

Thunderbird Bulletin

Camosun Gyro Club, Victoria, B.C., Canada



KEEPING UP

This is a bit of a thin issue for the first one of 2021.

My appeal for material may have gone largely unnoticed, but we were still able to put something together because some Gyros stepped up. Many thanks to them.

However, others have remained as silent as a Covid case in BC.

If we are to have a *Bulletin*, it is for all of us, all of you, and it cannot be the Editor's effort alone. Not only is that dictatorial (!), it is also inefficient, since the value of the *Bulletin* comes from what you – the Gyros of Camosun – put into it.

So, if you have not done a bio, sent in a story, or a traveller's tale or answered the 4 Questions, ... do so now!

Colm

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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year

It seems like yesterday and so long ago all at the same time: a new year, with new hope and new optimism. The year 2020 may not seem to have turned out that way.

However, we still have so much to look forward to, especially knowing that we are all part of that fraternity of friendship that is Gyro.

We're much more than a fraternity – though that is our basic foundation – we are a community. Like any community, we have our differences and we have "accommodations" to make with our fellows, but we all emerge richer for the compromises and discover new ways of seeing.

What 2021 will bring is anyone's guess, but we can influence it somewhat if we remember who we are: Camosun Gyros.

A WORD FROM PRESIDENT MIKE WEDEKIND
KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE



We are not doing too well having a Christmas/ Holiday Party. We had to cancel December 19th and now January 26th is out of the question; However, risking being called a “Dam Fool” by the late W.C. Fields, I have tentatively booked February 23rd at the University Club Restaurant. I think that we must give up the idea of having a Christmas/Holiday party and now plan for a Valentine’s Party!

We had a Board meeting on January 14th and the Minutes will be on our website, as well as here in the *Bulletin*. The first Motion out of the gate was to appoint Denis Moffatt as a Director with the role of Secretary.

Denis is a Past International President of Gyro, and I cannot say too much about our appreciation for his agreement to take on this important role for us. Thank you, Denis.

The Board also accepted the offer of Carol Navickas together with Dawn Cameron to review all our documentary history from 1949 with the plan to record our history for publication. This is a huge undertaking, and we look forward to hearing from Carol about how this project will develop.

I am planning on having another trivia contest later this month or early in February. I didn’t receive any replies to my help wanted ad in the last Bulletin about an understudy, so here it is again: We are looking for, or – perhaps more precisely – I am looking for, an understudy of my job as Website Editor. I’m happy to say that, presently, there is no urgency, but this will inevitably change one day. I think that the old boy Scout’s motto is most appropriate here: “Be Prepared!”. There is nothing particularly difficult about the job, but it does require some computer software knowledge such as being able to add a folder to your own computer and some thought, (healthy brain work).

Finally, let’s try to be numerous at Vancouver BC’s open meeting (see page 10) sounds fascinating!

In Gyro Friendship,

Mike

CAMOSUN GYRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS Meeting
Thursday January 14, 2021 @ 1600 via Zoom

Minutes

Chair: Mike Wedekind

Present: Mike Wedekind, Jay Fray, Ray Mew, Hans Rodenburg, Tim Evans, Rick McKay, Pat Marshall, Colm Foy, Denis Moffatt. Regrets: Ron Frolek.

Called to Order at 16:02 by President Mike.

Appointment of Secretary: Mike moved that Denis Moffatt be appointed as a Director of the Camosun Gyro Club to fill the vacancy following the death of Ed Navikas as Secretary. Seconded by Hans. Passed.

Minutes of Meeting 16 October 2021: Hans moved they be approved. Seconded by Pat. Passed.

Treasurer's Report: Jay noted he had little to report as the Club has been inactive. The Bank Balance is \$56,000, \$10,000 in reserve for our normal Installation weekend leaving \$46,000 in Club Equity. The current deficit to be funded by members is approximately \$300. Given the small amount to be charged to each Gyro recommending that billing be deferred to later in the year, which would then include any additional costs. In January we will need to bill out District IV annual dues to each Gyro – at the reduced charge of \$15.00 each. Most Gyros will have very small balances owing at the end of January, therefore recommending that statements only be sent out for any balances in excess of \$100.

