread on each other's footsteps: Summer, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Remembrance Day, Christmas and then the New Year. Each with its own history, customs, affections. Most can be traced to pagan roots . . . the solstices, the frightening sway of bad spirits, the recognition of honest work; warriors celebrated . . .

And yet, there is a certain comfort in following in the footsteps of those who have gone before . . . in singing the same hymns, in erecting the Christmas tree, in donning costumes or affixing poppies. But how much of this do we do, not out of conviction, but out of mindless repetition?

Christmas approaches which we celebrate with decorations, cards, trees, presents, Santa Claus, crèches . . . you know the routine. We mumble about "Season's Greetings" rather than "Merry Christmas" but respond in kind.

This is one time that Christians can take a stand: can refuse to put up cards that do not celebrate the Christian season – can put an angel or a star on top of their tree; can have a crèche on the mantel or the front yard . . . and the gifts can include a tree to reforest a desert; food for the homeless among us; a gift for the child or the granny, alone with no one to care.

The history of the Templar is that of those who guarded the sea lanes and the byways that pilgrims might reach the Holy Land to praise our Lord without being captured and enslaved. To-day's Templars extend their care to the victims of bigotry, intolerance and violence. The gauntlet is thrown down before each of us: that we find the way to provide protection and honour the victims of those who seek to destroy our faith and our way of life and values.

Be ever vigilant.
Be ever honourable.
Be ever brave.
Be ever a Templar

Bristol and the World of the Templars

By Rev. Nola Crewe

On a priory level not everything goes as we wish it to: and it is easy to become discouraged as one puts together an event that few attend, raise monies that barely cover the costs or speak to a forlorn few instead of a rapt crowd of hundreds. And that is why International events are so important . . . the awareness that one is a part, however small, of events that are truly world changing.

Our commitment to the protection of Christians; to the Holy Land; to ecumenicalism, are so often barely whispered in our home priories and we never seek media acclaim. Doing good in stealth seems to be our byword . . . but our impact is far beyond our numbers or our awareness. And it is only at international meetings that we learn of the incredible organization in which our numbers are recorded.

Many of our charities are unique to our communities. But on an international basis they accumulate and record our commitment to a better world. From skates in the high north, to medical supplies in the desert, from filling hungry bellies on a city street to bringing world leaders to negotiations, the Templars play an important role. In the 6th chapter of Matthew, Christ is recorded as warning . . . "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. . . . Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

And in following Christ's dictum, the newspapers do not record our good works or our neighbours know of our activities, but we are a busy and productive Order.

Between October 15th and 19th Canada was well-represented in Bristol, England . . . and their Priory and organizers paid credit to the role Canada had played in their experience. They noted their experiences and support when they came to Toronto in 2010. They had just been approved to host the 2014 gathering, were just beginning their planning and were grateful for the sharing of lessons-learned.



At Bristol, Skype was being tested as a means of communication for the far-flung priories (22) and commanderies represented there. From the Philippines we learned of their project to supply emergency purified water throughout the country, from Germany, plans to host us in 2015 and from the Grand Master we learned of countries seeking to join our ranks.

Each year there are opportunities for Templars to join their sister dames and brother knights worldwide . . . in the next year Cologne and Tamar will host us . . . and if you don't know the countries you might be in: then all the more reason to join us! Each priory, each country, has its own unique way of celebrating their membership in the Templars. In Bristol we gathered in the chapter house of a medieval cathedral and then processed to an Evensong of a choir whose talented voices echoed hymns heard there for a thousand years.



We also were recipients of the talents of their artistic former Grand Prior: of the bombed Templar Church of the Holy Cross – a drawing which one received as part of the fund raising draw for a week at the condo of the Grand Secretary [a unique charitable contribution that we hope to see other priories and Templars offer up].

Canada has much to offer the world. But we need to leave our provincial comfort behind. Join us as we explore the world within the hospitality of our fellow knights. Broaden your vision from local to limitless . . . the world is the Templars own.

Join us in our travels . . . your world will be richer for the journey. And your soul will rejoice.

International News

Joint NGO Statement
GENEVA SWITZERLAND (15 SEPTEMBER 2014)

The Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training Delivered at The UN Human Rights Council 27th session (8 - 26 September, 2014) Under Agenda Item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

OSMTH cosigned this report which can be read at
<http://www.osmth.org/documents/UNStatements/2014%20HRC27.pdf>

OSMTH Philippines

The International Grand Commander, Col Dr Marcel de Picciotto together with the commander of the commandery of the Philippines, Lt Cdr Jose Adolpho B. Cruz, the commandery Chancellor, Capt Rodrigo Meia, and Atty Kristoffer James Purisima, commandery marshal had a formal call with the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines, HE Feliciano Belmonte, Jr.

View a video of this event at http://youtu.be/NjpU_-6wGk0

Carpe Diem

The OSMTH Communications team has released the August 2014 issue of the Carpe Diem. This publication contains the latest information on activities of OSMTH at the international level.

You can read this at <http://carpediem.osmth.org/>

Beauseant

Journal of the Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States
Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

I got in a print copy of this Fall 2014 Journal so I scanned it in and you can download it at: <Http://www.electriccanadian.com/religion/usgrandpriory.pdf>

OSMTH International

The International Order has 5 committees...

Organisational Committee which handles our Rules and Statutes. At Bristol they launched an update set of rules which we hope to get a look at shortly.

Venues Committee which decides on where meetings of the International order are going to be held which usually works at least 2 or 3 years ahead.

Communications Committee which handles communications of the International order and produces the Carpe Diem.

Award and Devices Committee which decides on what awards can be given out and for what. I'm told that the standard promotions for each Grand Priory are from Knight or Dame to KCTJ (Commander), GOTJ, (Grand Officer) and GCTJ (Grand Croix). Where a Knight or Dame is promoted to Grand Prior of a country they automatically get the GCTJ given to them if they don't already have it. There are International awards but they are very rare and I'm led to believe only two have been given out in the past several years.

I was also told that several Grand Priory's have their own special awards that they give out for a variety of reasons. As all Grand Priories are autonomous it is up the them to decide how they wish to run their order.

Our Grand Chancellor, the Rev. Nola Crewe, Prior III of Toronto, was appointed to the board of this committee when attending the Bristol International conference.

History & Archives Committee which of course handles our archives so they can be referred to by future generations.

Our current membership is around 4,700 world wide. I'm told that the USA decided to be much harder on membership numbers so now to count as a member in the USA you must have at least paid membership dues within the past 2 years and also attended at least one event. This has meant an actual decline in numbers. Countries like Canada and Italy are seeing gains in membership.

Is backing Syria rebels a mistake?

I was watching the CNN program GPS and found this interview to be a most interesting one. It provides a possible solution and is well worth considering....

Fareed speaks with Joshua Landis, director of the University of Oklahoma's Center for Middle East Studies, about his proposal for addressing the Syria crisis.

So let's understand why you think that the solution that so many people keep urging, which is that the United States supports those rebels in the blue areas and that they will therefore win. They will establish control, create perhaps a democratic Syria. Why is that not going to work?

Well, it's not going to work because most of the blue area are dominated by the big rebel groups which are al Qaeda and the Islamic Front, which are jihadist, very anti-American groups. The pro-

American militias just got wiped out in the northern blue spot, Jabal al-Zawiya. They just got pushed aside by al Qaeda. And so they're very small. They may own perhaps 1 or 2 percent of Syria today, the rebels that are being backed by the United States.

So to turn those 2 percent into winners, that would not only wipe out ISIS, but taking on al-Assad would be a gargantuan undertaking.

So they have to beat Al-Nusra and al Qaeda and Khorasan. Then they've got to beat ISIS. Then they've got to beat al-Assad.

Yes, it's not going to happen. President Obama has given them half a billion dollars. Now, at the University of Oklahoma we have an endowment of much more than a billion dollars and we can't even pay the students to go for free.

See the whole interview at: <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/>

Syria
The BBC has done a special feature on Syria looking at all aspects of the Syrian conflict which you can see at: <http://www.bbc.com/syria> and within that section there is a specific article about "Syria's beleaguered Christians" which you can view at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-22270455>

Pope and patriarch condemn Mid-East persecution

Pope Francis and the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians have condemned the treatment of many Christians in the Middle East.

