

# THE HANDSHAKE



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



I would like to bring forward some thoughts to the full membership of AOTS that I shared with those in attendance at the 2011 Biennial at Jackson's Point, Ontario in April of last year.

The theme of Biennial 2011 was "Celebrating Men's Ministry: Making a Difference". That is exactly what being a member of AOTS should be all about. As the only national organization representing Men in the United Church, we should not lose sight of the aims of AOTS ... to promote fellowship, deepen the spiritual life of men and develop an effective program of Christian service.

At the Biennial Dinner, I recognized our outgoing President Jim McKibbin, who through his leadership made a difference. He has motivated us to take on national

challenges which have heightened national awareness of AOTS and worked to make the United Church more conscious of the needs of the men of our church. And most importantly, provided leadership that has encouraged us to step forward and tackle whatever task needs to get done. I am sure a lot of what Jim has done for AOTS as President will not be known ... what I do know is when I have seen him in action, he deals with matters in a fair and equitable manner and has set high standards for those of us that follow. That is his legacy.

Biennial 2011 was a landmark for AOTS with the adoption of the new constitution. It reflects the reality of AOTS today and will make the organization more effective. Most importantly it brings new regional focus to AOTS with Regional Councils to be established. I am committed to working with the executive to implement this new direction. It will require your help. I hope that if you are asked to assist in the various aspect of change, you will step up to the plate. It can sometimes be daunting to take on something new ... something which you are not sure is for you, but it can be very rewarding. I would encourage you to familiarize yourself with the new Constitution which can be found on the AOTS website, [www.AOTS.ca](http://www.AOTS.ca).

The value of generating excitement through a national or international project was seen this past year with the Dondi Project. The Biennial Conference has directed the Executive to consider this as a possible national project as well as the current Youth to Camp program. These are the types of projects that are reflective of the aims of AOTS. However, it is important that all clubs across Canada understand the programs and feel that these are projects that they can support. This will be a challenge to your new executive and regional councils which I will attempt to address successfully. This is all about communication.

If we are to embrace change, we cannot continue to do things the same old way. We have taken the initial step by adopting the new Constitution, that is just the beginning. We need to form our vision for the future and celebrate our successes. It is my hope to visit as many regional events over my term to carry this message forward.

I was extremely pleased that Gary Ross, Eastern Vice President, has successfully taken up the challenge given to him 2 years ago and is in the process, along with others in the East, of making arrangements for the August 2013 Biennial to be held in Gander. This is important not only to AOTS clubs but also an opportunity to participate co-operatively with other men's clubs on the east coast, this should be a great event and I would encourage as many of you as possible to attend, this will be an opportunity of a lifetime. I am also hoping that the following biennial in 2015 will be in the West. I am tossing out that challenge as it is important under our new Constitution that all clubs whether in the West, Central or East have an opportunity to participate in this type of national event.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during my term as President. Please feel free to contact me by whatever means you is most comfortable for you. If you have any ideas, concerns to share or want to get involved in the changing AOTS.

In His Service

David Morris, National President



**AOTS, "As One That Serves"**, is a church-related organization of men initiated in 1923 and dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship, 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 January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1923, at Kerisdale Methodist Church, now known as Ryerson United Church, Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Handshake contains news and announcements of the AOTS Men's Clubs and other men's ministry groups or individual members and from a variety of other contributors who are interested in sharing their ideas and interests with other men or groups. It is provided to AOTS members by the National AOTS office. The views, comments and opinions published in the *Handshake*, both printed and electronic forms, are not necessarily those of the National AOTS Association.

*All submissions are subject to editing.*

Photo submissions: If you want your original photo returned let us know and please enclose a stamped self addressed envelope with your submission.

Email addresses: [handshake2007@sympatico.ca](mailto:handshake2007@sympatico.ca)

Address: Harold Lorenz

708 - 40 William Roe Blvd.

Newmarket, ON L3Y 5N4

**\* Executive Members**

*Past President	Jim McKibbin
*President	David Morris
*President Elect	Jim Upright
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	Central John Cooke
	East Ernest Paddock

The AOTS web page can be found at:

[www.aots.ca](http://www.aots.ca)

**Webmaster address: [mark@aots.ca](mailto:mark@aots.ca)**

*Editor's Note:* It seems like a long time since the last Handshake was published. Arranging for an alternative printer and distribution system has proven to be more time consuming than anyone had anticipated.

Material has been a little slow in arriving, but seems to have picked up lately. This has prompted me to issue an electronic issue, as we did for our 85th Anniversary.

