

1982

THE HANDSHAKE

Sponsored by the B.C. AOTS-UCM Council and directed to all Men in the B.C. Conference of the United Church of Canada. Editor Bill Hastings.



PRESIDENT TOM REPRESENTS B.C. MEN AT GENERAL COUNCIL

Our hard working and much travelled Tom Murray has been on the go on our behalf. His portfolio covers both AOTS and UCM. He and his Presbytery representatives are the only official members for men in the Courts of our Church. Tom found General Council to be better "the second time around". We have space for only a few quotes from his report to the Handshake. He relates that "all of the commissioners were invited to spend a weekend with a Francophone Catholic family". This was a moving experience culminating in the attendance of Mass followed by a feast in his honour with several catholic families sharing in the latter. The official proceedings began with a dinner at McGill University. "500 of us paraded down University Ave. and along Sherbrooke to Notre Dame Cathedral." White gloved police secured the streets for us and called out "God Bless You" as we passed. Tom came up with a very astute observation. "The priest spoke beautiful French and passable English. Our Moderator and ministers spoke beautiful English and nearly passable French. We were warmly welcomed as Christian Brethren and felt at home in French speaking Canada." The proceedings and the reports thereof have been well documented and distributed but we would like to share petition number 25 with you. The subject was Adultery Yes, or No? Try this one on for size. It said in part "Fidelity does require sexual exclusivity and that marriage must not include secondary relationships of emotional intimacy and potential genital expression". The frustrations of one young commissioner were expressed in his question: "Doesn't that mean sleeping around?" To give Tom the last word. We're against that. To that we say "AMEN".

NOTICE OF MEETING

The 50th Annual Christmas Party is on once again. The date is December 8th, the place is Collinwood United, the time 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., the program good food, great fellowship and, of course, we will be in fine voice to sing those Christmas Carols. Plan to come. You can reserve a place by phoning Nelson Ball at 731-3606. Oh yes! Don't forget a pair of socks to be sent to First United.

A CLUB PROFILE

The Men's Club of Knox United, Prince George, B.C. continues to shine like a beacon in the northern interior of B.C. Full of the Spirit of our Lord, they continue to run an annual retreat for the men of the region. This active group has formed the nucleus of the planning committee for past Banff Men's Conferences. Oh yes, they retired on their own the Church debt of \$65,000. They continue to support the brotherhood of the men of the United Church by inviting men like Alan Staig of the DMC and our President, Tom Murphy, to participate in their Annual Retreat. They also keep in touch with the clubs across Canada through a donation to the AOTS National organization. Well done fellows! Keep up the good work.

THE M.V. "THOMAS CROSBY V" PROJECT

It was decided at the 1982 B.C. AOTS Round-Up to support once again this missionary boat that plies our northern waters. Last year we supplied funds to purchase a new two-way radio system. This year we volunteered to collect and direct funds towards storage lockers and life boats. The freight storage lockers have been built and in thanks for our support, a letter has been received from O.R. Howard, Master, Thomas Crosby V. The new life boats await the funds that have yet to come in. There has been considerable support from the Island and a few non-affiliated clubs on the mainland. Would those clubs who plan to join in on this project send their contributions to Terry Taylor, 141 East 41st Street, Vancouver, B.C. or Ernie Stafford, 1014 Vista Avenue, Duncan, B.C. V9L 2C6.

Incidentally, the Master of the Thomas Crosby V has written to tell us that the boats participation in the Nuclear Submarine protest did not interfere with its normal duties nor did it cost the ship money for operating during that trip. In actuality, they netted \$1500 through various donations. There have been protests as to the political advisability of this protest wherein a mission boat was used for reasons for which it was not intended. Those of us who have voiced our concerns in this matters have had opportunities to do so. Those who used the mission boat as a political weapon while questioning its viability, may their conscience be their guide.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The AOTS Provincial Round-Up is to be held on Saturday, March 26, 1983. We will gather at Centennial United, Victoria, B.C. and will have as our guests Gordon Hall, our National President; Jim Dickie, our Regional Vice-President; and Al Smith, our Executive Secretary. There will be more details in the January issue of the Hnadshake.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

The executive of the National Association of AOTS Clubs met on November 12, 13 and 14th in Oakville, Ontario. It was a different and, I think, very productive meeting. A new dimension was added by first of all meeting in a Church (St. Pauls) and within the environment of a very active AOTS club. We were billeted, fed, entertained and audited by a strong contingent of the members of this club. It was a great feeling to visit with them between the many sessions and to feel so welcome and to have a club so supportive.

Herein is a brief outline of some of the problems we addressed, the manner in which we discussed them and the positive results that ensued. We wasted no time on long reports. Meeting as a committee was a whole, a problem was put on the table, background information was supplied, and off we went into discussion groups with a mandate to solve the problem at hand. Taking the major points one at a time, we have the following:

- (1) To ask the Division of Mission in Canada to appoint the National AOTS President or his alternate as member of its Adult Unit. This Unit handles and works with all of the adult lay organizations. Indeed it is their voice nationally.
- (2) To ask the Adult Unit to request the Manual Revision Committee to include AOTS as an official arm of the Church. It is widely believed that, because we are not listed in the Manual, we are not a legal entity of the United Church. Doubtless the ground work for such recognition which was carefully prepared and

approved some years back has been lost within the reorganization of the Church into its various divisions. Strangely enough, the structure that is long since dead, namely, the UCM is still in the manual with all its defunct committee structure.