In a joint declaration, the Pope and Patriarch Bartholomew I said they could not resign themselves to a "Middle East without Christians".

On a three-day visit to Turkey, the pontiff discussed divisions between Catholics and Orthodox Christians.

In Istanbul, he and the patriarch also called for peace in Ukraine.

Patriarch Bartholomew is the spiritual leader of the world's 250 million Orthodox Christians, whose Church broke with Rome in 1054 in a schism that divided the Christian world.

Constantinople, as the modern Turkish city of Istanbul was once known, was the centre of Orthodox Christianity until the Ottoman conquest in 1453.

Only around 120,000 Christians remain in Turkey, where the vast majority of the 80 million citizens are Muslims.

Pope Francis also called for an interfaith dialogue with Muslims to counter fanaticism and fundamentalism when he visited the Turkish capital, Ankara.

'Indifference of many'

Christians have been targeted by Muslim hardliners in Iraq and Syria in recent years, with a violent campaign of persecution by Islamic State militants this summer when they captured the Iraqi city of Mosul.

In their joint declaration, the two Church leaders said: "We express our common concern for the current situation in Iraq, Syria and the whole Middle East.."

"Many of our brothers and sisters are being persecuted and have been forced violently from their homes. It even seems that the value of human life has been lost, that the human person no longer matters and may be sacrificed to other interests. And, tragically, all this is met by the indifference of many."

The violent conflict in Ukraine this year has accentuated differences between its large Orthodox and

Catholic communities.

The Pope and the patriarch said: "We pray for peace in Ukraine, a country of ancient Christian tradition, while we call upon all parties involved to pursue the path of dialogue and of respect for international law in order to bring an end to the conflict and allow all Ukrainians to live in harmony."

As his visit draws to a close, Pope Francis is also due to meet Turkey's chief rabbi, whose flock has diminished to just 17,000 people.

For more information see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30265996>

Also read the BBC article: "Turkey's Christians face tense times" at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30214805>

Canadian Update

Attack on Ottawa: PM Harper cites terrorist motive

The attack on Parliament Hill's Centre Block and the National War Memorial has left one Canadian soldier and one male suspect dead.

During an address to the nation, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said the incident in Ottawa was a 'terrorist' act.

For more information see

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/video?playlistId=1.2067493>

Canadian War Memorial Cartoon Touches Hearts Worldwide

Published on Oct 24, 2014



After his powerful artistic response to tragic events in Ottawa, it seemed everyone wanted a piece of Herald cartoonist Bruce MacKinnon on Thursday. His cartoon was not only trending on Twitter but requests for use of the cartoon came in from CNN, Fox News and The Independent, the UK publication which ran an online editorial below the cartoon.

Even the Canadian War Museum came calling.

Watercooler conversations throughout Nova Scotia seemed to be all about the cartoon and the feelings it evoked about the cold-blooded murder of a 24-year-old reservist in front of Canada's National War Memorial.

Simply stated, for the few who may not have seen it, the cartoon suggests the coming to life of the bronzed First World War soldiers that sit atop the memorial.

One soldier is bent over, supporting Cpl. Nathan Cirillo's body. Others are reaching down as if to help, while still others stare stoically forward.

His feet, complete with Argyll and Sutherland Highland socks and white spats, are the only part of the young soldier showing.

"That's the part that touched me - the feet," said Ian Thompson, associate publisher of The Chronicle Herald. "(And) I guess it's the notion of those folks in the statue coming to the aid of that young soldier."

Thompson was not surprised by the sheer volume of requests from news agencies around the world for MacKinnon's piece.

"Those of us who work here know Bruce is a world-class cartoonist," Thompson said. "Some of the world's largest news outlets - they want his stuff!"

The cartoon made it to the top of Reddit.com <<http://reddit.com/>> and the image-sharing site imgur.com <<http://imgur.com/>> .

Perhaps most impressive of all was a telephone call from an elderly man in Saskatoon who saw MacKinnon's work online.

"Quite frankly, what he did brought tears to my eyes," George Whitter said. "It was absolutely magnificent and I don't use that word very often," he added.

Whitter even went so far as to say the cartoon should be made into a bronze plaque and placed on the War Memorial.

"It is a powerful depiction of how these are not just soldiers from the past but they are of present and, sadly, the future," he said.

And what of the man who has an uncanny knack for hitting nerves and opening tear ducts? Of drawing thought-provoking cartoons that jam up news servers and cause readers to drip tears onto newsprint?

By noontime, MacKinnon had done a number of interviews with local news outlets and with CNN.

"It's the symbolism that is so important in cartooning... this one was a particularly emotional and disturbing one," said the legendarily humble cartoonist.

"I'm glad it came through clearly."

One woman emailed MacKinnon to say she was comforted by the thought that what he depicted is maybe what happened - the old soldiers really did help the young man as he lay dying.

"I can't really take credit for what the cartoon has evoked in people because I think it's the emotion

attached to the story that triggers the response," MacKinnon said.

This from the man who, after 28 years with the Herald, still can't believe he gets paid for drawing.

Canada remembers: Governor General rededicates National War Memorial
Princess Anne spoke on the Queen's behalf on Tuesday. In 1939, her grandfather first dedicated the monument, just months before the Second World War.

Tens of thousands of people surrounded the sunshine-bathed National War Memorial on Tuesday as Gov. Gen. David Johnston formally rededicated the monument in the name of all who have died in the service of Canada.

Clad in full military uniform, Johnston was standing just steps away from the spot where Cpl. Nathan Cirillo gave his life just three weeks ago in an attack on Parliament Hill that has given this year's Remembrance Day a laser-sharp currency.

Johnston said Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who was killed two days earlier in Quebec at the hands of man with jihadist sympathies, have joined the ranks of thousands of other dead, who will always be remembered.

"Freedom without peace is agony, and peace without freedom is slavery, and we will tolerate neither. This is the truth we owe our dead," Johnston said.

He urged the crowd to look closely at the towering bronze statues of Peace and Freedom atop the monument, as well as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which sits at its base.

See more of this event at: <http://tinyurl.com/nxka73r>

President of France visits Canada



Prime Minister Stephen Harper played tour guide Sunday as he hosted the president of France in Banff National Park in Alberta.

Francois Hollande is the first French president to make an official visit to Western Canada.

Harper met Hollande in Calgary and the two made the 90-minute trip to Banff by car.

They planned to discuss greater co-operation on international security and threats, trade and economic development, innovation, and broader people-to-people ties.

Hollande will also address Parliament and is scheduled to visit Montreal and Quebec City as well.

While in Banff both men attended a state dinner hosted by Gov. Gen. David Johnston.

The last French president to make a formal state visit to Canada was Francois Mitterrand in 1987, although Nicholas Sarkozy attended a European Union-Canada summit in 2008.

Hollande is accompanied by several cabinet ministers and large business and academic delegation.

France is Canada's eighth-largest commercial partner, with bilateral merchandise trade totalling more than \$8.5 billion in 2013.

A senior Conservative cabinet minister said it is significant that Hollande decided to visit Western Canada.

"It's not a coincidence that President Hollande asked to come to Alberta because I think the Europeans increasingly see Alberta as an engine of the Canadian economy. I think the largest French investments in Canada are here," said federal Employment Minister Jason Kenney.

"Many European and governments around the world are growing their footprint in Alberta for that reason."

French President Francois Hollande has described the relationship between Quebec and his country as "unique" as he continues his trip to Canada.

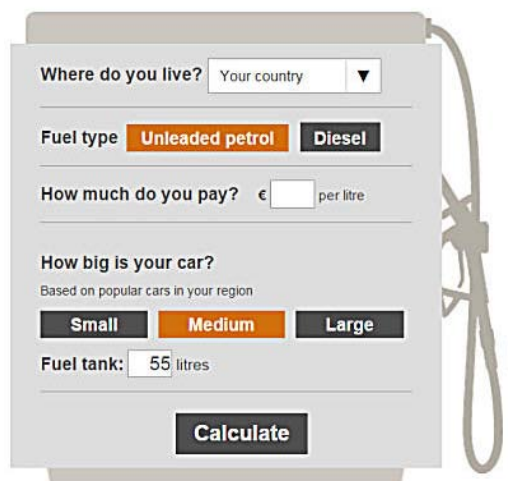
"Through history, you are, and always will be, our brothers," he said in an address to the national assembly in Quebec City on Tuesday.