Jay will ask Colm if he would be able to include this information in the next Club bulletin.

Jay moved that his Report be approved. Seconded by Hans. Passed.

Mike will send out letter to members regarding dues.

Club Activities February and March: Mike noted that he had booked the Dining Room at the UVic Club for Feb. 8 but due to PHO directive this will not happen. He has re booked the room for Feb. 23 contingent on Covid 19 directives.

Written Club History: Carol Navikas has indicated an interest in possibly creating a written history of the Camosun Gyro Club. The Board indicated full support for such an initiative including financial support if required. Denis will contact Carol to discuss further and report back to Board.

Other Business: Mike raised the question of activities that might be considered which would keep Members connected and involved during the current lock down. Discussion resulted in suggestions such as another Zoom Trivia session, and virtual meetings with speakers.

There being no further Business, Mike asked for a motion to terminate the meeting. Moved by Jay, Seconded by Hans. Passed at 16:30. Next Meeting at the call of the Chair.

Denis Moffatt, Secretary

A Tale of Two Systems

by
David Caul

I had been in bad shape, having been in and out of the hospital since before Christmas. The three different doctors had no idea why my leg and bad ankle had swollen up painfully, nor why the drugs I was on were not working.

My friend Joanna mentioned my poor condition to an indigenous healer at her church and he came right over. I had stopped eating and taking fluids for the preceding week and the healer, Dr. Joe Turner, asked me if I wanted to go on as I was or get better. My frustration gave me cause to answer his question in the latter. I had no hope.

He told me to drink 6-8 bottles of water each day and came to sit at my bedside over the next 4 days. It turned out my kidneys had failed and were not flushing the poison created in the damaged ankle that had been causing the swelling and pain. The GPs I had seen had not linked the kidney failure to the leg damage. Within 4 days I was able to get to the bathroom with a walker on my own.

Alarmed, my GP then ordered up blood tests and an MRI- wait time 4-5 weeks. Pain stricken, I paid \$1100 to get the MRI right away and was told there was nothing unusual about the arthritic ankle: nothing broken. A subsequent X-Ray indicated no break in the ankle.

In February, Joanna and I (equipped with a walker) went to Mexico for a medical vacation to get my ankle injected with an embryonic stem cell treatment that I desperately needed literally to get back on my feet. I took my MRI result to the Puerto Vallarta surgeon I had visited in the past. He told me the \$1100 MRI purchased in Victoria was of no value and sent me to the in-house lab for a new one. In 20 minutes (against a four-week wait in Canada) and \$40.00 later, I was back in the surgeon's office. We could hardly believe our eyes when the surgeon put the image up on his screen! The MRI showed a large bone spur on the arthritic ankle digging into the tendons.

The good doctor said the spur must immediately be removed to give relief, for the pain intensified when weight bearing. This was a Tuesday, and we were scheduled to fly out on the Friday.

What to do? Surgery in Canada could take months just to have a surgeon review the file.

This where a user-pay medical system differs!

Looking at his schedule the surgeon said, "Can you stay another few days? I could do the operation Thursday this week." So.....on Thursday, I was admitted to the hospital, prepped and put under to have a laparoscopic surgery.

Now in a wheelchair, Joanna had to transport me until the Monday for the follow-up review and the sought-after stem cell treatment to aid in the healing.

All in, the cost was \$900. Done and dusted!

A Good Muslim by Nasser Shojania

As I was walking along the shore of the Pacific Ocean, thinking about the past, an event from December 19th 1999, which happened to be World Religion Day, came to mind.

I was sitting at my computer writing a chapter of my book, *A Persian Letter to a Pious Mother from an Agnostic Son*, when the phone rang. A man's voice came on the line saying would I mind coming to talk about the Muslim religion to an event for World Religion Day.

