

The Handshake



The Voice of the National Association of United Church AOTS Men's Clubs

What's Happening?

The Central Region Spring Round-up was a success thanks to the hosts Hamilton and Manitou Conference men. The Tillsonburg club took the attendance banner (as shown below). Jack Cleave returned to claim the oldest attendee, at 88. One of the youth, Gavin Dempster, was the youngest for his second year.

Harry Wolfrain was kind enough to send along some notes that he calls "2006 Facts" and rather than give a long winded written summary of the weekend, I chose to use his notes and some photos to relate some of the happenings.



In some of the submissions to this newsletter, there is a call to work at making AOTS survive and to contribute when called. A positive sign that this is happening showed at the Round-Up. Volunteers stepped forward to lead 2 conferences, to replace Harry Wolfrain as secretary/ treasurer and to fill the position of newsletter editor. *(Continued on page 14)*

Upcoming Events

The Bay of Quinte Fall Rally will be hosted by Eastminster United Church AOTS Men's Club, in Belleville. It is set for November 11, at 6:00pm. This is the home church of our national president, Garnet Thompson. Belleville is quite central for the Bay of Quinte clubs and a good attendance is expected.

President, Al Anthony, has made a special appeal in his message on page 8. Of course, men from other areas are welcome, as well.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Devotion
- Reports
- President's message
- Editorial
- UC Archives

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Handshake

AOTS, "As One That Serves", is a church-related movement of men initiated in 1923 and dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship and deepening the spiritual life of men and developing effective programs of Christian service.

The Handshake © is published by the National Association of United Church AOTS Men's Clubs which was established 8 January, 1923, at Kerrisdale Methodist Church, which is now the Ryerson United Church, Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Handshake contains news and announcements of the AOTS Men's Clubs, and, other men's ministry groups as submitted. It is provided to AOTS members, twice yearly, by the national AOTS office. The views and comments which are published in the Handshake are not necessarily those of the national AOTS office.

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Photo submissions: Please do not send original photos.
Send high quality copies (not photocopies) by mail, or, .jpeg format by email.

Text Submissions: Cut and paste into the email message.
Please do not send attachments.
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Email address: klane_2@sympatico.ca
Address: Kenneth Lane, 44 Paris Drive,
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 2L9

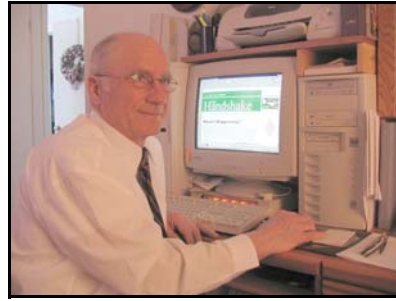
Honorary president-	Craig Watson
President-	Garnet Thompson
Recording secretary-	Ken Lane
National secretary-	Jim Upright
Treasurer-	Ernie Orpin
Handshake editor-	Rodney Green

The AOTS web page can be found at << www.aots.ca >>
Webmaster address << mark@aots.ca >>

The deadline for submissions
to the next edition of
the Handshake
is
15 March, 2007



Editorial



The first attempt at the Handshake generated few comments and only one completed survey form at the Ontario Round-Up. Does that mean that it is "OK", or, that it is not read?

I hope that it is the former, but do realize that any work is a work in progress and improvements can be made.

It would be interesting to know the members reaction to an on-line newsletter. It can be kept up to date easily and there would be no deadlines. Some ideas have been passed on to the national executive for consideration.

It can be surprising how well known the United Church is beyond our own members. Many from outside our church, and from outside our country, use the facilities of the United Church Archives. They recognize its value and make donations and monetary contributions. Please read the letter from Scott Goodine of the Association of Canadian Archivists, to Rev. Dr. James Sinclair, which is printed in its entirety on page 11.

Historians often cite the axiom. "You have to know where you have been, to know where you are going." In recent years, church regeneration committees have been discussing the direction of the United Church. Perhaps some input from outside groups could give some direction. They could also give a lesson on our past history and the valuable role played in Canada. rjg

Changes & Corrections

Note the date change for the 2007 National Convention. One week later, on 17, 18, 19 August, to avoid a conflict with a week long lacrosse tournament.

Kenneth Lane- klane_2@sympatico.ca
Gary Ross- rossgary@sympatico.ca



Devotion

Worshipping our Creator and all creation *by George Bishop*

Prayer: *We gather to worship you, O holy one. We are made in your image. Give us the grace to see your image in everyone we meet. Help us to see beyond colour, lifestyle, and ability to find your image in those we see each day, for we come to bring ourselves and all that we are and offer it to you. Accept us as we offer our prayers and our praise. Amen.*

Lesson (from “the soul of an Indian” by Ohiyesa, 1911)

The worship of the “Great Mystery” was silent, solitary, and free from all self-seeking. It was silent, because all speech is of necessity feeble and imperfect; therefore the souls of my ancestors ascended to God in wordless adoration. It was solitary, because they believed that He is nearer to us in solitude, and there were no priests authorized to come between a man and his Maker. None might exhort or confess or in any way meddle with the religious experience of another. Among us all men were created sons of God and stood erect, as conscious of their divinity. Our faith might not be formulated in creeds, nor forced upon any who were unwilling to receive it; hence there was no preaching, proselytizing, nor persecution, neither were there any scoffers or atheists.