"If we're looking for words to describe the relationship between France and Quebec, I would choose the simplest word. This relationship is 'unique,' the word forged over years of history."

Oil Prices

With oil prices around \$72 a barrel economies around the world are being affected. I noted that the BBC has a petrol price calculator which shows what people in various countries in the world are paying. You can see this at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-21238363>.



The image shows a screenshot of a petrol price calculator interface. The form is titled "Where do you live?" with a dropdown menu for "Your country". Below this, there are two buttons for "Fuel type": "Unleaded petrol" (highlighted in orange) and "Diesel". The next section is "How much do you pay?" with a text input field for the price in Euros (€) per litre. The "How big is your car?" section includes a sub-label "Based on popular cars in your region" and three buttons: "Small", "Medium" (highlighted in orange), and "Large". At the bottom, there is a "Fuel tank:" label with a text input field showing "55 litres" and a "Calculate" button.

Doing the sums Canadians pay \$0.11 more than average.

Canadians are actually paying a lot less for their fuel than many other countries. However the price

has an impact on our economy and when you factor in the costs of producing oil it is clear that many oil exporting countries are bringing in a lot less net revenue. Countries that are importers are doing much better.

The falling price of oil threatens to thump parts of Canada, whose fortunes are the most tied to oil of any Group of Seven countries. But oil's swoon isn't all bad news for a country that has the world's third-biggest oil reserve, underscoring the complex role the resource can play in a modern economy.

An estimated 7.5% of Canada's gross domestic product is directly tied up in the oil sector. A sustained fall in the commodity's price would hit government coffers, corporate profits and investment spending. A pullback in the country's oil patch would cost jobs and could knock a housing market that some analysts say is overvalued.

Since oil started falling in June, the Toronto Stock Exchange's benchmark index has lost about 4.3%, against a 2.8% gain for the S&P 500. The Canadian dollar is down 6.1% against the U.S. dollar, hovering near a five-year low of 88 U.S. cents.

Canada's oil boom exacerbated regional differences, with the oil-producing western provinces prospering as the manufacturing-based economies in central Canada stalling on a stronger domestic dollar, which made their exports pricier abroad.

Now, falling oil prices are also playing out differently across the country. The provinces of Ontario and Quebec expect a boost in exports from the fall of the petro-linked currency. Households and businesses across Canada will save on fuel costs and stand to benefit broadly from the positive effect that a falling oil price typically has on Canada's biggest trading partner, the U.S.

"There are definitely going to be opportunities from price declines", said Kevin Schilroth, general manager at Abuma Manufacturing Ltd., a metal-fabrication company in London, Ontario. The province has lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs since 2004, in part as the Canadian dollar strengthened during the commodities boom.

The outlook differs markedly in energy-rich western Canada. In Alberta, Fort McMurray has seen its population grow by more than 70% to over 75,000 since 2000 on the back of the oil-sands boom. Last month, as oil prices posted their biggest one-day drop in two years, Fort McMurray was alive with talk of what that might mean.

"We are used to fluctuations, but this did get noticed," said Katie Ekroth, a real estate broker there with RE/MAX.

Canadian Oil Sands Ltd. and Talisman Energy Inc. both reported lower cash flow from operations in the quarter ended Sept. 30 due in part to falling oil prices, but most other major producers in Canada have yet to feel a big financial impact. Many operators are expected to announce their 2015 capital-spending plans next month, but so far few have indicated they will pull back on investment due to the current price slump, given that project construction often takes years. What's more, Canadian producers have, so far, been buffered from the worst of the decline by a weaker Canadian dollar and narrowing price spread for their oil compared to benchmark U.S. crudes.

But Canada's large mining industry sets a worrying precedent. A two-year fall in the price of metals, from gold to iron ore, has led to a slowdown that has curbed tax revenues, seen miners laid off and sucked work out of the large Toronto banking and legal sector which supports the sector.

High among economists' worries is that lower crude prices will sap new business investment, which, along with exports, was expected to be a driver of Canadian growth after years of reliance on consumer spending and construction. The energy sector accounts for 24% of business investment, while crude oil and bitumen were 17% of overall merchandise exports, according to Royal Bank of Canada .

The energy industry employs, directly and indirectly, 550,000 people in Canada, which has population of about 35 million. Higher unemployment could hit Canadians' ability to service mortgages in a country that has one of the highest household debt loads in the world. When the oil price fell sharply during the 2008 global downturn, house prices in oil-rich Alberta fell by 18%.

In Fort McMurray, home prices have soared, with the average price increasing by 182% to 567,195 Canadian dollars (\$497,103) over the last ten years, against an 85% gain to C\$406,504 across the rest of Canada, according to the Canadian Real Estate Association.

A drop in revenues among companies in or tied to Canada's energy industry would mean a drop in provincial and federal taxes. Non-renewable resources account for over 20% of Alberta's revenue. The province estimates that a one-dollar drop in the price of a barrel of West Texas Intermediate crude costs it C\$215 million in tax revenue.

Nationally, the falls in the oil price will knock 0.6% of GDP this year, Capital Economics estimates. But other economists are more sanguine.

"Let's not jump the gun," said Sal Guatieri, an economist with Bank of Montreal, which predicts the oil-price drop could shave 0.1% off Canada's GDP this year and 0.2% next year. Mr. Guatieri points out that house prices in Alberta soon climbed back after their 2008 drop.

Other provinces are expected to benefit, not least because a softer Canadian dollar boosts exports. Analysis by Toronto-Dominion Bank shows that a 10% decline in the price of a barrel of WTI oil leads to a roughly 1% decline in the value of the Canadian dollar.

The Canadian dollar's decline has been cited as one reason why Canadian manufacturing has grown in recent quarters after decades of decline. In the current year to date, manufacturing has been responsible for 0.3% of Canada's 2% growth, making it the third contributor behind the resource industries and real estate.

Canadian drivers should also enjoy lower prices at the pump, which are down about 10% from highs seen earlier this year. That means more cash to spend elsewhere. Bank of Montreal estimates gas savings could boost overall spending power by about C\$4.42 billion.

Economists say the biggest influence on the Canadian economy will be what happens south of the border. Despite increased oil production, the U.S. economy is still likely to benefit from a falling oil price, and that in turn will benefit Canada, Around 75% of whose merchandise exports go into the U.S, according to Paul Ferley, an economist at RBC.

Keystone XL pipeline prospects got a boost from U.S. election results. The odds of the controversial Keystone XL pipeline getting approved increased after this week's U.S. midterm elections.

The TransCanada pipeline project, which would transport up to 830,000 barrels of oilsands crude per day from Alberta to the U.S. Gulf Coast, has been awaiting U.S. approval for six years. President Barack Obama said last year that Keystone XL will only go forward if it "does not significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution."

Pro-Keystone Republicans defeated anti-Keystone Democrats in several Senate races on Tuesday. Now the Republicans not only have a majority of Senate seats, along with support from pro-Keystone Democratic Party senators, they have enough votes to overcome any anti-Keystone filibuster.

Harper's visit to China

Stephen Harper has arrived in China to begin a four-day visit that will focus largely on building closer economic ties with Canada's No. 2 trading partner.

On a mild, hazy night, Harper and his wife, Laureen, were greeted at the Hangzhou airport by Liang Liming, vice governor of the Zhejiang province, and other dignitaries.

The prime minister is leading a delegation of Canadian business representatives Thursday in Hangzhou, an industrial but scenic metropolis south of Shanghai, before heading to the Chinese capital on the weekend.

Those in his entourage include Canadian pork, beef and grain producers, officials from financial services companies and mining, oil and gas firms. Industry Minister James Moore and International

Trade Minister Ed Fast are also along for the trip.