"Why ask me?" said I; "I don't believe in God and indeed, I am still looking for him. Why don't you go to the mosque in Quadra street and ask one of them?" He said he went there, and they said they didn't have anyone for that day. (The reason, I assume, they did not like that day is because it had too many number 9s in it and 9 is the favorite number of the Baha'i religion, which many Muslims – especially Iranian ones – regard as heretical and schismatic.)

I asked how he had found me, and he said that he had been to the pharmacy on Quadra Street, which was run by a Persian doctor, and he had asked if they knew anybody who could do such a presentation. They had replied that, if anybody could do it, it would be Dr. Shojania.

On that basis, I said I can come and talk about a good Muslim, to which he agreed and gave me instructions about the event in a hall at the University of Victoria. On the day, three religions were represented. First, a gentleman spoke for 10 minutes about Judaism. He was followed by a second gentleman who talked about Christianity.

When my turn came, I said, "I know a good Muslim and she is my mother: her religion was Islam." It is important", I reminded the audience, "to note that the word 'Islam' comes from the Arabic root *selm*, meaning to surrender, to give up, and place your will in the hand of God". To do that, my mother would do "Tavakkol" which means "trusting in God's plan" or "to make God your advocate".

My mother never talked about her religion, but I saw that she was praying five times a day. She seemed to have direct line with God. One night, when her cardiologist son came home from the office, over supper my mother noticed evidence of addiction in his eyes. She knew that using drugs at that age would lead to poverty, cheating, lying and all sorts of immorality.

That night, after her late-night prayer in Arabic, she sat away from her prayer mat and asked God in Farsi: "Either cure him or take him away from me while he is still as good and innocent as the first day that you gave him to me."

The next morning Hamid was found dead in bed. He had choked on the eggplant stew that our mother had cooked for him.

After I finished my speech a Buddhist approached me and asked, "You praised the religion of your mother so much, how come you are yourself irreligious?" I said, "I know a lullaby, but I still cannot sleep!" He reached into his pocket, pulled out a piece of paper and wrote it down.

Measure for Measure or As You Like It?

by

Colm Foy

In north North America (nNA), bakers and cooks will all have had the experience of working with pounds & ounces, cups, spoons, quarts, fluid ounces and, even, metric measures, as in the rest of the world (even in Mexico, if you're wondering about the "north North America" bit). People still talk in feet and inches for almost any length measurement and pounds seem inextricably linked to body weight, or butter, which, if you think about it, is a bit worrying.

Worse, how about the dates? Not the edible kind, the year kind. Only in nNA can 12/10/11 mean anything other than 12th October 2011 (although it could be 1911, 1811, 1711 etc, but you get the drift). Under the influence, one supposes, of our cousins to the south, it could mean 10th November 2012, December 10th 2011, or any other combination you care to imagine.

As for miles vs kilometres, we've joined the world with that, although "down south" they still have trouble with it, despite the fact that we no longer have Roman legions to mark out the miles for us (a "mile" equals one thousand steps of a legionnaire).

Why does this matter? A great deal, as it happens, as we try to build a sustainable world.

Without agreed and standard measurement, it is impossible to reach a consensus about how we are doing in the struggle for a cleaner, more sustainable planet to leave to subsequent generations (who, presumably, will have grasped the need to join the rest of the world in this domain).

It is also really irritating!

Maybe it's time for Canada finally fully to embrace the international standards of measurement. Then we can join the drive for sustainable development without the embarrassment of seeming not to know how to count.

PS: The United Nations has adopted the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, with the aim of reversing as much as possible the damage to our environment from unrestricted use and abuse of the planet's natural resources (including the air we breathe and the water we drink). The target date for achieving the *Goals* is 2030. The author is Convenor of the UN's *Sustainable Development Transformation Forum*. For further details, see: <https://unodsd.un.org/content/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs>.

No, He Did Not Build the Mont St Michel!

