



Retirees Association of Mohawk College NEWSLETTER Autumn, 2008



Retirees Brave the waters of the might Grand River - and Survive!

See story on page 8.

Retirees' Luncheon

Last June 26, over 100 retirees tramped back to the college for the President's fifth annual Retirees' Luncheon. The food was excellent and the company reminiscent of old times. President MaryLynn West-Moynes gave an interesting summary of new activities at Mohawk, although she did not indicate when the vast renovations at Saltfleet (Stoney Creek Campus) would at last be finished. Some of us learned that the President was resigning to move closer to home. (A new president has not yet been named.)

If you missed out, we urge you to attend next year. (If you did not receive an invitation in the mail, please contact the college to rectify the situation.)

Upcoming Events

December 4: **Geritol Follies** with lunch at the Sheraton Hotel. (Sold out)

January 28: **Chinese New Year's Dinner** at **Le Chinois**. Contact Marie Yakimoff.

March: Luncheon show at Carmen's (in planning stage)

April: **Married Alive** at **Stage West**

May: **Country Music Legends** at the **Drayton Theatre**

June 10: **General Annual Meeting** at **Michaelangelo's**

July: **Camelot** at **Grand Bend Theatre**

Fall: trip to **Shaw** or **Stratford** or **Toronto**

December: **2 Pianos 4 Hands** at **St. Jacobs**

Retirees Association of Mohawk College Newsletter

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Recently having a 12:45 appointment in the large plaza at the corner of Upper Ottawa St and Stone Church Road and knowing that there was a Vietnamese Restaurant hard by, we decided to lunch there beforehand. The restaurant is the **Pho Mai** and is technically located in Unit #24 at 1070 Stone Church Road E.. Since we were running a bit late, we forwent the customary beer and settled for the green tea which appeared almost magically on the table. Mary ordered a seafood noodle soup and I a beef noodle soup. Mary, who is somewhat of a connoisseur of Vietnamese noodle soups, found it the best she had ever tasted. Unlike other Vietnamese restaurants we have lunched, at we were given knives, forks and spoons; I found more awkward to eat the noodles with these than chop sticks and a ceramic spoon. Lunch with tax and tip was \$19.

A relatively new restaurant, **Charlie West** 1686 Main ST W, had been advertising in the local papers and we decided to lunch there one summer day. The concept of their "market lunch" is rather unusual in that it is a cafeteria cum buffet; for the advertised price of \$8 you can make one pass at the buffet. You enter, pay for your lunch and beverage – in our case beer -- and proceed to pick up the food. The offerings although somewhat eclectic had an Asian slant. There were hot and cold appe-

tizers followed by hot entrées which were served by the staff. The offerings while uniformly good were somewhat limited. The rather mediocre deserts and coffee, which can be picked up later if wanted, are included in the price of the lunch. The serving staff was friendly and helpful and told us the buffet changes often. Lunch with beer and tax was \$29.

Al Dente at 250 King George

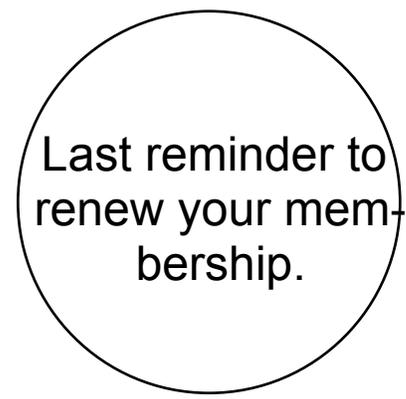


Rd in Brantford is, as the reader might suspect, an Italian restaurant specializing in pasta. It was a warm day when we visited and we decided to lunch on the patio rather than in the restaurant proper. The patio was most attractive being located under a canopy of vines with rather rustic furniture. Mary and I both ordered a pint of Nickel Brook ale and decided on our lunch. We both ordered soup of the day and Chicken Manicotti. The soup was a delightful cream of mushroom with a strong lemony overtone. The manicotti filing was shredded chicken and spinach. The manicotti was excellent. The service was friendly and helpful if somewhat slow – the patio was crowded, surpris-

ingly so for a Thursday. Lunch with beer tax and tip was \$43.

Mary had lunch with our friend Kathy in Paris recently and when she told me that it was at the **Arlington Hotel** 106 Grand River St N it brought back memories. Growing up in Brantford, as a teenager, the Arlington was renowned as a watering hole that did not worry about the age (or lack thereof) of their patrons.