In Beijing, Harper met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, who has called for a more open form of government since taking office in 2012.

A senior government official says Harper will raise China's human rights record during their discussions.

Canada and China have signed a reciprocal currency deal that's expected to dramatically boost exports.

The signing of the deal was announced in Beijing today by Premier Li Keqiang and Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

"It's a great boon for the Canadian business community, both importers and exporters, because they can now do business in China with the currency and not have to go through multiple financial exchange transactions," Stewart Beck, president and CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, told CBC News.

"So the pundits are saying it could double maybe even triple the level of Canadian trade between Canada and China," he said.

Authorized by China's central bank, the deal will allow direct business between the Canadian dollar and the Chinese yuan, cutting out the middle man — in most cases, the U.S. dollar.

After he wrapped up a weekend of meetings with all of China's top leadership, Harper told reporters he's satisfied with how the trip went.

"Look, I'm very pleased with the visit, that on each trip that I've done here, I think we have significantly advanced the economic relationship," Harper said.

Harper and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met Sunday on the eve of the APEC summit. Japan issued a joint statement following their chat, saying the two leaders agreed on the "need to confirm the political determination to settle a deal."

The TPP joint statement a day later suggested there's been some success towards that goal.

"With the end coming into focus, we have instructed our ministers and negotiators to make concluding this agreement a top priority so that our businesses, workers, farmers and consumers can start to reap the real and substantial benefits of the agreement as soon as possible."

Harper also made a brief appearance at the APEC summit, posing for the so-called group photo with other world leaders. The smiling prime minister was situated behind Russian President Vladimir Putin for the photo.

Harper was in China for four days in efforts to build closer business ties to China, a country that's been excluded from TPP negotiations.

The prime minister announced commercial and currency deals worth as much as \$2.5 billion between the Chinese and Canada, and met with China's leadership, including President Xi Jinping.

"Next year marks the 45th anniversary of China-Canada diplomatic relations," Li said as he greeted Harper to the Great Hall of the People in the Chinese capital. "Our relationship will come to a new starting point."

Harper headed home to Ottawa late Monday to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies on Parliament Hill. On Wednesday, he's turning around and heading back to the Asia-Pacific region for meetings in New Zealand and to attend the G20 summit in Australia.

A look at some of the other agreements and initiatives announced during Stephen Harper's visit to

China:

Foreign Affairs Ministers Dialogue and an Economic and Financial Strategic Dialogue: This agreement is designed to enhance bilateral communication and co-operation in the areas of foreign affairs and economic and financial matters.

Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Co-operation: Expansion of this agreement will help the Canadian nuclear industry increase its exports to China and generate jobs and growth in Canada's nuclear energy sector.

Air Travel: An updated Canada-China Air Transport Agreement allows airlines from both countries to offer more travel options for goods, services and people.

Transit Without Visa Program: Expansion of the Transit Without Visa Program and the China Transit Program adds China Southern Airlines to both programs. Travellers from the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Taiwan who normally require a visa to come to Canada are allowed to transit without a visa if they are travelling through Canada en route to or from the U.S.

Health sector: Both countries will co-operate more closely in several health-related areas, including joint research efforts on infectious disease prevention and control, chronic disease, traditional Chinese medicine, food safety, health innovation as well as health emergency preparedness and response.

Cherries: This agreement marks the normalization of cherry exports from B.C. to China, valued by the industry at \$20 million annually. The two sides also agreed to sign a arrangement of intent to develop mutually agreeable conditions for export of fresh blueberries to China.

Harper in New Zealand: Rubbing noses and renewing old ties
Mr. Harper and his wife, Laureen, were greeted by New Zealand Governor-General Jerry Mateparae at Government House in Auckland with a powhiri greeting ceremony.

A traditional challenge, called the wero or taki, is used to determine whether a visitor comes as friend or foe. Maori warriors laid down a dart, or rakau tapu, which Mr. Harper picked up as a gesture of goodwill.



Later Friday, Mr. Harper travelled to the Auckland war memorial to lay a wreath. New Zealand and Canadian soldiers fought together in conflicts that include both World Wars, the Korean War, the Gulf War and the war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Harper's trip to New Zealand is his first in any capacity, but Ms. Harper has a Kiwi connection.

Her first husband was New Zealander Neil Fenton, a tech company founder. Their marriage ended in 1988, five years before she married Mr. Harper.

Some New Zealanders have apparently not forgotten Laureen Harper. A customs official at the Auckland airport told a Canadian reporter entering the country that he once knew her, describing her as "a lovely person" and asking how she was doing. He couldn't be identified because of his work as a customs service agent.

"The government of Canada is prepared to engage in actions against ISIL in Syria but only as long as those are not interpreted as war against the government of Syria," the prime minister told a news conference Friday at the end of his first official visit to New Zealand, referring to the ISIS militant group by one of its alternate names.

The news conference marked the end of Harper's visit to New Zealand and set the stage for his arrival later Friday in Brisbane for the G20 summit, one that Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has said will have a heavy economic focus.

The prime minister's day in Auckland involved rubbing noses with Maori ceremonial warriors as well as laying a wreath at the Auckland war memorial.

Harper and New Zealand Prime Minister John Key reflected on their close ties during the news conference.

Key laughingly praised the Canadian flag, saying he is running a "successful" campaign to change the New Zealand flag to one that is more recognizably Kiwi.

He has frequently pointed to Canada's switch to its famous Maple Leaf flag in 1965 as evidence that it won't dishonour New Zealand's war dead by having a new ensign.

Stephen Harper heads home after headline-grabbing G20 PM in international spotlight for confronting Vladimir Putin over Ukraine.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said at the end of a Group of 20 summit that placed him in the international spotlight for telling Russian President Vladimir Putin to get out of Ukraine that Canada will soon contribute to global climate funds.

"We will be part of an international agreement of binding obligations on all major emitters," Harper told a news conference on Sunday.

Despite a communique heavy on economics, Putin overshadowed much of the two-day summit.

Harper warned that if the world community eases up on Russia for its annexation of Crimea earlier this year, it will only whet Putin's appetite for similar aggression.

"We send the message, as I think we have in Canada, that whether it takes, five months or 50 years, we're not going to drop the subject until Ukrainian territory is returned to Ukrainians," he said.

"It is necessary for all of us to keep the pressure on Mr. Putin and his regime and to do so over the long term, to make it clear that it will not be business as usual."

See a news summary of this meeting at:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/stephen-harper-heads-home-after-headline-grabbing-g20-1.2836872>

Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the 81st anniversary of the Holodomor



Prime Minister Stephen Harper today issued the following statement commemorating the 81st anniversary of the Holodomor:

“Today is Holodomor Memorial Day, a somber occasion when people around the world remember the forced starvation of millions of Ukrainian men, women and children in 1932 and 1933 by Joseph Stalin’s tyrannical communist regime.

“On this sombre day, let us join with Ukrainians in Canada and around the world in remembering the victims of this genocide, which was intended to crush the aspirations, freedom and independence of a proud people.

“Let us also remember the tremendous courage and resolve demonstrated by those Ukrainians who survived that awful period and shared their horrifying experiences with the world.

“Our Government officially recognized the Holodomor as an act of genocide in May 2008 and remains committed to teaching Canadians about this crime against humanity.

“Today, Canada continues to support the people of Ukraine in their efforts to secure a peaceful and prosperous future for their country. We continue to stand with the people of Ukraine in the face of the Putin regime’s illegal occupation of the Crimean Peninsula and its military aggression in Eastern Ukraine. This support has included delivering equipment and supplies to the Ukrainian Armed Forces as well as providing significant financial assistance and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. We have also sent election observers to eight successive Ukrainian elections to help ensure that they were free and fair.

“On this day, let us honour the millions of victims of the Holodomor, pay tribute to the courage of those that survived, and recommit to supporting Ukraine as it follows its path as a proud and independent member of the European family of nations.”