(3) Finances. Several budgets were proposed that involved figures ranging up to \$250,000.00. The reduction of club membership dues in relationship to National was considered with various proposals as to amounts getting a great deal of attention. In the end, we accepted a stand-still budget with continued support from the Clubs, the DNC and our individual benefactors working through the "Second Mile". Incidentally, travelling costs were covered by an anonymous benefactor or two.

(4) Projects. It was noted that the "Harry Colonett Fund" is set up now so that it can supply two scholarships per year. These scholarships go to Agricultural students who wish to work in this field in third world countries. Congratulations to all the participating clubs right across Canada. A new project was proposed: a fund to be established to aid the United Church Hospitals. A very good promotion plan complete with a film strip has already been drawn up. Approval of this National Project will be sought at St. John's, Newfoundland, July 21, 1983 at the AOTS Convention. Like the Crosby Fund, these monies can be directed towards specific pieces of equipment. As B.C. has four hospitals, we will have a greater interest than any other Conference.

(5) Membership. The National Membership Committee reported that the slide and tape presentation depicting the activities, etc., of an AOTS Club will soon be available. With the various conferences and districts reporting the possible formation of clubs, one could feel that a potential increase in the number of clubs is imminent. Several reported the problem of encouraging new club formation with immediate application of membership dues being a major stumbling block. After a great deal of thought, the National executive has recommended that a Charter may be presented with the understanding that there can be a two-year moratorium on membership dues. The door is to be left open as to how and when within this time frame a club would add to its affiliation the privilege of voting at a National Convention. There was a strong feeling that we could now visit with clubs, speak of a National project, show a film strip on club Round-Up and Convention activities with the emphasis on Christian Fellowship. The film strip alone re the Hospital Project could serve as a very good "in" where we are looking for an invitation to speak to clubs. It has to be noted that it falls right back on the shoulders of our existing affiliated clubs to not only keep supporting the National Association in a monetary sense, but to go forth as missionaries and truly be fishers of men.

Once again space being limited, we are unable to give more details of your National executives deliberations. Personally, I felt very positive about our future after this meeting.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The bulletin board of your church should have on it the first flyer announcing the Coastal Christian Men's Celebration of Faith. The date is April 29, Friday, to Sunday, May 1, 1983. The speaker is Hugh McCallum, Editor of the United Church Observer. The committee is very busy making sure that we will attain the usual high standard where we will have a renewal of faith within a Christian environment. Doug Ray and Jim Muirhead of Surrey, B.C., head the Celebration of Faith this year and they are well ahead of schedule with the arrangements. You will

note that the word Conference has been dropped from the name of the meeting. It was felt that it lead to considerable confusion and that it did not indicate the purpose for which we gather. With the change, we have not shortened the name but rather it is even more cumbersome. In time, we will come up with a more palatable mouthful having as its centre the work "Faith".

NEWS FROM VANCOUVER ISLAND

The main bastion of AOTS in B.C. is very active and well. We hear from our Provincial Vice-President, Ernie Stafford, that they have elected a new executive with Ron Jones (Esquimalt), President; Keith Macdonald (Duncan), 1st Vice; and Ode Gust (Ladysmith), 2nd Vice. There were 36 members present at the District Council Meeting on October 15th at Esquimalt. I hear of visits between clubs, with Duncan carrying the torch as per usual. The Duncan Club was the main participant on Lay Sunday in their Church. Don Morton pointed out that no less than 5 past presidents had a role in the service itself. The choir loft rang to the melodious voices of Club members. To date, I have not received the minutes of the D.C. meeting, but if they follow tradition the next meeting should fall on January 15, 1983. The Fairfield AOTS Newsletter comes in as regularly as clockwork. Ted Belt is the faithful editor and the Archives are wondering if he has on file all the back copies?

BITS AND PIECES

President Tom took the "red eye express" to the National Meeting. "Never again," says Tom, "It may have saved money but it sure took its toll on me."

The doctors of the United Church Hospitals kept a nurse on the Thomas Crosby V for a time by paying her salary out of their own pocket. Does the Crosby still have a nurse on the crew? If not, why not?

The following figures are taken from a directory of men's groups in Canada and Bermuda prepared and edited by Al Smith, the executive secretary of the National Association of AOTS Clubs. The B.C. figures go as follows: 57 Churches have a group of some kind or others. They range from men's clubs prayer study groups, a breakfast club, an ecumenical fellowship group and AOTS Clubs. The later are the only ones who maintain a bond of Christian fellowship with the men of other churches in B.C. and indeed in Canada. In all, the 57 groups serve 1344 men. Divided into two sections, we have forty individual groups whose activities usually center around their own churches and twenty AOTS Clubs. Those of us who are active in men's work know that there are more small groups who meet from time to time. There are probably many others known only in their own congregation. The conclusion has to be that many of the 1344 men in B.C. who belong to the above do not know of the Christian man across the street, across town and indeed across the Province.

The AOST-UCM Council wishes you all
a Joyous Christmas
and a Happy New Year!