Subsequently Mary and I lunched there. In the intervening sixty plus years the old beverage rooms – "Men" and "Ladies and Escorts" – have been replaced by an upscale bar and a white table cloth restaurant. Indeed it is now a very charming hostelry. After asking our friendly and charming server what they had on tap, Mary chose a *Stella Artois* and I an Alexander Keith. We both had the *soupe du jour*, a lovely celery and cilantro purée with just a hint of spiciness. We both ordered the pickerel which arrived on a piece of halved baguette with a delicious *ailloli* sauce. Lunch with beer, tax and tip was \$61.



The Saga Continues ...

Last time I wrote about the travails of using Windows Vista. For some unknown reason about 2 and a half months after I started using Vista, it suddenly started recognizing my networked data drive. I have no idea why it took so long or why it finally did it, but hey, I'm not going to complain about something that is finally working with Vista. I only wish I could give you more good news about Microsoft's latest and worst operating system. Mind you, underneath the Graphical User Interface (GUI) there may have been myriad good and useful changes, I don't know. I only know that working with Vista day after day is not an experience I could recommend to anyone.

Fortunately, although it dominates the market, Windows is not your only choice for an operating system. First of all, there is the McIntosh. Back in the day, over twenty years ago, I had an Atari ST with a GUI (Graphical User Interface) that was often touted as the "Poor man's McIntosh". It could run circles around its contemporary DOS (non-GUI) competitors, but alas, it was underfunded and poorly promoted. And the uninformed "powers of the day" demanded "compatibility". Although the ST used 3½ inch disks while the DOS computers still used 5¼, as soon as the DOS comput-

ers switched to 3½, we had about as much "compatibility" as was needed. I could prepare documents and spreadsheets on my ST and with the disk transfer them to the DOS (and early Windows) machines - and vice versa, although I seldom if ever wanted to. But I was talking about the McIntosh. I've never used one, but I have the feeling that, having experience with Windows and the ST, moving to a Mac would not be all that difficult. The problem is that it requires all new hardware - and somewhat more expensive hardware at that. Still, if you were a first-time computer buyer, I would recommend that you seriously consider a McIntosh.

Not that the Mac doesn't have its quirks. Two I have heard about and believe still to exist are that there is no button to eject a CD/DVD disk. You must instruct the software to do it. There are some good safety (safety for your data) reasons for this set-up, but for me, it means I have less control over my environment. The other quirk is probably only of interest to "power users". When you activate the "file open/save/save as" dialogue box, you can do more than load in or save data. You can actually rename a file or delete one (not the file you're actually working on). You can't do this on a Mac. Again, there are logical reasons, but for me, it would be an inconvenience I wouldn't appreciate.

The other major alternative to Windows is Linux. Linux has the advantage of running on the

same hardware (or older) as Windows, so there is no output for hardware. Linux is free (or nearly so depending on how you get it), so there's no outlay there. And there's also a vast library of software that is, you guessed it, free! So why doesn't Linux dominate the market? I call Linux the "Not quite ready for prime time operating system". Here's why: As long as you stick with the common tools like an Internet browser, e-mail client, word processor, spreadsheet or presentation app, you're fine. There are also dozens of other applications and games in the Linux "library" that are easy to install - and free. And all the applications I mentioned earlier work exactly like their Windows cousins (Open Office, Firebird, Thunderbird - and did I mention they're all free?). But



Spinning the Web (and other tales)

By
Fred Oldfield

when you move to less commonly used programs, programs that are not in the "library" you have to use a command shell and some confusing commands to install these programs. For me it's like going back 25 years in time, and

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PIGS

I had read all the books I ever needed to read so farming should be a snap, right? Sure ... As a rule farmers are not intrusive types. They don't want to interfere. They know that you have a lot of education and they respect your right to learn through experience – at least that's what my charitable side says. Sometimes I really do wonder however if maybe there is a slippery mean streak deep down in those "I'm not going to interfere" – quarter smiles. Sort of like the Mona Lisa. For-



**The
Farming Life**
By
Geoff Brooker

get I said that, it couldn't be true, and heaven knows they are good neighbours when called upon. But just the same ... Anyway I asked Dan McEachern if I could buy four weener pigs.