Further information on the Holodomor can be found at:
<http://www.holodomorct.org/>

A good overview of the Ukrainian situation can be found at:
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26270866>

In addition to 18,000+ American hockey fans singing “O Canada” before a Pittsburgh Penguins hockey game, this appeared as an editorial cartoon by “Bish” in the Pittsburgh, PA “Tribune Review.”



Canada's Long-Term Commitment to the Micronutrient Initiative
Dakar, Senegal
30 November 2014

Maternal, newborn and child health remains Canada's top international development priority and we are committed to working with Canadian and international partners toward the goal of ending the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children under the age of five.

See more at:

<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2014/11/30/canadas-long-term-commitment-micronutrient-initiative>

Canadian History

Fruit Ranching in British Columbia

I came across this interesting account of Fruit Ranching in BC. It's an account of a family from the UK making the trip to Canada after doing their research and then how they purchased the land. It then proceeds to explain all aspect of fruit farming from preparing the land, planting, maintenance and harvesting and selling the crop. Alongside you also get accounts of the problems they faced and how they overcame them. This account is within the 19th century.

You can download this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/bc/fruitranchinginb00bealuoft.pdf>

Canada in Flanders

By Sir Max Aitken MP (1916)

INTRODUCTION

By Rt. Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden, G.C.M.G.

More than a year ago the bugles of the Empire sounded throughout the world the call to duty. The justice of the cause was recognised in every quarter of the King's dominions, and nowhere more fully than in Canada; it has since been confirmed by the judgment of the civilised world. Within a week Canada had sprung to arms; within three weeks 35,000 men were marshalled on Valcartier Plain, which had been transformed, as if by magic, into a great military camp; within six weeks from the outbreak of war a Canadian Division, fully organised and equipped in every branch of the service, with a surplus of guns and ammunition nearly sufficient for another Division, and with a detail of

reinforcements amounting to 10,000 men, was ready to proceed overseas.

Twice in September of last year I saw these forces march past under review by the Duke of Connaught. Later, I visited every unit of the contingent, addressed their officers, and bade them all God-speed. The Armada which left the shores of Gaspé on October 3rd, 1914, carried the largest army that ever crossed the Atlantic at one time.

In the midst of the following winter they went to the front. Few of them had any previous experience of war. They had lived in a peace-loving country; they had been gathered from the varied avocations of our national life; they had come from the hills and valleys and surf-beaten shores of the Maritime Provinces; from the banks of the St. Lawrence and its hundred affluents in the two great central Provinces; from the mining and lumber camps of the north; from the broad prairie Provinces and their northern hinterlands; from the majesty of the mountains that look to the east upon the prairies and to the west upon the Pacific; from the shores of the great western ocean; from all the far-flung communities of our Dominion they had hurried, quickly responsive to the call.

Almost in the dawn of their experience at the front there came to them an ordeal such as has seldom tested the most tried of veterans. An unknown and terrible means of warfare, which temporarily shattered the gallant forces that held the line at their left, poured upon them torture and death. The bravest and most experienced troops might well have been daunted and driven back by the fierceness of the onslaught to which they were exposed and by the horrible methods of the attack. Assailed by overwhelming numbers on front and flank, they held their own in a conflict which raged for days; they barred the path against the German onrush and saved the day for the Empire, for the Allies, and for the world.

The story of their tenacity, their valour, and their heroism has been well told in the pages that follow. But it can never be completely told. Many of those upon whose memories alone splendid incidents of that story were indelibly engraven lie beneath the sod in Northern France and in Belgium.

On more than one stricken field the record thus made by the 1st Canadian Division has held good. From the lips of those who fought at Festubert and at Givenchy, from dauntless survivors of the Princess Patricia's Regiment, I have heard, in many a hospital and convalescent home in the Motherland, what their comrades had dared and done.

No Canadian can ever look forth unmoved upon that valley where Ypres lies shattered in the distance, and the sweep of the hills overlooks the graves of more than 100,000 men who fell because a remorseless militarist autocracy decreed this war.

In the years to come it will be the duty and the pride of Canada to rear, both in this Dominion and beyond the ocean, monuments which will worthily commemorate the glorious deeds of her sons who offered the supreme sacrifice for liberty and civilisation.

R. L. Borden.
Ottawa, December 6th, 1915.

You can read this book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/flanders/index.htm>

Our Christmas Party
By Old Merry (1867)

I thought you might enjoy this book over Christmas as it shows how Christmas was celebrated back in 1867. In the book there are story tellers and one is about Whaling where the ship sinks in an ice flow and the Inuit helped save them. Another story is about a rescue in the Rocky Mountains.

You can download this book at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/ourchristmaspart00hoddiala.pdf>

From Prior II of St James Priory, Sir Matthew Gaasenbeek

Thanks to Sir Matthew for sending these 2 stories into us...

1907 Photo



The year is 1907, one hundred and 7+ years ago.

Wilfred Laurier's ideas on Immigrants and being a Canadian in 1907.

'In the first place, we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes a Canadian and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed, or birthplace, or origin.

But this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet a Canadian, and nothing but a Canadian... There can be no divided allegiance here.

Any man who says he is a Canadian, but something else also, isn't a Canadian at all. We have room for but one flag, the Canadian flag... And we have room for but one sole loyalty and that is a loyalty to the Canadian people.' Wilfred Laurier 1907

Gotta love this one, eh??

Forget Rednecks...

Here is what Jeff Foxworthy has to say about Canadians; during a recent appearance at Caesars in Windsor:

If your local Dairy Queen is closed from September through May,
You may live in Canada.

If someone in a Home Depot store offers you assistance and they don't work there,
You may live in Canada.

If you've worn shorts and a parka at the same time,
You may live in Canada.

If you've had a lengthy telephone conversation with someone who dialed a wrong number,
You may live in Canada.

If 'Vacation' means going anywhere south of Detroit for the weekend,
You may live in Canada.

If you measure distance in hours,
You may live in Canada.

If you know several people Who have hit a deer more than once,
You may live in Canada.

If you have switched from 'heat' to 'A/C' in the same day and back again,
You may live in Canada.

If you can drive 90 km/hr through 2 feet of snow during a raging blizzard without flinching,
You may live in Canada.

If you install security lights on your house and garage, but leave both unlocked,
You may live in Canada.

If you carry jumper cables in your car and your wife knows how to use them,
You may live in Canada.

If you design your kid's Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit,
You may live in Canada.

If the speed limit on the highway is 80 km -- You're going 95 and everybody is passing you,
You may live in Canada.

If driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled with snow,
You may live in Canada.

If you know all 4 seasons: Almost winter, winter, still winter, and road construction,
You may live in Canada.

If you have more miles on your snow blower than your car,
You may live in Canada.

If you find -2 degrees 'a little chilly',
You may live in Canada.

If you actually understand these jokes, and forward them to all your friends,
you definitely are Canadian and proud to be.

Canon Andrew White

OCTOBER 29, 2014

Dear Friends,

It has been a long hard, difficult and wonderful trip to the US. There have been continual meetings with people who really care about our work and mission. I have continually been asked how people can help and my answer has been continually "Pray for Peace and Pay for Peace". The highlight of my recent trips has been my visits to the Christian Schools. These visits were obviously not fundraising ventures but for me the highlight was when a little boy came up to me and gave me \$1. That dollar is still with me I cannot use it. It is to me the true symbol of the widows might. Other children then came up to me and gave me their one or five dollars. So I have decided to give to the church the same amount of money given to me and the one dollars I will give away at Bethel Church this weekend. It is a sign of God's goodness and provision to me and us.

Bethel

I got to Bethel where as usual I had an amazing visit. I told my story in depth and then told people about the young boy in Seattle who gave me the \$1. The story was clearly the most amazing story of so many I had to tell. I told how he had given me his \$1 to help the needs of his brothers and sisters who had been dispersed and massacred. I told them how after the one dollar other children started bringing me their \$1. It was so moving and it was not long before all the students started bringing me their one dollars. In every class the same thing happened when I told the story by the end of my one day in Bethel that \$1 had turned into thousands and thousands of dollars. That little boy had no idea

what he was doing but he was sure that he did what God told him to do. There at Bethel they took the dollars and got them changed into a cheque to bring relief to the thousands of Christians we were helping. All because of one boy and \$1.