There were no temples or shrines among us save those of nature. Being a natural man, the Indian was intensely poetical. He would deem it sacrilege to build a house for Him who may be met face to face in the mysterious shadowy aisles of the primeval forest or on the sunlit bosom of virgin prairies, upon dizzy spires and pinnacles of naked rock, and yonder in the jewelled vault of the night sky! He who enrobes Himself in filmy veils of cloud, there on the rim of the visible world where our Great-Grandfather Sun kindles his evening camp-fire, He who rides upon the rigorous wind of the north, or breathes forth His spirit upon aromatic southern airs, whose war-canoe is launched upon majestic rivers and inland seas ---He needs no lesser cathedral!

Lesson (from “Making your life meaningful” by the Dalai Lama, 2000)

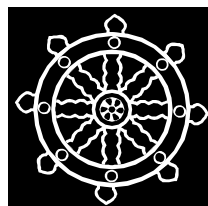
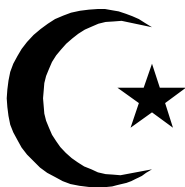
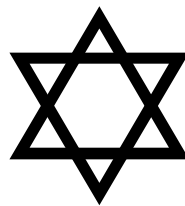
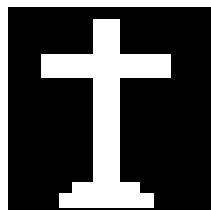
When I meet people in different parts of the world, I am always reminded that we are all basically alike: we are all human beings. Maybe we wear different clothes, our skin is a different colour, or we speak different languages. These are only superficial differences; basically, we are the same human beings. That is what makes it possible for us to understand each other and to develop friendship and closeness.

Let me share a short prayer which gives me inspiration: *May I become at all times, both now and forever a protector for those without protection, a guide for those who have lost their way, a ship for those with oceans to cross, a bridge for those with rivers to cross, a sanctuary for those in danger, a lamp for those without light, a place of refuge for those who lack shelter, and a servant to all in need.*

Because we all share this small planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. That is not just a dream but a necessity. We are dependent on each other in so many ways that we can no longer live in isolated communities and ignore what is happening outside those communities. We need to help each other when we have difficulties, and we must share the good fortune that we enjoy.

In conclusion from the eighth century Buddhist master, Shantideva: *For as long as space endures, and for as long as living beings remain, until then may I, too, abide to dispel the misery of the world.*

Scripture reading: Romans 12: 9 – 18



Lesson (from “Beside Still Waters” by Betty Radford Turcott, 2004)

Worship takes many forms. A Muslim kneels and bows low to the ground until his forehead touches the prayer mat on the floor of the mosque. A Jew sways forward and back as her prayers are said aloud in chorus with others. Quakers sit in silence waiting for God’s message. Loud amens, fervent hallelujahs, and dramatic gestures are an important part of the worship of some devout Christians. For others, quiet listening and thinking about the spoken and written word are ways of worship. Each style expresses the assurance of God’s presence, and the need to be in a holy place. God meets people where they are in their expression of faith.

Worship is a time to be in the presence of God and to be aware of God’s nearness. Corporate worship, as we gather together in prayer and praise, is vital for most believers. There are, of course, times of worship and devotion in private, and these enrich our lives and deepen our understanding. But we need to join with others for encouragement, conversation, and community. It is not the time to think about off-key singers or the minister’s earrings. It is a time to enter fully into the experience of being in tune with God and waiting for God’s word to engage us and prepare us for living in the world of work, school, and everyday life.

Another way to express this idea is to consider all we do each and every day as worship – then on Sunday, we gather with each other to celebrate the worship of the past week, and to prepare for the coming week’s work and worship. Having been gathered in community, we go out to work and worship, believing that they are one, and that God sees what we do in our work and worship as we offer them in faith.

Closing prayer *As we gather in times of prayer and praise, we offer our worship to you O Creator. Your image is present in the hearts of all the people we meet. Help us to remember that you love and care for all your children. May we see you in the face of each person we meet, and may they see your love in each one of us. In the name of the one who was a friend to all, even Jesus Christ. Amen.*

National Reports

The
2007 National AOTS Convention
will be held at
Trent University
in Peterborough, Ontario,
on August 17th, 18th & 19th, 2007.
Please mark these dates on your calendar
and plan to attend.
The Theme Speaker will be
Rev. Dr. Wilbur C. Cox.
Additional information and Registration
Forms will shortly be mailed to all Clubs.

