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Jenny Wren Times

PO BOX 14, STATION 'F', TORONTO ON M4Y 2L4

www.thewrens.com



MEETINGS

General meetings held the third Monday of the month September through June.

(except - on public holidays).

Editor Margaret Haliburton

JANUARY 2010

Next Meeting – Monday - January 18 - Elections

COMING EVENTS

Thursday – January 21 – Pub Lunch – Robbie Burns

Monday – February 15 – General Meeting

Monday – March 15 – General Meeting and St. Pat's celebration

**Missions to Seafarers – Third Thursday of every month –
12.00 Noon - Pub Lunch – All you can eat for \$12.00**

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

This year has been a busy one for membership – the records have been reviewed and updated. Ten new members joined us – this good news is a result of publicity in various magazines and word of mouth. Unfortunately nine of our long time members died and three took their names off our roster due to inability to take an active part. Nine members are in two or three years arrears – and - after notification will be dropped from our mailing list unless we hear from them. Our seven honorary members continue to support and help us in a variety of ways.

Janet Watt

We are sorry to report the death of Vivian Tombs Nov. 11, 2009

Dues are due January 2010 – \$20.00 per annum. Payable to The Wren Association of Toronto. Mail to address in the Heading Page 1

Jenny Wren Revue

We had a very successful performance at the St. George's Society. The applause and laughter was very heartwarming. We were given a light snack, tea and coffee afterwards and those who stayed later were very well wined. As usual there was one ex Wren in the audience so we gave her information about our association. Now we wait to see if she will join us. One woman asked us if we would consider performing on Moses Ziemer's Zoomer TV show. (Moses Ziemer is the owner of the classical radio station FM 96.3 and a TV station.) Again - wait and see if anything comes from this. A very gracious lady called me to thank us and re-enforced their appreciation.

DOORS OPEN

Diane and Bev manned a table at Doors Open – HMCS York on May 23, 2009. They displayed Wren memorabilia which generated lots of interest by the public. York was most helpful with setting up and taking down. This event proved so successful that it will be repeated next year and we have again been invited to participate. We hope to have more help and thus expand our display and of course publicize Navy Lady.

WOMEN AS PERSONS

The year 2009, is also important to us as women. It is the 80th anniversary of women in Canada, the UK and the US to be legally acknowledged as a person. Before that we were the property of men. In Canada the catalyst was a woman elected to parliament and not allowed to take her seat as she was not a person. Only persons could be allowed to sit in the commons and the senate. Women paraded, made speeches, wrote letters, and pressured the males in their families. Many were jailed and even tortured. There are five statues representing our Canadian leaders on parliament hill. One of them is Nellie McClung but to date I have been unable to name the others. When I do I will be able to give more information about this important part of our history.

Wren Activist.

Coral Eswyn (Thomas) Lyster, a British Wren married a Canadian – W, Lyster of the Calgary Highlanders. He was wounded in Germany and evacuated home along with Eswyn and their infant son. She was the first War Bride arriving in Canada in Feb. 1946. Because of "careless

legislation" 64000 war brides and their foreign born children lost their Canadian citizenship. Eswyn fought this and spoke before the Standing Parliamentary Committee of Citizenship and Immigration and in 2008 citizenship was restored.

(Source Vancouver paper obituary.)

ASSOCIATION BUSINESS.

Nominations for New Executive

President – Margaret Haliburton
First Vice/Programme – Diane Huba
Treasurer – Julie Hallett
Secretary –
Membership – Janet Watt
Hospitality – Sheila Kingsley

Publicity/Liaison and Memorabilia/Archives Officers - to be appointed at the January executive meeting.

Wren History

In the last ten years writers, daughters, historians, centennial staff and whomever have shown a great interest in veterans. Now with our Centennial nearing, the requests are numerous. If you have a story to tell, let us know and we will contact the authors. One daughter of a Wren, Ruth McKeown, hopes to write a book. She is willing to come to us with a camera and recorder. If any one wishes to talk to her please let us know so we may make arrangements.

NAVY LADY

Wonderful News.

A good friend of ours Ann Kallin – co-author of "Proudly She Marched" – has arranged, with Mr. G. Hayton - the Chief Executive of the Cambridge Libraries and Galleries – to have approval given for planting of the rose and a ceremony at the Jenny Wren Statue. A compatible date will be arranged – then - we can plan a visit and all the necessary protocol.

I am informed that the commercial outlets have placed orders for a goodly amount of the available stock. Those wishing to purchase Navy Lady for commemorative services need to let us know your requirements as soon as possible. Please contact us at Georgie@thewens.com or write to the association address (refer to letter head –page one) or call Joan Balch at 416-480-9741.

Purchases for personal plantings may be made at your local outlet.

CENTENIAL INFORMATION

Government Participation

The Post office is issuing commemorative stamps and will be available in May 2010. The mint is issuing a circulation commemorative coin distribution date unknown

Calendar

Bev Covington has access to a Canadian Naval Centennial Calendar. If interested please call her at 416-664-6470

CANADA REMEMBERS

Nancy Siew, a very good friend of our association has donated a three volume DVD set of this National Film Board series. These are available – on loan - to members. If interested please contact – M. Haliburton at 416-594-3359 or margaret.haliburton086@sympatico.ca.

WASN'T THAT A PARTY?

Annual Christmas Lunch

Diane Huba (Vice President and Programme Officer) as master of ceremonies did a super job again. Wren Bingo and a lounge/reception area offered an opportunity to mix and mingle also the seating arrangements gave us an area for dancing plus a bit of entertainment. Diane provided the sound system so we could sing carols to say nothing of being able to hear the necessary announcements. It was so good to see the "Yorkers" out in force – also Honourary Wrens, husbands and friends, all of whom helped make the event special. Honourary Wren Georgie Williams and staff, again provided a much appreciated wonderful meal. Many thanks to all those who donated to the food bank including those who donated but did not attend the party. I'm not even going to try to name all of Diane's hard working assistants – I just want to say many, many thanks for a job well done.

Margaret Haliburton - President

Thank You

To Hon.Member Georgie Williams, for the donation of a big box of envelopes. This represents a big saving to us.

ROYAL NAVY SEAMAN AWARDED MILITARY CROSS FOR BRAVERY

AB Kate Nesbitt - serving with a Commando Brigade in Afghanistan saw a British soldier fall from a bullet wound during a fire fight. She sprinted 70 yards under fire to reach him. Kate opened a second airway allowing him to breath. She stayed with him under fire for 45 minutes until the enemy was flushed out. For this act of bravery Kate was awarded the Military Cross.

The Military Cross was formerly reserved for commissioned personal. The UK - in 1993 – started a programme to review honours and to eliminate rank distinctions. However the revered Military Medal is no more. Only one other woman has been award the Military Cross.

The Citation reads - "Under fire and under pressure her commitment to courage was inspirational and made a difference between life and death. She performed in the highest tradition of her service."

AB Kate Nesbitt is only five feet tall. Prince Phillip had to bend deeply to present the Award and speak with her. Kate is now serving at a Military Hospital in the UK

PS -Shortly after the ceremony she turned 21

Quote from the original newspaper article –

"So who says the front lines area is no place for a woman to be, if that's what she wants to do?"

Thought from a matelot. (My sentiments too)

I was a sailor once. I was part of the navy, and the navy will always be part of me.

Chris Shellard - Royal Navy

War Veterans Allowance Act

If you are low income and served in WWII and/or Korea you may be eligible for the War Veterans allowance together with a number of health

care and home care related programs. This includes allied veterans who have lived in Canada for 10 years or more. For detailed information call 1-866-522-2122 or www.vac-acc.gc.ca