Never underestimate how G-d can use the widows might and the boys \$1. As I write I am on my way to Nashville Tennessee for the final part of my visit. It is a place I am very much looking forward to visiting and seeing what God is going to do there. I am sure it will be good. I return back to the UK on Friday and next Sunday I am preaching at Corpus Christi College Cambridge. So I will actually have a chance to see my Josiah in situ in Cambridge, how I am so looking forward to seeing him. Early next week I return to Jordan and Israel and later BBC News.

Well the money is now counted and the \$1 has raised over \$25,000 I just told his teacher and she can't wait to tell the children tomorrow, she said it is just like the 5 loaves and 2 fishes.

With every Blessing,

Christmas Cards and the 2015 Calendar
NOVEMBER 17, 2014

We are delighted to be able to make two gift products available to you through our online shop. These are all great gifts for family and friends, and perhaps you or your church may want to purchase a larger amount to sell at Christmas fairs and events in the coming weeks to support the work going on at St George's in Baghdad.

This year's 2015 FRRME calendar features images of all the varied relief and reconciliation work that takes place on a daily basis at St George's Church, Baghdad. Also featured are images from the relief work that is currently taking place in northern Iraq, based in the city of Erbil.

The FRRME Christmas card this year features the St George's Communion Class of 2014.

Also available this year are gift packs of three items, including Christmas Cards, Calendar and a copy of Older Younger Brother at a cost of £18.

Every purchase will make a real difference to families and individuals in our congregation and the wider St George's community – thank you in advance for supporting us and sharing our vision and mission when you buy one of our gift products. You can buy the items right now by simply visiting our shop page at <http://frrme.org/shop/>

Maybe you would also consider buying one of Canon Andrew's books as a gift for a friend this Christmas, including his most recent called "Older Younger Brother".

Thank you for your support, and have a Merry Christmas from your friends at FRRME!

Learn more about him and his work at:
<http://frrme.org/what-we-do/canon-andrew-white/>

Words to The Last Post

If any of you have ever been to a military funeral in which The Last Post was played; this brings out a new meaning of it.

We have all heard the haunting song, 'The Last Post.' It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes.

But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the American Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the

other side of the narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate.

But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, we now know as 'The Last Post' used at military funerals was born. The words are:

Day is done.
Gone the sun.
From the lakes
From the hills.
From the sky.
All is well.
Safely rest.
God is nigh.

Fading light.
Dims the sight.
And a star.
Gems the sky.
Gleaming bright.
From afar.
Drawing nigh.
Falls the night.

Thanks and praise.
For our days.
Neath the sun
Neath the stars.
Neath the sky
As we go.
This we know.
God is nigh

Who has not felt the chills while listening to 'The Last Post' but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse . I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along.

I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before.

Remember Those Lost and Harmed While Serving Their Country. Also Remember Those Who Have Served And Returned; and for those presently serving in the Armed Forces.

See also the Canadian Funeral and Burial Program at:

<http://www.lastpostfund.ca/EN/funeral.php>

Listen to the Last Post at:

<http://www.legion.ca/media/last-post/>

Dr. John McCrae, University of Toronto medical graduate

By Edward Shorter and Susan Bélanger

Edward Shorter is the Faculty of Medicine's Jason A. Hannah Professor of the History of Medicine and also a professor in its psychiatry department. He has authored numerous books on the history of psychiatry and mental illness. Susan Bélanger is research coordinator in the history of medicine program.



This cascade of ceramic poppies at the Tower of London is part of the temporary installation: Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red, comprising one poppy planted for every British soldier killed in the First World War

Last month, Dr. John McCrae was selected as a 2015 inductee to the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. This timely announcement coincides with the centenary of the First World War, and the honour itself is a fitting commemoration of his famous poem, In Flanders Fields.

McCrae's tribute to his fallen comrades, written on May 3rd, 1915 during a lull in the terrible battle of Ypres, was published in the London magazine Punch that December. It quickly became the most popular poem of the Great War, known throughout the British Empire and later in the United States. After a century the poppy and McCrae's verses remain potent symbols of remembrance and the tragedy of war.

Yet the soldier-poet's own story has been largely forgotten, except in his hometown of Guelph. There his memory is preserved in the limestone cottage where he was born in 1872, now a museum.

John McCrae was a product of Ontario's rural heartland. The grandson of rugged Scottish pioneers, he inherited his mother's intellectual curiosity and warmth, his father's love of the military, and his

family's strong Presbyterian commitment to duty. John and his brother Thomas (born in 1870) went on to become two of the University of Toronto's most distinguished early medical graduates.

Even before entering U of T, young John's talent and broad interests were evident. He began writing poetry while at Guelph Collegiate, and at 14 joined the school's cadet corps, winning a provincial gold medal. The following year he entered the militia unit commanded by his father. In 1888, at the age of 16, he became the first Guelph student awarded a University of Toronto scholarship.

McCrae spent most of the next decade in Toronto. Yet this key period in his life is sparsely documented, partly perhaps because the Faculty of Medicine (established in 1877) was still in its infancy. As an undergraduate at the university's Knox (Presbyterian) College, he was a diligent student and devoted church-goer, but also found time to write poetry and remain active in both the Guelph militia and as one of the few members, along with writer Stephen Leacock, of the Varsity's unit, "an honourable but neglected body called Company K."

He excelled in biology under the supervision of Professor Ramsay Wright, earning the highest mark in his second year. In third year he slipped to second place as his chronic asthma worsened in the city smog. After taking a year off to teach at the agricultural college in Guelph, McCrae returned to Toronto in late 1893, completed his degree in Natural Sciences with high honours in 1894 and entered the Faculty of Medicine.

McCrae graduated in 1898, winning the gold medal as the top student in his class. Following a brief internship at the Toronto General Hospital, he joined the large contingent of top-notch Toronto medical graduates sent by Wright and J.E. Graham, professor of clinical medicine, to study with North America's foremost medical educator. Canadian-born Dr. (later Sir) William Osler had transformed Johns Hopkins into the leading medical school and teaching hospital on the continent, and would go on in 1905 to become Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford. McCrae's brother Thomas, who had graduated from Toronto as silver medalist in 1895, remained at Hopkins as one of Osler's assistant residents and eventually became one of his close colleagues.

John McCrae spent several months working with Osler before beginning a fellowship in pathology at McGill University in September 1899. His studies were soon interrupted by the outbreak of the Boer War in mid-October. Believing that it was his duty to fight, he again took a year off, this time to lead the Guelph contingent of the Royal Canadian Artillery on active service in South Africa. There he served with distinction and was a popular officer, but was shocked by the cruelty and destruction of war.

After returning to Montreal in 1901, McCrae resumed his medical career, becoming one of the leading academic physicians of his generation, with positions at McGill University and the various teaching hospitals in addition to a large private practice. Gregarious and outgoing, he was also a popular social and literary figure with a large circle of friends.

McCrae resigned from the artillery brigade in 1904 after reaching the rank of Major, and was not involved with the military again until the eruption of the Great War in August 1914. As part of the British Empire, Canada was automatically involved in the conflict, and within three weeks 45,000 Canadians had rushed to enlist, McCrae among them. As before his chief motivation was duty rather than a naïve rush to adventure: "I am going because I think every bachelor, especially if he has experience of war, ought to go," he wrote to a friend. "I am really rather afraid, but more afraid to stay at home with my conscience."

Even so, nothing could prepare him for the horror of trench warfare. Appointed as brigade-surgeon to the Canadian Field Artillery, he found himself posted to the trenches near the devastated city of Ypres in Belgium. On April 22, 1915, the Germans launched an unexpected attack, using deadly chlorine gas for the first time in the war. The Canadian forces held the line for 17 days, but at a terrible cost. Half of the brigade was killed, including one of McCrae's closest friends, who fell the day before he wrote *In Flanders Fields*.