Men's Ministries

The Men's Ministries Network was established in 2004 out of concerns raised from different areas of the United Church about men's ministry.

The need was recognized in order to help men and the groups they are in to connect with each other and celebrate, support, and strengthen the many forms of ministry in which they are involved.

The Men's Ministry Network includes all men's groups, e.g. UCM groups, fellowship groups, spirituality groups, service groups and As One That Serves (AOTS) clubs.

AOTS (As One That Serves) is a formal, structured organization within the Men's Ministry Network. It is a church-related movement of men initiated in 1923 that is dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship, deepening the spiritual life of men and developing effective programs for Christian service.

Membership and Fellowship

-Submitted by Richard Deitriche

Greetings in the name of our Lord God.

One new Life Membership was approved, that of Harry Wolfram of the Bellefair United Church club, Toronto. I look forward to others to come in, but to date have not received any by mail.

I was totally surprised to receive my National Life Membership, on Father's Day, here at Holy Trinity with our National President Garnet Thompson present. This was the first time I had no words to say. I call it shocked to be honored by all of you on the National Executive Council for the honour given me.

I shall strive to go forth doing my part in AOTS. Hopefully will be attending the next Round-Up as I was missed from, yes, raising Hell, or was that waking every one up.

God be with you as you make your decisions for the betterment of AOTS, now and in the future.

I look forward to any correspondence by mail or email:

Richard Paul Deitriche
2 Central Ave
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 2E9

rpdpersona.ca

Positions Filled

Ken Lane drew attention to the positions that were filled recently and asked that they be approved at the Annual Meeting.

Brian Bigelow–
Manitou Conference representative
Wally Macdonald–
Hamilton Conference rep.
Rodney Green–
Handshake Editor

President's Message



Well, I don't know where the year went. But, it has been one year of great emotion and many roads had to be overcome because of the way things worked out.

When I was sworn in as President, I had all the great ideas of what I was going to do and how I was going to get them done.

First, may I tell you what you already know, and that is that we have a great organization and we have to work hard at keeping it alive. In my first year as President, and not long into my year, I had a call from one of the clubs close to my home town saying that they were no longer going to be an affiliated club. A few of the members would stay on as individual members. Well, that was my first

real awakening as to the job ahead. AOTS has been good to us all and now, even more so, we need to make sure that we stay focused on the role of AOTS.

We have the Men's Ministries Network that is working through the National Church and with George Bishop and a team of AOTS members, and non-members, working to give men a new focus on the men in the church community.

We set out to try to visit many different conferences across Canada but were able to make it to only a few, and we are still working on that.

The Youth-to-Camp program must be re-addressed because of the availability of Mark Browning. We have different programs and we need to focus on them and try our best to do them right.

I have had the opportunity to give a message in a few churches, in the past year, and look forward to being able to do so at other churches.

I was able to make it to Toronto to hear Jim McKibbin give the message in Toronto. The Spring Round-Up, at Jackson's Point was a great success and we had a record, or close to it, of new members and a number of youth, also.

The Fall Rallies are coming and I look forward to trying to attend the one in Toronto, and, I will be at the Bay of Quinte Conference Rally, on 11 November, at Eastminster United Church, in Belleville.

It has been great working with Craig Watson to help make the National Convention, in August 2007, one of the best.

Before I took office, I had let my name stand for election to council for the city of Belleville. I came in 8th place and 6 got elected to sit. Since then, one member resigned and one died of cancer, so I was placed on council to take on of the vacant seats.. So, that has taken a lot of wind out of my sails as to what I was going to do for this great organization.

Here we are again into another municipal election and I have to work hard at getting re-elected. As President of the AOTS, I am in the position of not being able to achieve all that I want to do. But win or lose, I promise that for the balance of my term that I will give 110% of my dedication.

President-
Garnet Thompson

Calendar

11 November, 2006- Bay of Quinte Conference Fall Rally, at Eastminster United Church, Belleville, ON
4 November, 2006- Toronto Conference Fall Rally, at Trinity, Newmarket, Ontario (tentative)

Regional Reports: Central

Harry Wolfrain National AOTS Life Member

I am delighted to be able to nominate Harry Wolfrain as a life member of As One That Serves on behalf of the Toronto Conference. Harry epitomizes the spirit of AOTS, a spirit he has exemplified for 53 years as a member of this wonderful organization of United Church men. During his tenure as a member, Harry has held most, if not all, of the important regional positions - positions which were decisive in keeping the organization going. He has held the Bellefair club together for many years, regularly signing up +40 members. He is hard man to say "no" to. Harry's energy makes men 30 and 40 years his junior look on in awe. It was only recently that he resigned from the Bellefair choir after over 50 years of singing service.

Throughout his membership time, Harry has been there for the AOTS, whether it was organizing regular meetings, taking Sunday School kids fishing, raising money to sponsor children internationally, writing articles for a publication, organizing variety shows, stuffing envelopes, helping out with the Observer, etc etc etc.