This electronic issue costs next to nothing to produce, and I seem to have accumulated an email list that gets the word out across Canada. With the help of all of you that are on email and/or have access to the web site, we can distribute a "full colour" issue for you to enjoy.

Hopefully as I finish compiling this issue, it will cover items from across Canada, have lots of pictures and give a good overview of the men of the United Church of Canada in action.

Some of the items are a little "old", but very interesting and informative.

*Thanks*



**J. Keith Arner**

Sept. 30, 1922

Jan. 28, 2011

Keith was an active member of Harrow United Church, AOTS Men's Club, Past Master of King Edward Masonic Lodge #488 and a 32 Degree Mason. He served overseas in WWII with the R.C.E.M.E. from 1943

to 1946. After the war he worked in Windsor in the tool & die industry, a Robotic Company and was part owner of a material handling company and was also a consultant with the Ontario Ministry of Industry and Trades.

*All of us in AOTS remember Keith with fondness.*

# CHURCHMEN'S CAMP

June 8th to 10th, 2012

*Riding Mountain Conference Center - Clear Lake, Manitoba*

**YOUR FAITH IN GOD IS YOUR**

**GREATEST STRENGTH**



We know Dan Palsson as a Sports Announcer for CTV Winnipeg. His is a familiar face. He is much more than a sports announcer. As he will share at MEN'S CAMP, there are many more facets, skills and stories that make up this father, friend, and businessman.

Dan Palsson had a difficult start to life. Raised by a single parent he showed a lot of interest and talent in sports, which took him to the Notre Dame College in Wilcox, Saskatchewan. Their hockey program has produced over 100 NHL players – sadly, Dan was not one of them due to what one of his coaches said was only because of two factors ... too short and no talent! Needless to say, Dan has had to rely on a good sense of humor and an amazing family. His wife's family in particular had a huge impact as great examples on his Christian journey.

Dan and his family moved to Winnipeg in the summer of 1989 to work as a TV Sports caster. Covering Gretzky, Messier and the rest of the Stanley Cup champion Oilers was too boring – so he came back to his roots. He got involved with **Hockey Ministries International** (HMI) hosting numerous youth camps locally. Then he got involved with **Athletes in Action** and was able to head to places like Russia in '92 with Paul Henderson and spread the same message of Christian Sportsmanship! Dan's love of sports ministry, combined with a passion for hockey allowed him to become involved in 2 ministries – both with the same goal – serving Christ and being His ambassador presenting the Gospel.

HMI's program teaches athletes to strive for excellence and recognize that

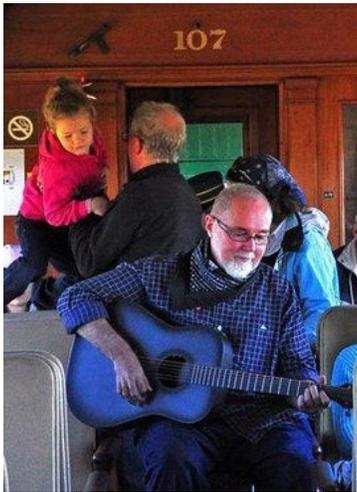
***faith in God is their Greatest Strength!***

**Come to camp to meet Dan and share in his inspiring  
Stories from youngsters to NHL stars!**

*For more info:*

**[www.menscamp.ca](http://www.menscamp.ca)**

*Continued on page 4*



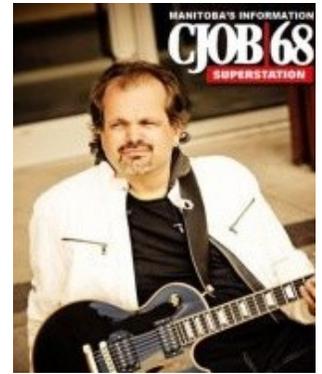
SATURDAY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT:  
***THE B-SIDE APOSTLES WITH***  
CBC Radio's "Up To Speed" Star ...

**LARRY UPDIKE**

and CJOB's Weekend talk Radio Host ...

**Greg Glatz**

DROP IN FEE FOR ENTERTAINMENT \$25  
WHOLE WEEKEND \$110



**WHY GO TO CHURCHMEN'S CAMP?**

Sometimes God works a miracle that you never even see! Our speaker this year, came to our attention in a very innocent way. He helped a young man named Earl Cook. As chronicled on CBC, Earl's seemingly impossible life story and the way celebrity sports stars reached out to him, affected hundreds if not thousands of people. Dan started the ball rolling with the celebrities with a simple phone call. The rest was inspiring!