Marie-France Skourides, spouse of our esteemed Alex writes, “My maternal grandfather Henri Nicolas was born in 1881 and was a « Compagnon de France », a carpenter. The *Compagnons* were a guild of superbly skilled artisans (carpenters, stone cutters etc) founded in the 13th century and they are responsible for creating some of the most beautiful buildings in France. Apprenticeship was lengthy and the *Compagnons* were required to travel everywhere in France to study the most important buildings and go to wherever there was work to be done. It so happens that – according to my family’s records and family tree – my grand dad Henri is the man who installed the cross (or whatever it is) at the very top of the steeple on the Abbey of the Mont St Michel on the Normandie/Brittany border”. It is important to note here that both Brittany and Normandie claim the *Mont* as their own, a little like the spat between Québec and Newfoundland and Labrador, although a little older by a millennium.



Marie-France goes on to say, “Of course I was not saying Grandpa Henri was involved in the original Building of the Abbey - that took several centuries starting in the 11th - but was probably involved in the major restorations that started in the 19th century.”

Now, on a different - but somewhat related - topic, Marie-France continues: “If and when you travel to France and have the privilege and opportunity to eat *gigot* (leg of lamb) *de pré-salé*, you will thoroughly enjoy yourself, for this melt-in-the-mouth wonder comes from the meadows surrounding the Mont St Michel. These meadows (*prés*) are often flooded by the tides and the salt in the earth and the grass where the sheep graze gives the meat a unique and wonderful flavour.” So true!

From Ray Mew

Kahren and I are healthy and happy, though missing hugging our kids and grandkids and travelling to warm places, as are we all, I think.

One strong appeal to all Gyros is that we should all plead with our physicians to get our initial vaccine doses as early as possible and be proactive to ensure our doctors book in our second doses in a timely fashion, as per the manufacturers' recommendations. My brother, Doctor Gil, has already been vaccinated, as he covers long-term-care homes. He reports that the anticipated priority vaccine availability for the elderly with chronic conditions, especially respiratory ones, was pushed back for Island Health to favour Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health, where the case numbers had skyrocketed. Let's hope the vaccine arrives in Victoria by this month's end.

Such a new normal for all of us, where so many of us are going stir crazy not socializing as Gyros. For Kahren and I, FaceTime and telephone calls are our only way to stay in touch with families and, especially, grandchildren. Safety first!

Personally, it has been a time to stay calm, kind and safe. We continue supporting my 86-year-old brother who is post-stroke, so isolated with 24/7 caregivers, though thankfully safely at his own home. Also, as some may know, Saanich Peninsula Hospital (where Kahren works, though not in an Acute Care area) experienced an outbreak from December 1st to Dec 31st. There is not nearly enough information to staff or the public of details of the outbreak nor of the 4 deaths (out of 11 in our Island Health Authority). We do know that 11 patients and 11 staff were infected (Kahren tested negative, thankfully).

In the light of all this and similar information – as well as being asthmatic, myself – we are staying very safe and isolated. I know we are not alone in this situation.

While I feel somewhat "mature", Kahren and I are blessed with good health and energy. New electric bikes and finding so many trails around Broadmead have been a new diversion and healthy experience.

All our Gyro friends are very welcome to reach out should we be able to provide support or help during this extraordinary period, while we await the arrival of vaccine and the return to our rich Camosun Gyro life.

In Gyro Friendship,

Ray and Kahren

Bob Skene Receives the First Chris Randall Award

The Spirit of Gyro is perfectly encapsulated in the award of the very first Lifetime Achievement Award created in memory of Victoria Gyro and International President, Chris Randall, who died last year. Chris was a major figure in the Victoria Club, in District IV and, indeed, throughout Gyro. He was an intimate of the Club rules and regulations and totally devoted to Gyro as an institution and as a very human association of men.