Harry is the glue, which makes the Toronto Conference of AOTS work, representing the corporate memory of the organization. He is that important link to the Central Region. And, I daresay that he has held that organization together too. He produces minutes of every meeting and he delivers them to you personally, with your name on them, typewritten perfectly, with-



Garnet Thompson, Harry Wolfrain, Meryl Shepley

out the benefit of a computer, or email. He just keeps up.

There is a song which many of us know, that reminds me of Harry. It is a song of strength, perseverance and determination.

That song is John Henry.

And for those of you who don't remember it, it is a song about how John Henry, against all odds beat a steam drill, in a contest of strength. There are many versions of that song but here is the last stanza of one of those versions:

Buddie, where you come from
To this railroad job?
If you wantta be a good steel-
drivin' man,
Put yo' trust in yo' hammah an' yo
God. Lawd, Lawd
Put yo' trust in your hammah and
yo' God

That's what Harry does. It is a privilege to know an individual who so personifies this spirit of servant leadership.

Harry Wolfrain.

Thank you

-Submitted by Reg Cockburn

Editors note:

After years of crossing paths with Harry at round-ups and conventions, I had a good chat with Harry at the 2005 Central Region Round-Up, at Jackson's Point. It turns out that Harry's father was the minister in our pastoral charge of Consecon and Carrying Place when Harry was but a lad. Congratulations, Harry.

Regional Reports: central

Wellington United Church AOTS
Men's Club, Wellington, ON
-Submitted by David Vaughn

At the June 2006 meeting of the Wellington AOTS, members paid tribute to their Honorary President, Rev. Jeff de Jonge who will be leaving Wellington in September after 15 years of Pastoral Care. Rev. Jeff has been an active member of AOTS and has participated as a speaker or chaplain at a number of Round-ups and regional meetings, and he has always been available with advice and guidance whenever needed. Rev. Jeff will be missed, not only by Wellington AOTS and the Congregation but also by the people of Wellington and beyond.



On behalf of the members of the Wellington AOTS, Keith Elliott, National AOTS Member at Large, presented Jeff with a clock which Keith had crafted as a replica of the Wellington Church.

July 1st

Wellington village is the site of one of the best run July 1st celebrations. The park is full of residents and visitors alike who come to share in the small town fun. The entertainment is first class and it seems that the entertainers also love the atmosphere. There is a parade, entertainment, food and lots of visiting.

Bay of Quinte AOTS is fortunate to have the Wellington United Church situated next to the park and to have the use of the Bloomfield AOTS "Chip Wagon". Men from area AOTS clubs man the wagon for the day, under the direction of Ron Fox. This is the main fundraiser for the Bay of Quinte Conference.



Regional Reports: Central

Bay of Quinte AOTS men were a tremendous help on, 29th of April, for Camp Quin-Mo-Lac's annual clean-up day. All were pitching in to get the camp ready for the 'soon to arrive' summer campers.

Representing four local AOTS clubs are, L to R: Ian Dallas, Al Anthony, Peter Phahl, Keith Elliott, Dave Smith, Doug Carter, Corey Burris, Gord Ackerman, Jeff Anthony, Bill Wilson, Clarence Macdonald, Walter Richards Howard Dyck. Missing from photo Clyde Lyon. Sign holders are Benjamin & Christopher Anthony. Cameraman in front is the camp director- Wendell White



Photo by I. Anthony

Bay of Quinte Conference

-Submitted by Al Anthony

Greetings from the Bay of Quinte Conference. This is a message of information.

Let me begin with an urgent request to all presidents to encourage members to attend the 47th fall Rally, at Eastminster United Church, 432 Bridge Street East, Belleville, on the 11th of November at 6:00pm.

At the 2005 Fall Rally, only 27 % of the total Bay of Quinte membership were in attendance. Low turnout is very discouraging to those members who are willing to accept leadership positions and spend a great deal of effort to make such events happen.

My second request is for a member to come forward with any level of talent at the piano or keyboard. For years, we have had the pleasure of Betty and Craig Watson to lead us in sing-song. It is with regrets that Betty is not able to fill our request this year and we have no one to take her place.

My third request is for every club in the Bay of Quinte Conference to have a representative attend a meeting at St Paul's Church, in Stirling, on Sunday afternoon, 15th October, at 2:00pm.

This meeting is to bring together all the work that the organizing committee has been discussing over the past couple of years to ensure that the 2007 Biannual Convention, in Peterborough, will be a

The committee has been working very hard under some strenuous circumstances and are in need of every one's support. Let us show them our appreciation on October 15th, at St Paul's . Best Wishes and God Bless.

Yours in AOTS

The **Observer on Tape** project is still going well, at Eastminster United Church, with 35 volunteers involved. Garnet Thompson noted that with the present equipment many new monthly customers can be accommodated. So, pass the word at your churches and clubs.