Not long after Camp heard this story and had invited Earl and his mom to share it, God asked Earl to come home. It was a sad and peaceful end to a life filled with constant battle against disease and circumstances. Yet there was always a smile on Earl's face and he accepted each challenge with grace and determination.

Dan Palsson was a spiritual leader for Earl, invited him into home and life. Earls funeral was held at the MTS center and Dan spoke of the impact this story had on his life, and how he was forever changed by this young man. Dan truly was the Good Samaritan, who helped the stranger and was rewarded by God's love and strength!

Why not come out to Camp and meet this man of God. I'll see you there!

**JAMES DOUGLAS - CHAIR**

*RIDING MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHMEN*

***TO REGISTER***

Please fill out the form and mail with pre-registration deposit of \$10, or full amount of \$110, to:

***Men's Camp***

% Herman Klassen  
Box 1541

Minnedosa, MB R0J 1E0

Please make cheques payable to "Riding Mountain Conference of Churchmen"

Balance of registration, if any, paid at camp.

**REGISTRATION FORM - PLEASE PRINT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Check if req'd. RV Parking \_\_\_\_\_ Special Diet \_\_\_\_\_

Financial assistance is available from Continuation Fund - I would like to apply \_\_\_\_\_

**Call James Douglas for further information**  
**Cell (204) 794-7940 Home (204) 8968768**

## Duncan United Church, Duncan, BC, AOTS Update From 2011

Warmest greetings from the west! Our group is happy to report to the national membership about our activities in 2011. In that year, we had 37 members, with most attending our monthly dinner meetings at the church. These gatherings are held on the last Thursday of every month except July and August. The guys always look forward to the monthly meeting as it provides an opportunity for fellowship and sharing, a great meal (thanks always to the UCW and/or Velma Bercier!) a bit of singing and listening to a guest speaker. The last part of the meeting is usually devoted to AOTS club business.

Our May monthly meeting was “Ladies Night”, held in Heritage Hall. This time, members and their wives – along with a few other guests - enjoyed comic opera and music performances courtesy of several DUC folk. The “Ukeladies” group performed several pieces and AOTS member Clarke Popham had everyone riveted during his recitation of “The Cremation of Sam McGee”. Mike Kanski was his usual capable self, acting as MC.

In 2011, Duncan AOTS lost four present/past members. We remember Marv Fowler, Ernie Stafford, Phil Watson and Hugh Robinson.

Other group activities at the church throughout 2011 included Robbie Burns Night in January, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and two garage sales (spring and fall). Finally, to wrap things up before summer, we held our annual Fun Fair for the congregation and youth in late June.

Many thanks to those AOTS members who, through their hard work and determination, helped to make all of these projects a success!

*submitted by Shaun Pattenden, Secretary*

Drew Shaw finishing his  
“Address to the Haggis”  
at the Burns Night .



Duncan United 2012 AOTS Executive  
*Left to right* - Shaun Pattenden (Secretary),  
Roy Robinson (President) Keith Bennett  
(Treasurer), Rick Freidrich (Vice President).



## Minnedosa AOTS Club - Manitoba

The winter of 2011 / 2012 seems to be going down in the record book as one of the best winters that we have had in memory and there are some long memories in the Minnedosa AOTS Club. I don't think there is anyone living who can remember less snow and milder temperatures than what Minnedosa has experienced this year. As this report is being written it is impossible to find enough snow to make a snow ball. The lakes have frozen over for the fishermen, but the ski-doo-ers can not find enough snow to ride on.

The Minnedosa club has had a very busy year with special activities including:

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Winnipeg Men's Choir - which had to be cancelled due to bad weather

Spring String Concert

Ice cream sales during Fun Fest

Annual Church Fall Supper - a special thank you for congregational donations and assistance.

Fall Pancake Supper

Purchase of Quiet Room Window Covers for the new church

Archival records submitted

Christmas supper



The club has donated to many different projects as usual, but one of the newest projects is the support that is being forwarded to the "LSIN" program operated by Principal James Sheppard and teachers of Tanners Crossing School. The club has committed to raise \$2,000 per year for this local project to help young people stay in school.

Here is a picture of the fellows working at the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.

L to R - Clayton Searle - Charter Member Minnedosa AOTS and Past President Don Jones doing what they like best to do, making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.