Bob Skene received the Award, he says, because of his efforts as Governor in 2010 to ensure financial solvency for Gyro District IV and his creation of the investments that have supported the District ever since. However, Bob certainly was recognised for more than this very important effort for the District. In or out of office as a Gyro official, Bob laboured to bring a sense of responsibility and reason to the workings of the District, even to the point of becoming an occasional thorn in the side of the District's officers! Unlike Henry II of England, who declared, "Who will rid me of this troublesome priest!" and ended up with the murder and subsequent sainthood of Thomas Becket, Gyro always treats Bob with the respect he deserves and constantly turns to him for wisdom and advice, which is a different- and much less painful – form of "sainthood"!



The fact that Chris and Bob frequently disagreed, had no bearing on their friendship and mutual respect.

Hence, it is right and fitting – and very "Gyro" – that Bob should be the recipient of a prize named in honour of his old sparring partner and friend, Chris Randall.

Congratulations, Bob Skene, and thanks!

Colm Foy

The Penultimate Page

Happy December/January/February birthdays to: Chuck Gorrie (01/12), Norman Prelychpan (23/11), Bob Doell (28/12), Jan Lim (08/01), Jim Bailey (10/01), Ken Travers (22/01) and Ron Frolek (28/01), Hunter McDonald and Les Wood (both 10/02) and Ron Campion (17/02).

A WWI Chronicle

The diaries of Arthur J. Read (John's Dad) contain a fascinating and unique account of life in the trenches of World War I. They have now been published in a (very) limited edition and we will be bringing you extracts in the months and weeks to come with the assistance of John.

Pony Up!

We have received a request from the District 4 Treasurer that we pay the District Dues of \$15.00 each. Usually, the Dues are \$30.00 each, but because 2020 was basically a write off, the District expenses were severely curtailed. This allowed the reduction in Dues.

Here is the District 4 Budget for 2020-2021: [2020-2021 Budget approved at AGM.xlsx](#)

The District Interim Convention is to be held in Nanaimo on May 14th 2021 and the International Convention in Winnipeg beginning on August 4th 2021. I assume that we will be able to go to Nanaimo and I would like to suggest that we make an effort to do so.

Mike

Be Virtually There!

District IV Governor Matthew Williams writes: The Vancouver, BC club will be hosting a guest speaker, Marc Nelitz, on February 10th, and extends an invitation to all of District IV.

Marc will talk about some of the science that has been both in and behind many headlines. Science has helped us face many challenges, but the public increasingly mistrusts science and scientists. Why do scientists sometimes get a bad rap and what does this mean for the challenges we face in the coming decade?"

Time: Feb 10, 2021 07:00 PM, Zoom connection details can be found in Matthew's 23/01 email sent out to all DIV Gyros.

THE LAST PAGE

YOUR EXECUTIVE 2019/2020

President	Mike Wedekind	1 st VP	Hans RODENBURGH
Secretary	Denis Moffatt	2 nd VP	Tim Evans
Treasurer	Jay FRAY	Past President	Pat Marshall
Director	Ray Mew	Director	Ron FROLEK
Director	Colm FOY	Director	Rick McKay

CAMOSUN CLUB CALENDAR

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Reminder from the *Bulletin* Editor:

All Executive meetings are open to Ordinary Gyro Members (do we have any “ordinary” members?). In the next season, I am hoping to add them to the Calendar for your information and publish the minutes. The same goes for District IV Minutes and reports. Every Gyro already receives the International President’s message, so I see no need to reproduce it here.

District Bulletin

District IV now has its own Bulletin that goes out to every one of our Gyro members and as many of the partners as possible in BC and the State of Washington. Submissions for that publication should be sent to wanda.ollis@outlook.com. Wanda can also help with advice about appropriate material, photos, style and so on.

Nominating Committee

The Constitution says we need one, so Your Executive has elected IPP Pat Marshall, as Chair, and President Mike Wedekind and Hans Rodenburgh as members. May they be guided by boundless wisdom and quantities of quality Scotch!

The *Thunderbird Bulletin* is published by the Camosun Gyro Club for the benefit of its members. The views and ideas expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Camosun Club or Gyro International. Overall Editor: Colm Foy (colmfoy@gmail.com).