Regional Reports: Central (cont'd) Western

4 County AOTS- London Conference

-Submitted by Paul Cooper

2006 High-Lites

- 4 County AOTS continued an active program in 2006. Executive meets quarterly to plan activities and to provide an opportunity for clubs to share a summary of the activities/events they are sponsoring. All clubs continue to enhance the spiritual lives of their communities and churches with an impressive list of ongoing gifts.

- 4 County group was well represented at the Ontario Spring Round-Up held at Jackson's Point, in April, hosted by Hamilton/Manitou. The annual golf tournament, held in June, was hosted by the St Andrew's Chatham club and provided an opportunity to demonstrate a wide diversity of golfing skills.

-The Harrow club offered to host the annual National AOTS executive meeting. It was coordinated with our normal Fall Rally, on September 29-30.

-Park Street United Church, Chatham, submitted notice of their club folding due to declining membership. Fortunately, some of the members have joined St Andrew's Chatham AOTS Club.

- Harrow-Malden is working with an interested, in Amherstburg, who would like to set up an OTS club. They have also invited members from Roseland-Windsor to attend some of their events.

St Paul's AOTS Men's Club, Oakville

-Submitted by Howard Wills

The Annual Congregation Barbeque was held Saturday September 9 at which some 91 people attended. While there was some drizzle during the morning and continuing cloudy conditions through the afternoon, the barbeque was still held outside on the front lawn. As in the past years, there was a great variety of food to satisfy those present— hot dogs and hamburgers and all the trimmings, salads, fruit pies and ice cream, soft drinks, tea and coffee. Many thanks to those purchasing food items, the cooks and the many other who helped set up tables, served, and cleaned up afterwards— especially Bud Ferris, Bill Sprung, George and Don Cooper, Lloyd Wilson, Doug MacDonald, Allan Simpson, Wally Macdonald and Bev Holmes. This is always an occasion for friendly fellowship.

Quickly following up the barbeque was the fall Golf Day on Thursday September 14. The golf tournament, this year, took place at the Deerfield Golf Club, in Oakville. Some 22 persons participated in the tournament. It was generally overcast but no rain. Back at the church, an excellent roast beef dinner was served and a great variety of prizes were available to the golfers and dinner helpers. A total of 48 enjoyed the great dinner. The golfers included a number of men from St James Rosemount United Church, in Kitchener, and two ladies from St Paul's.

As in past years, many members along with other men and ladies of the congregation were volunteers at the Annual Oakville Waterfront Festival that takes place in the last week of June.

The annual meeting of the National Council of the AOTS was attended by Wally Macdonald and Howard Wills.



Western BC Conference

-Submitted by Jan Maandag

With only three clubs remaining in the conference, there are unfortunately not many opportunities to organize a round-up. There are however close ties between Oak Bay and the Duncan clubs on Vancouver Island, with regular visits back and forth.

It has been more difficult to maintain contact with the South Burnaby Club. They have regular meetings and are an active club.

My efforts will be concentrated on arranging an interchange of sorts between the Mainland and Vancouver Island clubs.

For many United Church Men, the Banff Men's Conference, remains an important meeting ground. Time and expenses are the great obstacle for many others.

Submitted in His service.

Regional Reports- Central (cont'd)

Toronto Conference Report- As One That Serves

-Submitted by Jim McKibbin
President, Toronto Conference

The 5 Toronto Conference Clubs continue to soldier on. We have some great AOTS representatives at each club; however, like AOTS we are getting older and we need to pay attention to the issue of succession, especially given the dearth of men coming forward to participate in AOTS.

As a commissioner to the General Council, I am happy to report that the Emerging Spirit initiative was adopted by the council. I know that Keith Howard spoke to the National Biennial and to the Toronto Conference Fall Rally. So it is now clear the church has committed to the issue of speaking to 30-45 year olds.

Much of the General Council work is featured on the church's website and I would encourage those who are able to, to visit the site and check out the conference.

Our Fall Rally will be focused on the General Council proceedings. It is entitled Stating Our Faith and our theme speaker will be Michael Bourgeois. Michael was the chair of the Committee on Theology and Faith during the development of the statement of faith, 2000-2006, and is associate professor of theology at Emmanuel College, Toronto. Michael is the architect of the new Song of Faith.

We are losing a longstanding

member and elder, as George Bishop and Helen prepare to move to Eastern Ontario. We wish them well and God speed in their endeavors.

Trinity, Newmarket is once again hosting the Fall Rally and we are thankful for their support. Kingston Road UC has recently welcomed a new minister, Richard Choe, who was formerly with Church House and Ethnic Ministries. Wexford Heights continues to be active in fundraising and in the community, working with the Muslim community around the congregation. Don Mills is currently seeking to prolong the life of men's work in the area by uniting with other local churches. Bellefair is now in full discussions with neighbouring Kew Beach, to investigate amalgamation.