Perhaps I should explain that it is not weiner as in 'hot dog' but as in just weened. Dan said "OK". I hate to perpetuate a stereotype but most farmers really are men of few words. Not always, mind you, and their wives definitely do not have to subscribe to the same

stereotyping but I won't name names. Having said that, you can dig out the information you need if you ask the right questions.

We had acquired a cow and But that's another story. We had, to put it bluntly, an over abundance of rich Guernsey milk and we had to find something to do with an extra gallon of liquid gold each day. Pigs were the answer. We actually got it right and arrived back at the farm with two little squealers which could run like stink if they ever got loose, so with great care, we put them in the pen prepared with fresh straw. One of my good city friends Ron, married to Sharon, showed particular interest and wanted to pay for half of the venture. I said 'OK'. Ron paid for one weener and for a goodly portion of the pig feed and we became gentlemen pig farmers – although Ron and Sharon could only view their investment after a forty-five minute drive on weekends.

Carmen the cow kept producing her share and after a few months of quite astronomical growth the penned twenty pound weeners had grown to about two hundred pounds each. If you want to grow pigs quickly you have to have more than one so they will compete for the food. Pigs are pretty bright animals and clean too, endeavouring to keep their bi-products in one corner of the pen, but when it comes to food they eat like ... pigs.

Market day arrived. Ron arrived and I had borrowed a one ton stake truck from my neighbour Clare, the truck being owned by his father, Everett. Remember that this was our first pig venture and we have had many "learning experiences" since then but back then, in our ignorance we figured the pigs would happily walk down the corridor and up the ramp into the truck. Pigs are built very low to the ground. Pigs are very smooth — no handles unlike cattle that have horns. Pigs are very strong. They are also very smart and above all, pigs are stubborn. Well, the two young novice farmers knew something about being stubborn but after an hour of struggling, four hundred pounds of pork had managed to by-pass the ramp and were happily enjoying their first taste of freedom, wandering around the back lawn and heading for the ripening vegetables in the garden. We knew we had met our match. There was only one thing to do and an emergency call went out to Clare; he was home and arrived with Everett in less than fifteen minutes.

In the years since that first incident we have used a variety of pig loading tricks. These tricks usually involved seduction - with ripe fruit and lots of patience but on that September day the time for guile had passed. Ron and I had successfully shooed the critters away from the crops and were approaching exhaustion when the fresh troops arrived. The

pigs were fresh as the cucumbers they were hoping to eat.

Clare, about forty and tanned darkly from both farming and masonry contracting in the sun was followed by Everett, sixty-ish and bedecked with a fresh set of clean overalls, approached the crisis with disconcerting calm. Clare looked at us with expressionless wedge-wood blue eyes and said "Uhhuh" Everett said "I see you have a little problem". Now, they didn't really laugh or even smile but I'm sure there was a smirk in there somewhere. "Mind if we give it a try", this from Clare. "I would really appreciate it" I blurted, panic not too far from the surface. The technique involved using plywood guides to return the porkers to the barn. The truck and ramp were then relocated at the entrance.

"Have you got a pail?" said Clare; again with little expression. It seems pigs will back up with a pail over their head. I wouldn't want to try it with a nine hundred pound boar but these fellows could be backed up the ramp. With the 'handles' available – ears and tail – they were cajoled up into the truck. In fifteen more minutes the pigs were loaded and the drama resolved.

"Do you need any help driving over to Hogeterp's?" asked Everett. Hogeterp's was the local abattoir and butcher. "No, No but thanks so very much" I said resonating sincerely. The drive and the unloading was, as my father-in-law would say "duck soup" but when we had left the farm that day and for several weeks thereafter whenever I saw Everett or any other local farmer, I'm sure they were smirking – word gets out you know.

By-Pass: An Affair of the Heart

Common as By-Pass surgery is these days, it always comes as a shock when it shows up for you. It was the day before my wife and I were supposed to fly out of Toronto for Amsterdam to begin our annual 8-week vacation in Friesland (N.W. Province of the Netherlands). My doctor phoned and told me I had tested positive in a stress test which meant I had failed the test and was probably suffering from Angina (a condition where the heart does not receive enough blood and causes chest pains which dissipate as soon as you sit down and rest.) I thought I had a touch of heartburn - occasionally, since April when I was bonspieling in Whitby (7 games).