McCrae was gratified by the success of his poem and its use as a call to arms, but his creative fires were now largely spent. It was the second-last poem he would write. Soon afterward he was promoted to lieutenant-colonel in charge of medicine at the No. 3 Canadian General Hospital in

France staffed by his friends and colleagues from McGill. Those who had known him in happier times were shocked by the worn and exhausted man he had become. The enormous number of wounded and the grim reports from subsequent battles affected him deeply. Relentlessly committed to duty, he insisted on living in a tent throughout the winter like his comrades at the front and had to be ordered into the heated officers' huts as his health failed. On January 24, 1918, McCrae was appointed as consulting physician to the First British Army, the first Canadian so honoured. But he did not live to take up this post. Four days later he died of pneumonia and meningitis, and was buried with full military honours in Wimereux, France.

McCrae's tragic belief that he "would have broken faith had he lived while so many had died" – seen as an example of his selfless devotion to duty by his grieving compatriots, but now recognized as an ominous symptom of despair born of post-traumatic stress – remains the final chapter in this story of the terrible cost of war.

During the early days of the Second Battle of Ypres a young Canadian artillery officer, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, was killed on 2nd May, 1915 in the gun positions near Ypres. An exploding German artillery shell landed near him. He was serving in the same Canadian artillery unit as a friend of his, the Canadian military doctor and artillery commander Major John McCrae.

As the brigade doctor, John McCrae was asked to conduct the burial service for Alexis because the chaplain had been called away somewhere else on duty that evening. It is believed that later that evening, after the burial, John began the draft for his now famous poem "In Flanders Fields".

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Videos that Educate and Entertain

I do find that on YouTube you can watch videos that help educate you on a whole variety of matters and here are five you might want to watch...

The Templar Code (Full Documentary)

<http://youtu.be/Pp2ENaiGr1g>

The Real History of Israel's Origins (Full Documentary)

<http://youtu.be/GHxcQgDM1nY>

A History of the Middle East since WWII

http://youtu.be/LdsmZo_1-gw

Vladimir Putin Full Length Documentary: The Putin System

<http://youtu.be/m5Rkom1RpKA>

Talking Canadian

A Moral to the Stories

From Sir Eddie Carey of the Windsor Priory

I was delighted to get in three stories from Eddie after I'd been asking all our Knights and Dames at the Windsor Investiture to contribute some stories for the newsletter and here they are...

The Master has to Have Help

An old Knight had secured the use of a vacant lot. He had dug out the weeds, removed the stones and rubbish, plowed it, harrowed it, planted seeds and cared for the plants until what had been a stony weed patch became a thing of beauty.

One day the Grand Prior passed that way and entered into conversation with the old Knight, who was loosening the soil with his hoe and pushing it up around the roots of the plants. The Grand Prior remarked, "Brother Jackson, you and the Lord sure have worked miracles with this old vacant lot." The Knight responded, "Yes sir, Grand Prior, yes sir, me and the Lord sure has done a fine job here; you ought to of seen all the weeds and stones and rubbish there was here when the Lord was looking after it all by Himself."

That's only a story. It may never have happened, but in it are lessons for Knights and Dames, just as there are lessons for them in some of the things that never happened that we teach in chivalry, Knighthood gives the Brother and Sister only the rough. Yes, it provides him with the vacant lot, with the implements, and even with the seed, but it is up to the Knight and Dame to do the plowing, the harrowing, the planting and the cultivating that will bring out the plants and the beauty. They must push the soil up around the roots of the plants.

The Prior, working alone, can't make SMOTJ bloom in this Priory, any more than the Lord was able to make a flower garden grow on the vacant lot without the help of the old Knight. Without the help of the Knights and Dames there will be here only a weed patch strewn with stones and rubbish. There will be no beautiful plants, their roots carefully covered with rich soil. SMOTJ can't be funneled into you. You have to use your brains in digging for the beauty of it. Put your mind to it and you may be astonished at the pleasure you will derive from seeing the soil become productive through your efforts. You may be astonished at the pleasure you will get from seeing the seeds of wisdom send up shoots that climb upward, turn their blossoms to the sun and burst into beautiful flowers of SMOTJ knowledge.

When the Man's put together right

Father wished a little relief from answering questions while he read the Sunday paper. The newspaper contained a full page map of the world. A brilliant idea was born. Dad took the map to the dining room table, cut it into zigzag pieces and told his little bunch of questions that she couldn't ask another until she put the map together. He figured out a peaceful two hours, but in a few minutes the tot called dad to see the completed work. "How did you get it together so quickly dad wished to know?" "As you started to cut the map up I noticed there was a picture of a man on the other side. I turn the pieces over, put the man together, and when the man was put together right the whole world was all right."

I need not point out the moral of the story. Have we ever had a calamity, have we ever had a crisis, have we ever been in any kind of mess that wasn't due to man not being put together right? When men are put together right, the whole world will be alright. It is every Knight and Dames job to see the man is put together right.

The stars we think we see

Any of us, looking into the heavens on a clear night, would say they saw millions of stars, and most of you would be astounded to be informed that we never actually see any of the stars that we think we see. What we actually see are rays of the light sent out by those stars. The stars are themselves

so many thousands, and millions, and billions of light years away that the rays we see tonight were on their way to us last night, the night before that, last week, last month, last year, and even for many, many years before that.

Some of the rays that will reach us tonight were on their way to us during every year any one of us has ever known. Some of the rays were on their way to us before SMOTJ was born. Some of the stars are so many billions of miles away that their rays have traveled day and night, at the speed of light, clear nights and dark nights, through generations, through centuries, through the rise and fall of nations and civilizations; since before Buddha imparted wisdom upon the world or Moses led his people from Egypt. Even before the first stone was laid at the Great White Temple which crowned Moriah's Mount, in order to reach just this evening and guide our feet on our way home from our nightly meetings. If the stars were close enough to come within the range of our vision, their brilliancy would destroy our mortal bodies.

Scientists tell us rays of light still are reaching us from stars that ceased to exist hundreds, or thousands, or even millions of years ago. Perhaps on the eve of the crucifixion a star was extinguished, but its rays are still traveling toward us and offering light. Equally possible is on the evening of the resurrection a new star was born, one that has not yet revealed its light to us as yet, but will someday offer a Great Light to those who follow us next month, next year, or many lifetimes from now.

The life of a human is but a moment in the span of time that takes the twinkle of the star to reach us. We live by rays of light produced by stars that have ceased to exist. Knights and Dames live by the rays of a Great Light produced two thousand years ago or more, those who follow us will be guided by what we have done, and we, who are here but a fraction of a moment, should hasten to start rays of SMOTJ Light on their way to brethren who shall live a century, or a hundred centuries, or thousands of centuries after we have ceased to exist.

So mote could be.

A Wee Bit of Humour

A Newfie decided there was money to be made in lumber so he bought a good chunk of land with lots of trees. He then headed for the local store to purchase a chain saw.

Having purchased one he then set about cutting down the trees. He didn't think he was doing too well so he went back to the store and complained about the chain saw. The salesman agreed to take it back and give him the next model up.

In another week the Newfie still wasn't satisfied with progress so back he went to the store to talk to the salesman. The salesman was puzzled about the lack of progress but agreed to give him the very top model they had.

Again the Newfie set to and while he cut more lumber he still didn't think he was doing as good as he should so... you guessed it... he went back to the store.

This time the salesman decided he should try out the chain saw to make sure it was working correctly so they both went out back. The salesman started the saw...

And the Newfie said "What's that noise?".



I noted this wee bit of humour...

An Englishman, lecturing on his travels, was speaking disparagingly about the Scots in Canada and the mixing of the race with the Indians.

'You'll find,' he said, 'a great number of Scots half-breeds and French halfbreeds, but you cannot find any English half-breeds.'

'Not surprisingly,' shouted a Scot in the audience. 'The squaws had to draw the line somewhere.'

This actually reminded me of the true story that in the Hudson Bay Companies Dictionary it sites an entry called "Improved Scot" which it says is a "native half breed of Scots descent".

I got that story from the late Sir Harold Nelson and I didn't believe him but he later came up with a scan of the actual entry.