I had the opportunity to speak recently to Kingston Road about the General Council and I will be doing that again at Bellefair on September 16. Plans are underway for our Spring Roundup which will be held April 20 -22 at Jackson's Point. We invited the new Moderator, David Guliano, to attend, or possibly the new General Secretary, Nora Sanders. You can read about them on the website or in the Observer.

In addition we hope to have a special theme speaker on the Friday evening. That is to be announced. Please accept our best wishes for the national meetings. We shall keep the success of your deliberations in our prayers.

Thank you

Manitoba Northwestern Ontario Report

-Submitted by Charlie Klein

The Handshake is a welcome addition to the clubs and meetings in the Manitoba District. At present the Windsor Park Club is the most active and best attended club with 23 to 25 members attending each month.

We regret that the Grey Street club has decided to disband and will no longer exist as a club. However, at last count, 8 of the former members have indicated they will become individual members and it is hoped that some of those will attend the District Council meetings.

Minnedosa Club had their annual roast beef supper in late January and three District Council members Harry Burdon, Don Mackenzie and Jim Lawrence visited and report having an excellent meal and social evening. Unfortunately, shortly after this visit the Minnedosa United Church was destroyed by fire. Harvey Douglas is submitting a full report to the Handshake on this incident.

Harry Burdon reports that the participation in the Sunday Services at Riverview Health Centre is still strong with many churches and individuals assisting on a weekly rotational basis. Attendance at the services runs to over 50 residents each week.

United Church Archives: Does it have value?

The Rev. Dr. James H. Sinclair
General Secretary, General Council
The United Church of Canada
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M8X 2Y4

Dear Rev. Sinclair:

I am writing you on behalf of the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) to encourage the General Council of the United Church of Canada to secure appropriate funding for the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada. Established in 1975, the ACA is a national association representing English-speaking archivists in Canada. With headquarters in Ottawa, the ACA's mandate is to provide the archival profession leadership and to facilitate an understanding and appreciation of archival heritage across the country.

I understand that three of the five Ontario Conferences have given notice to withdraw from their covenant with Victoria University concerning their archival records and that this represents a loss of \$85,000 annually to the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada. The scope of this loss amounts to a serious setback to the Central Archives program. The ACA urges you and the General Council to find a solution to this problem so as not to compromise an invaluable archival resource.

The Central Archives plays a vital legal and administrative role in the United Church of Canada. By preserving and protecting the national records of the United Church of Canada, its antecedent denominations, as well as those of the Conferences, Presbyteries and Pastoral Charges in Ontario, the Central Archives sustains the consistent stewardship of the Church's invaluable corporate memory. Without the adequate financial support required to ensure their long-term management and preservation, the United Church's documentary resources are seriously compromised.

Since 1953, the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada has been a component of Canada's cultural life. Archival evidence of the decisions, policies, and activities of the United Church of Canada provide comprehensive documentation of the issues facing the Church and Canadian society as a whole. Furthermore, baptism, marriage, and burial registers record the vital events of individual congregational members' lives. Indeed, the United Church of Canada / Victoria University Archives serves more than 3600 researchers each year through personal visits, telephone calls, and written inquiries. Users include academics, students, local church historians, genealogists, journalists, Church and University administrators, and private individuals. Researchers come from all parts of the world.

The local, provincial, national and international archival community has also greatly benefited from the immense leadership, expertise, and example provided by the Central

Archives. The United Church of Canada / Victoria University Archives maintains a superb facility, renowned for its admirable implementation of archival standards, excellent public services, and high degree of accessibility to the public. A model for other archives, the Central Archives has hosted visiting archivists and dignitaries from around the world.

The ACA is aware of the United Church of Canada's fiscal constraints, but surely a solution can be found to resolve this dilemma without imposing drastic measures on the Central Archives' excellent program. The Central Archives of the United Church of Canada supports legal, administrative, and cultural endeavours. It deserves the necessary resources to sustain this work; anything less would be an abdication of the responsibility to preserve and to protect the United Church's collective memory.

The United Church of Canada - Canada's largest Protestant and uniquely Canadian denomination - has been a leader in religious archives for over fifty years. I am happy to discuss the ACA's concerns further with you and any others working towards a solution; please contact me at via e-mail at scott.goodine@gov.ab.ca or via phone at (780) 427-8773.