Tanners Crossing School Principal, 2 staff and 6 grade 7 or 8 students help bus tables and look after the tea and coffee. The Minnedosa AOTS have made a commitment to support the teachers and students of Tanners Crossing School by donating \$2,000 per year to assist in the LSIN Program. The LSIN program involves all kinds of activities to help youth appreciate and stay in school and, thanks to the principal and staff who go the extra mile to make this program work in Minnedosa, it is making a difference.

*Submitted by Harvey Douglas*

## Two Volunteers Celebrate 112 Years of Combined Service

Harry Burdon and Ernie Orpin, both members of the United Church AOTS Men's Club, live their lives according to the Club's creed: "As one that serves." They have volunteered at Sunday worship services at Riverview Health Centre for a combined total of 112 years and, as Harry puts it, "I'm happy that at my age I can still serve — so I will!"

These two dedicated volunteers first became involved at Riverview in the 1950s through the AOTS, and they've been going strong ever since. They transport patients and residents in their wheelchairs from their rooms to Sunday services, which today take place in the Worship Centre. Before the new facility opened in 1997, Harry and Ernie wheeled people to two different locations in the old buildings.

"There is a tremendous need to help people in this way," explains Ernie. "Many people at Riverview would not be able to attend services without the volunteers who come in to help. We are happy that we can fulfill this need."

For Harry's part, coordination of the volunteers was part of his job for over 30 years of his tenure at the Centre. He would contact other congregations to drum up helpers to come in on Sunday. Today, there can be 50 to 60 patients and residents attending

the services, so it can take quite a crew of helpers to get people settled, either in the Worship Centre itself or in the nearby Thomas Sill Auditorium, which is connected via audio-visual feed.

Harry bowed out of that role recently when a weekend volunteer from the Centre started to do the organizing. "We are now seeing a few young kids from schools and churches coming in to do the wheeling," he says. "This is great because the need is still there, and having younger people come in will ensure the service continues."

Harry continues to wheel people to the services, mainly taking care of residents on the Alzheimers unit. Ernie likes to attend his own church some Sundays, but still comes in every other Sunday to arrange chairs in the Worship Centre to make sure the large crowd will be comfortably accommodated.

Why do they continue after so many years? "I've made good friends with patients and residents, and I know it means a lot to them — they look for us on Sundays," says Ernie. Harry agrees, and adds: "Working with people at Riverview has helped me to be patient — I see people who are challenged in many ways, but they are cheerful anyway."

And who wouldn't be cheerful, with committed volunteers like Harry and Ernie there to help out?



Long-time volunteers Harry Burdon (L) and Ernie Orpin (R).

Photo: Ian Willmer

Our thanks to the "Riverview Health Centre" Winnipeg, Manitoba - "Health Views" publication for this article

### **Dear Fellow AOTS Members, we are alive and well in Wetaskiwin, Alberta.**



Over the past two years and 4 months we have been traveling in the wilderness, but finally arrived home. We had our first meeting in our new Church.



*Preparing for the first service*

**First United Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, February 5, 2012.**

# Thought for today...

## Men – Followers – Servants

*(31-32a) Then Jesus began to teach his followers that the Son of Man must suffer many things. He taught that the Son of Man would not be accepted by the older Jewish leaders, the leading priests, and the teachers of the law. He said that the Son of Man must be killed and then rise from death after three days. Jesus told them everything that would happen. He did not keep anything secret.*

*(32b-33) Peter took Jesus away from the other followers to talk to him alone. Peter criticized him for saying these things. But Jesus turned and looked at his followers. Then he criticized Peter. He said to Peter, “Get away from me, you are talking like Satan. You don’t care about the same things God does. You care only about things that people think are important.”*

*(34-38) Then Jesus called the crowd and his followers to him. He said, “Any of you who want to be my followers must stop thinking about yourself and what you want. You must be willing to carry the cross that is given to you for following me. Any of you who try to save the life you have will lose it. But you who give up your life for me and for the Good News will save it. It is worth nothing for you to have the whole world if you yourself are lost. You could never pay enough to buy back your life. People today are sinful. They have not been faithful to God. As you live among them, don’t be ashamed of me and my teaching. If that happens, I will be ashamed of you when I come with the glory of my Father and the holy angels.*

Mark 8:31-38 (Easy-to-read version)

There may be legitimate reasons why some ministers won’t be personally involved in men’s ministry, in AOTS or in a men’s group of any description. Ministers are busy with responsibilities in a multitude of constituencies. Said spiritually, they are shepherds of a flock. It is a demanding calling.