My doctor assured me that we could likely still go on vacation and set me up to meet with a cardiologist at 25 Charlton Avenue, one of the Sullivan's (there are three) who saw me at 5:45 pm. Everybody went home, but the Holland-France soccer game was on in the waiting room.

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Cruising on the Grand River. Read the review on page 8.

Music before the cruise and during lunch only added to the delightful day.



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After my E.C.G. Dr. Hugh Sullivan advised me that because of my active lifestyle curling and cycling, I should attend for this cardiography/angioplasty procedure at the Hamilton General Hospital. It was to be about a half an hour where they shoot some dye in around my heart to determine blockages or closures in the arteries leading to the heart. Then, where necessary, balloon the artery out by inflating the catheter or inserting a permanent stent (a wire mesh tube to support the artery after the procedure is over). It was still June, we could still make it to Europe.

It was early July before I was given an appointment with these busy people at the H. I. U. (Heart Investigation Unit) at Hamilton General. Catheterization requires a pre-op, so I received a package in the mail which told me what to expect and when to be there. My procedure was to be performed by Dr. Mehta on July 8.

After I was prepped, there was a slight delay, but soon I was wheeled in, moved on to a narrow table and my groin was frozen. After 20 - 25 minutes they were done and I was sent back to my base.

The aperture the doctor had made was plugged and I had to lie still on my back until the bleeding stopped. Staunching the bleeding is the most important aspect of this procedure

and the most dangerous apart from cardiac arrest which is quoted as 1,000 to 1 shot for the balloon procedure and a hundred to one for the stent. As my Italian neighbour often says "Whadya gonna do, Dave?"

After a short while, Dr. Mehta came over and politely advised us that nothing was done. He tried to get through one, but it was plugged completely and the second was about 70% stopped up. A second doctor came up and up and they recommended a by-pass, and the best person for that would be a Dr. Teoh. Unfortunately, they could not say how long a wait time I would have. I was floored and went home.

What happened next, blew me away. Dr. Teoh's secretary phoned and said we could see Dr. Teoh on the following Monday.

His office is located across the street from the hospital in the medical building on Victoria Street. Judy knew who we were as soon as we arrived, no one else was waiting - also a positive sign when you go into a doctor's office. Stripped down to my underwear, Dr. Teoh explored my body, especially down the inside calf of my right leg. He seemed satisfied and the examination was over. I sat up and asked the question on everyone's mind: "When?" "Thursday or Friday of this week" was the reply which I quickly accepted much to the surprise of my wife and son, but they soon acquiesced. It was late in

the day so the arrangements for pre-op and operation were phoned to us the following day: 8 am Thursday morning, check-in at 6.

The pre-op package had a diagram of the human body with shaded areas that needed to be shaved, a situation I took quite seriously. I managed to wet shave the inside of my legs in the shower, but I knew my son had clippers. I started at the bottom and went to the top in front of the bathroom mirror, around the sides and half way up the arms. My wife thought she had a different man in the house looking like a fanned plucked chicken, but only from the front!

Next I had to scrub myself in the shower with a special pre-op scrubber in the evening, and again in the morning - 4 am in the morning! Would I be so tired I wouldn't need an anaesthetic?

Being admitted at 6 am is part of the morning activity at Hamilton General. Not much else happens. Family members are encouraged to attend, then down a line of waiting beds and eager people ready to disrobe me and give me one of those gowns designed to keep one in bed and on one's back. Three little pills and the lights were going out.

Apparently, a nurse comes out half way through the operation to keep the family advised that all was well. Then, at the end,

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Dr. Teoh came out with assurances that the whole thing was over successfully.

On into recovery and the ICU Which is the busiest and noisiest place in the hospital. My heart developed an uneven rhythm on Friday (a common occurrence after an operation), so I got to stay in ICU For two days - such joy - before going up by wheel chair to Fifth Floor South (5S).

Ah, peace and some serious sleeping at last. All post-op cardiac patients end up on 5S, ask anyone who had a bypass. People were there from Niagara area, St. Catharines, Welland and Thunder Bay (and that's just in my room!)

After all was done, I had a 14 inch surgical scar down my chest and a 25 staple scar down the inside of my right leg. But I was weak as a kitten from this major operation.

Each nurse did an assessment on me at the beginning of each shift and changed the bandages (hence the shaving). And there was a wire through my heart in case I needed to be jump started.