Best Regards,

Scott Goodine
President

* This letter was written on
26 July, 2006

AOTS Report to 2006 Annual Meeting- Ken Lane

In a recent attempt to put some better order and efficiency into the space I call my office and also to separate and catalogue some boxes of old material for presentation to the archives, I came across some old reports written by myself and others suggesting better ways of operating and stimulating AOTS. Some of these reports were somewhat used to attempt improvement, but others were just left “ on the burner “ and not implemented or otherwise considered by the concerned committees or the National Council

For example in one of my earlier reports, where I had been asked to make suggestions to stimulate and increase the committee effectiveness, it was suggested that to improve the knowledge of committee chairs in the all around work of AOTS, that a suggested limit of 3 terms of office for any one committee chair should be implemented. This is not to move persons out of a position - but rather an attempt to broaden their knowledge and responsibilities in AOTS as they progress to National President. Responsibility. Really all positions should be an advancement and preparation to assume the office of president and better prepared to do that job. The concern, when the report was written, was that the council was not efficiently dealing with many committee items and had become somewhat bogged down in certain areas where we were not bringing new ideas to stimulate and promote our projects etc. At that time, it was felt that any National Officer, except National Secretary, Treasurer should not occupy the SAME office for more than three terms. It was felt that in that time he should be able to assess

the situation, establish a working committee and get valuable work completed. If he was unable to develop new stimulus in that time, he should change committee responsibilities, apply his energy to a new subject and let some other person put forth ideas for the committee he has just vacated. This was not any attempt to remove men from National Council but rather a suggestion to increase the output of committees and to improve the effectiveness of our organization. If we are locked into one area of concern for a long period, we often lose focus on new ideas for that subject and become complacent and lose interest in that responsibility. However the same person, challenged with a new responsibility might well perform at a much higher efficiency and be better informed about other areas of AOTS concern as he progresses through the leadership level of our association.

Looking back over various reports and minutes, I was concerned that the same items were appearing on agenda year after year without any real resolution - but with notation that committees were either working on that concern and would report back. Certainly this is not true to all areas of AOTS concern and it is great to see progress being made in Men’s Ministry etc. but again with this progress AOTS itself has not put forth a plan of action that would signify our willingness to be the real stimulus and the possible leadership of this initiative with the United Church. Certainly the Regeneration Committee have made the effort in their assuming steering committee responsibilities - but I do not see a general concern or attempt to

step forward as an organization and offer to assume greater responsibility in developing and promoting this ministry of men.

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Although my remarks are taken from past reports etc., I still feel that these suggestions of a limit on the number of terms of office of a committee chair are still relevant. Certainly we will have to promote the challenge and attempt to bring some new people into the leadership of AOTS, but that should be the on going responsibility of all Council members. Certainly it is hard to get good leadership volunteers in this busy world, but we must if we are to go forth and continue effective Service for Christ, and continue the dream of Dr Riggs and others who worked so hard to establish AS ONE THAT SERVES.

Looking back is great but the view ahead is more important. I guess since 1961, I have been involved in almost every position of Council and so I should now further consider that I am perhaps taking the position of someone who will have greater insight into the future of AOTS and more youthful enthusiasm to do the job. So taking my own suggestions to heart I will complete my terms of office as National Recording Secretary at the Biennial in June of 2007 and will not be seeking a further term of office.

I hope that these thoughts expressed here will lead to positive action and renewed vigour in our operation, and not seen as a “sour grapes” report.

As One That Serves
Kenneth Lane,
Recording Secretary

“Temporarily– Doing what we can”

Hymn: No 81 VU “As With Gladness Men of Old”

Must Read Scripture: 1st Corinthians 3:5-15;

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials.

1st Peter 1:3-9

He who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward.

Gracious Lord, you are the hope of all the world and especially this Men’s organization. Everywhere we turn, you are there, loving your creation in the midst of our struggles. You have given us hearts that question our shortcomings and minds that resist easy answers. Be with us as we struggle to ponder the mystery of our future existence as a purposeful organization in your world, and the part you have called us to play in that amazing world. Amen

Some things we accomplish in life require intense commitment for a short time– and the result has lifelong value. Ask yourself, are we here today not in a state of stalemate and maintenance? Spinning our wheels, not going anywhere but downward. Poor us! What can WE do about it?

Well, think, for instance, of the people who came before us to form this Men’s Organization in the first place. Those diligent people set aside other goals and dedicated their time, money, skills and hard work, for a period of years, so they could put an organization that they believed in, in place; that in fifty or seventy five years would still be there with some meaning of their names still behind it. Where is that desire within the organization today? Stalemate and maintenance will not get the organization past the next ten years looking at the bottom line. What kind of legacy will that leave?

So, let’s hope something gets done about it soon. As the apostle Peter described an exchange of tough times for good results. Peter is writing here about the tough times that come into our lives even though we haven’t chosen them, but if worked upon, can have lasting benefits. We can rejoice during our trials, not for the trial itself, but for the coming benefits. Tough times bring pain and sadness, and do not seem to promise any good news, but by acting upon them, and seeing the greater joy that lies ahead, it will help us to understand those temporary tough times.

Sometimes there is discouragement because we are unsuccessful. People are inattentive, indifferent, the world grows more non-Christian and violent. All very discouraging grounds to work from.

But don’t despair! Listen to the words of a clergyman who was murdered for speaking out on violence and injustice. “We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We cannot do everything, we must realize that. But we must do something.”