A Christmas Story for the Little Ones

At time of going to press with this newsletter I regret to tell you that on November 28th 2014 Margo Fallis died from cancer. She will be missed by the many tens of thousands that have enjoyed her children's stories and poems over many years. You can read many of those at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/kids/childrens_stories.htm

The Christmas Bell
Written by Margo Fallis

Jingle jingle jingle! The box was filled with dozens of small gold, silver, red, and green bells. Katie carried the cardboard box over to the tree. She had a long piece of white cord and started stringing the bells onto it. She put a green one on first, then a red one, a silver one and a gold one. Katie used all the bells in the box; all but one – Melody. There wasn't room on the string for any more bells. The little silver bell sat alone in the box. Katie, anxious to put the chain of bells up on her Christmas tree, tossed the almost empty box across the room.

Jingle jingle jingle! The bells dangling across the tree giggled and jingled merrily as they hung among the brightly colored red, blue, orange, green, yellow and purple lights, the glass ornaments, the shimmering tinsel, and fragrant popcorn and cranberry ropes.

Melody rolled out of the box and went bumpety-bump across the wooden floor. She rolled, and rolled, and rolled, and went right down the heater vent. She slid down, down, down and fell onto the cold, cement floor in the basement. She rolled, and rolled, and rolled some more and stopped right outside a mouse hole, giving a little jingle. Melody opened her eyes, feeling rather dizzy. She looked around the dark room. There were cobwebs and piles of moldy newspapers, and it smelled damp.

Martin, the mouse, woke up when he heard the jingling sounds coming from outside his hole. He yawned, stretched, and got out of bed. Brrrrr, it was cold. Rubbing his furry arms, he walked towards the hole. He saw a small silver bell lying on the floor. Curious, he picked it up, using two hands, and carried it inside his hole. He noticed how shiny it was. He shook it. Jingle jingle jingle! Martin started to laugh. He shook it again. Jingle jingle jingle!

"Stop that! You're making me dizzy!" Melody said. Martin dropped the bell. He was so surprised to hear it talk. He looked at the silver bell and noticed it had big green eyes and a cheerful smile. "Hi! My name is Melody. I'm a jingle bell."

"How did you end up outside my mouse hole?" Martin asked.

"I rolled down the heater vent and then across the floor, which, by the way, is very cold. What's your name?" asked Melody.

"Martin," the mouse replied. He walked over to her, picked her up and put her on his bed. He looked at her and saw his reflection. "Hee hee hee," he giggled.

"Why are you laughing?"

"I can see myself. You are so shiny. My nose is cute," Martin said, grinning.

"It's cold down here, Martin. Why don't you move upstairs where it's warmer?"

"I can't do that. There's a C-A-T up there. He'll eat me."

"What's a C-A-T?" Melody asked, giving a little jingle as she moved.

"A cat! There's a big, fluffy, meowing cat that lives upstairs. If I go up there, he'll gobble me up. I have to stay in the basement. It is too cold down here for the cat. Sometimes I get hungry, especially when I smell food cooking."

Melody looked at Martin. He was a skinny mouse. His nose was long and his eyes were bulgy and dirty brown. "Martin, I can help you. If you take me back upstairs, I will help you find a way to stop the cat from eating you."

Martin got excited. "You can? Okay. Let's do it. I'll carry you upstairs." Martin picked Melody up and carried her up each step to the top, which wasn't easy, as he was a little mouse. They squeezed under the closed door. "Now what?" he asked, "where's the cat?"

"Shhhhh," Melody whispered. Both of them could smell gingerbread baking. "Follow me," she urged. She rolled across the floor toward the living room. Martin followed, looking behind him and all around for the cat. "Look at the tree," she told him. The two stood silently, gazing up at the huge Christmas tree. It was beautiful. "There wasn't enough room on the string for me. See all the other bells?" Melody sighed and felt sad. Katie was sitting on the carpeted floor, looking at all the packages under the tree.

"Uh, Melody. What about the cat?" Martin whispered, terrified.

"Oh yes, the cat. Here's what we do. Let's go back into the kitchen and find the plate of chocolate fudge on the table. I've got an idea." She rolled onto the linoleum floor and Martin stayed close to her. He helped her up to the table and they stood in front of the plate of fudge. It was dark brown and had nuts in it and smelled so chocolaty. "Delicious," said Melody.

Martin sniffed it. "Mmmm, it does smell good." He took a finger and pulled a piece off and ate it. "It is delicious," he said, reaching for more.

"Don't, Martin. We need it. Help me," Melody said. They gathered all the fudge and started shaping it. After a while they stood back. Martin licked his fingers. They had made a giant, chocolate fudge mouse. It had a pointed nose like Martins and a long fudge tail.

"Wow! It's me!" said Martin. His eyes bulged out even further.

"Let's hide over there, behind that plate of peppermint sticks," she told Martin. "Be very quiet." She started calling the cat. "Here kitty. Here kitty. Here kitty."

"Yikes! What are you doing?" Martin asked. "Why are you calling the cat?"

"Shhhh. Just watch."

The cat came strutting into the kitchen. He looked up and saw the fudge mouse. "Meow," it went, thinking it was a real mouse. It pounced onto the table, nearly crunching Melody. It started eating the fudge. It ate, and ate, and ate, until there was none left. When it had finished, the cat sat on the table feeling very sick. That was a lot of fudge and nuts that it had eaten.

Melody rolled over to Martin. "Jump out and start yelling at the cat. Tell him that you want him to eat you too!"

"What?" Martin gulped. "What if he does eat me?"

"Trust me. He won't."

"Okay," Martin said. He jumped out from behind the peppermints and ran up to the cat. He started shouting, "Eat me. Eat me too. One mouse isn't enough. Eat me!"

The cat looked at Martin. He was so full of 'mouse' that the thought of eating another one made him feel very sick. "No! No! No! I never want to eat another mouse again in my life." The cat jumped off the table and ran into the other room.

Melody smiled. "There now, Martin, the cat will never bother you again," she assured him. Martin went down to the basement and gathered all his belongings and brought them upstairs to a mouse hole near the Christmas tree. Melody, not having anywhere else to go, moved in with him. Every night they enjoyed listening to the bells jingle, watching the lights glowing, and smelling the popcorn and cranberries. It was going to be a merry Christmas for both of them.

What better way to celebrate the Christmas season than to read stories to your kids about polar bears, Christmas monsters and candy canes. You can read a wee selection of these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/kids/stories/xmas.htm>

Notable Upcoming Events

Canadian International

December 11 Christmas Social Toronto, at the RCMI 5.30 pm to 8.00 pm

December 14 Christmas Social Windsor at Windsor Yacht Club 3 pm until 6 pm. The OSMTH Secretary General will be attending.

January 19, 2015 Toronto AGM and History Night at the RCMI from 5.30 pm

February 28, 2015 Toronto Templar Valentine Dinner Dance Social. Will be held at <http://thecapitoleventtheatre.com>

April 12-19, 2015 Tomar, Portugal, International Meeting
September 30 - October 4 Cologne, Germany, International Meeting
September 25, 2015 Toronto Investiture, dinner at RCMI to follow.
April 13 - 17, 2016 Copenhagen, Denmark, International Meeting
November 7, 2015 Windsor Investiture
Fall 2016, Sophia, Bulgaria, International Meeting

Note: Some of the dates can be approximate so to get more specific information do email your Prior for up to date information. Their email addresses are at the foot of this newsletter.

Priory Contacts:

Grand Priory of Canada

[H. E. Commander \(Ret'd\) Sir Peter L. Kelly, CD, GCTJ](#)

Priory of the Ascension of our Lord, Windsor

[H. E. Major Sir Roy Embury, CD, GOTJ](#)

St James Priory, Toronto

[H. E. Sir Nick Migliore](#)

Priory of Simon Peter, Ottawa

[H. E. Sir William Megill](#)

Commandary of Edmonton

[Sir Robert MacMullen](#)

Preceptory of Halifax, Nova Scotia

[Dame Anne C. Matthewman](#)

Newsletter Editors

[Sir Alastair McIntyre](#) GOTJ Tel: +1 519 351 7020 EST

[H. E. The Rev Dame Nola Crewe](#), Grand Chancellor.