Yes, there was a nurse from the Mohawk class of '91, a mother of two. My wife made five trips to Hamilton General and on the fifth, she took me home. I was so happy to be out in the sunshine and rain. They provided me with a booklet of instruction for recovery, including exercises as well as

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I don't like it. That's why I'm writing this in Windows and not Linux. I have both installed on this computer, and I'd rather be running Linux. But some programs, like this desktop publishing app either aren't available or what is available works quite differently and requires a rather steep learning curve I haven't got time to invest in. The same problem with the graphics/photo editing app.

Still, Linux has come a long way (it's still the preferred operating system for most of those Internet servers out there because it's so stable). If your needs are modest, Linux may fit the bill, and the price is right!

There are several other much-lesser known operating systems, but these are the main ones. I have long predicted that Microsoft will someday get its "come-uppence". If the next version of Windows is anywhere near as bad as Vista, I predict users will swarm to the Mac (if they need new hardware) or Linux. I honestly don't believe they'll be sorry, either.



YES, I'M A SENIOR CITIZEN!

I'm the life of the party..... even if it lasts until 8 p.m.

I'm very good at opening childproof caps... with a hammer.

I'm usually interested in going home before I get to where I am going.

I'm awake many hours before my body allows me to get up.

I'm smiling all the time because I can't hear a thing you're saying.

I'm very good at telling stories; over and over and over and over...

I'm aware that other people's grandchildren are not nearly as cute as mine.

I'm so cared for --- long term care, eye care, private care, dental care.

SUCCESS:

At age 4 success is . . . not peeing in your pants.

At age 12 success is . . . having friends.

At age 17 success is . . . having a driver's license.

At age 35 success is . . . having money.

At age 50 s success is . . . having money.

At age 70 success is . . . having a drivers license.

At age 75 success is . . . having friends.

At age 80 success is . . . not peeing in your pants.

What a Beautiful Day!

On Thursday Aug 14th 35 Mohawk retirees and their friends met at the Grand River Cruises large building. There we were met by Donna Dunlop who was the planner for this trip. Donna informed us that we would be on the river boat called the Queen, the craft shop was open and we were all meeting in the auditorium where coffee was available and baked goods could be purchased.

When everyone was there we were welcomed and shown a lovely video about the Grand River from its source to its mouth. It showed the towns that the Grand flows through and the major rivers that feed into it.

Now the mood picked up with the introduction of a group called the Blazing Fiddles. These four young people, two fiddlers, a bass player and the piano player who also played the spoons and a bongo drum. All were great musicians in their own right. There was a variety of music from Dr Zivago to Fiddler on the Roof. The audience was clapping to the music and seemed to enjoy everything.

After the concert we headed to the Queen and found our seats and after a short intro by the Captain dinner was served; fresh homemade bread, garden salad, roast

beef, mashed potatoes, mixed beans and carrots and gravy. There was enough to satisfy all. After a small break the apple pie, tea and coffee were served. Throughout dinner we had music from one of the fiddlers who then changed boats in the middle of the river.

It was one of our first sunny days and the scenery was lovely. We saw Great Blue Herons, turtles and fishermen.

We disembarked around 3:30 after a pleasant afternoon with great company.

- Isabel Kerr

ning gag was the height difference between the taller Cher and the her shorter husband, Sunni.

The performer did not miss a step in their resurrection to the stage of Elvis, the Supremes and others.

After nearly 3 hours of performing, and over 50 different songs, the curtain came down. The young cast of singers, musicians and dancers received a well deserved standing ovation.

We returned to the college well fed and entertained.

- Ronald McDonald

Legends

After the sun burned off the early morning fog, a full bus of MOHAWK COLLEGE RETIREES and guests travelled to Mennonite Country.

The day was sunny and bright. After seeing many horses and cows grazing over will kept farms, the bus arrived at Crossroads restaurant in Elmira.

A full noon hour meal was served with great attention to detail. Homemade deserts were particularly tasty.

The restaurant had a store attached where many local goods were being sold.

After lunch, we travelled another 30 minutes to the Draydon Festival Theatre to see LEGENDS (a salute to musical pioneers).

Music, comedy and magic were presented to a full house. A run-



THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE:

- 1 -- You believe in Santa Claus.
- 2 -- You don't believe in Santa Claus.
- 3 -- You are Santa Claus.
- 4 -- You look like Santa Claus.