Therein lies our success. With that attitude it will help us to do the small things and to leave “an opportunity for God’s grace to enter and to do the rest.” That agrees with Paul’s encouragement to be faithful in our tasks and to wait on God who “gives the increase.” [1 Cor. 3:6-7]

Do not allow discouragement to cause you to quit. Do something about your misfortunes today. And, in God’s own time your work will bear fruit for future generations. Maybe it’s time to pool all monetary resources from the organization and parent church into one place, speak with one strong responsible voice, and bring the message of this great Men’s movement once again across the country. It worked initially in the late twenties and again in the fifties and early sixties. Both times when the parent church finally realized the MEN did have something to contribute to the bottom line. Maybe not millions, but the light bulbs were kept burning. As an organization with excellent goals to: Promote Christian Fellowship, Deepen the Spiritual Life of Men and Being of Christian Service. YOU are a success in God’s kingdom only if YOU are being faithful where He has placed YOU.

(Continued on page 14)

(continued from page 13)

Closing Prayer

O God, you are present in all the moments of our lives, loving and guiding, but not forcing us into a fuller relationship with you. We are in your hands. Forgive us when we accept only what we see as good. Have mercy on us when we turn away from what troubles and disturbs. Strengthen us to learn the truth without fear and help us recognize your presence in all the hurtful places. In the name of our faithful soul companion, Jesus, help us to meet the troubles in our organization and to work them out with diligence. Amen

Submitted by Gil Reashore

As the boys in a church summer camp were lining up for dinner, they noticed a note on the first bowl. The camp director had placed a sign in the bowl of apples, "Take only one, God is watching." As the boys moved along the line, they noticed another sign on the last bowl. One of the boys had placed a sign, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

The Art Harding Award

The award went to Walter Smith. His many accomplishments were presented to the audience. Walter's very gracious acceptance speech made it apparent to all that he was a very deserving winner.



The Theme Speaker

Rev Thom Davies was the theme speaker and told of his involvement with the Wesley Urban Ministries, in Hamilton, Ontario.

The theme was "On Earth as in Heaven." When you pray, "On earth as in heaven", what are you hoping for?



(Continued on page 16)

Looking Back

The 1988 edition of the Handshake is the earliest in my collection. It was a great 12 pages with interesting articles and a wonderful collection of photos. It is encouraging to see the number of AOTS men who are still active and taking leadership roles in the movement. Of course, after so many years have elapsed there are those familiar faces who have passed on; Jack Thompson, Lloyd Clark, Reg Cooper (from the photos). Support was being asked for the Second Mile, youth work and the United Church Hospital Services. These projects are still active in one form or another. The Banff Men's Conference report stated that 351 men came away spiritually motivated. How did clubs raise their funds? Remember the AOTS nut sales? The nut sales were a prime fund raiser across Canada. At this point in our AOTS and United Church history, the topic of ordination of homosexuals was a major and divisive issue.

Looking back: Thank you for the leaders, AOTS men who have stood strong for so many years. rjg

Notice: Position of National Secretary

The Staff position of National Secretary for the National AOTS office, is now open for applications. The successful candidate would commence this position Jan 1, 2008

Applications for this position can be forwarded to any member of the "Staff Committee" beginning Sept 1, 2006. The initial closing date for applications is Dec 31, 2006. The successful applicant will be installed at the next Biennial Convention, in August 2007, at Peterborough, ON

The job description for this position are described in the AOTS "Bylaws" Page 12 Section 9. Further details are available from any member of the Staffing Committee.

The Staffing Committee members are indicated in the Bylaws as the following:

President Elect

Bill Love 9815 Palishall Rd. S.W. Calgary, AB T2V 3T4
Ph 403 281-4844 "Bill Love" shoultsw@shaw.ca

Eastern Vice-President

Gary Ross Box 1439 Lewisport, NL A0G 3A0
Ph 709 535-2990 Gary_Ross@cooperators.ca

Central Vice-President

Merle Shepley Box 752 Harrow, ON N0R 1G0
Ph 519 738-2510 "Merle" hshepley8@sympatico.ca

Western Vice-President

Roy Jones 506 Fraser St. Esquimalt BC V9A 3H5
Ph 250 384-4640 janetjones@shaw.ca

In His Service

Jim Upright

In Memoriam

Lloyd Clark entered into rest, 6 March, 2006. Lloyd was a member of Park Street AOTS, Chatham, ON



The evening sing-song is always a popular event



“Chaverim” a popular youth group entertained



Some have to work!



Get used to these faces. This is part of the committee for the 2007 National Convention. Keith Elliott, Garnet Thompson, Blake Gieg, Al Anthony and Craig Watson.



The Jackson’s Point Convention Centre has great facilities. A bright, well equipped auditorium is one part.

In Closing

“ Well done is better that well said.”

"As One That Serves"