Some ministers have been burned after several tries to establish or maintain men’s groups. The men may not show enough interest if the minister tries to do too much, or the men may form cliques such that newcomers are not welcomed, and they eventually will grow old and have to withdraw from leadership.

In many instances men’s ministry has a big black eye, whether AOTS or Saturday breakfast club or some other men’s group. The mental image is a separate group of the most zealous men in the church. Many of these men are viewed as kooky, or even a threat to the minister. Instead of encouraging the minister, they may act like they know something the minister doesn’t. It can be a real downer.

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In our Bible passage, Jesus was trying to help his followers understand who he is and what it means to be true followers. Is it any easier for us as men today than it was for Peter to understand, to accept and then to follow Jesus' teaching? Do we care about the same things God does? Or, like Jesus accused Peter, do we only care about things that people think are important?

It is good to get together as men for fellowship, for support and for work to help others. But Jesus said if we want to be true followers of his, we must be willing to show we are followers and accept the consequences. Don't be ashamed of Jesus' teachings. Be willing to show others you believe.

Perhaps in our ministry with men, we need to figure out how to mentor men in becoming "followers" of Jesus. Ministry with men needs to "disciple" men in their existing roles, even if they already are elders, stewards, ushers, choir members, or youth workers. It is not enough to be a good "worker", eventually we will all "burn out" if working is all we do. We all need to be "discipled" into becoming true followers of Jesus.

Jesus won the world by winning 12 ordinary men. What would happen if your church had a group of men whose main passion was to see Jesus Christ receive glory in everything they did?

Some questions to consider as you ponder that group of men.

- How can we worship a God we don't know?
- How can we serve effectively if we don't know God wants to use us?
- How can we bring about social justice if we don't know what is just?
- How can we have genuine fellowship unless we are taught to love and not be selfish?
- How can we become followers unless we hear the word of the Lord?

Let us pray –

God, we are not as strong as we would like to be.

But we have some strength

And we know that, through prayer, we can experience your support.

It is difficult for us to stop thinking about ourselves

And what we want.

Help us to see what you want

And what you are asking us to do as your servants.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*George Bishop – Spiritual Life and Leadership*

## Greetings from Lakefield (Ont.) United Church AOTS Men's Club.

Two thousand and twelve will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our club. Our charter was granted in 1962 and we were the 632<sup>nd</sup> club in Canada. I wonder how many there are now?

Lakefield AOTS has been in the Christmas tree business for 41 years. Proceeds from the sale of trees together with the proceeds from our three annual concerts fund the charitable activities of our group. Trees are ordered in the Fall from a Pontypool tree farm and also from a tree farm in the Apsley area. Pontypool trees are delivered wrapped in binder twine to the church the last weekend in November. AOTS members together with a number of volunteers from the congregation go with a flatbed truck to Apsley and load pre-cut trees onto the truck which is then driven to the church in Lakefield and unloaded. Fortunately, we have a vacant lawn beside the church.

A week or so previous to the arrival of the trees, the men will have set up rows of wooden rail fences upon which the trees will be leaned for display to prospective buyers. Our minister does not wish trees to be sold during church service on Sunday morning but Sunday afternoon sales are usually brisk. We try to staff the weekends with two

volunteers and the weekday sales can usually be handled by one person. Our hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our trees vary in size from mini 3 ft. trees to 15 footers. We cut and trim trees to the buyers wishes. We have spruce, balsam, fraser fir and scotch pine. Scotch pine is in short supply and we had very few this past Christmas.

Prices range from \$15.00 to \$45.00 for the largest trees and are usually less than other sellers in our area. We order between 300 and 335 trees



each year and are usually sold out by the third week in December.

Because AOTS members are getting "long in the tooth," the past year we invited other members of the congregation, both male and female, to help out with sales. The response was excellent and as a result, one half of the profit (\$2500.00) was contributed to the church general fund.

Profits from the sale of trees and our annual concerts are used to support kids from our church and the wider community to attend Camp Quin-mo-lac each summer. Lakefield Community Care, Five Counties Children's Centre and various other youth projects in our community are also supported. We enjoy what we do and with an active membership of 20 to 25 members, we hope to carry on for some years to come.

*Submitted by John Sherin, M.D.*

*On the left - George Mosier (Past President) and on the right - Keith Gummo.*

## First United Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta

The Annual Beef Supper was held at the Moose Hall in March. We had great support from the ladies in the congregation. We had a smaller crowd than normal, but it was still a success.

This year we chose to promote a gigantic Garage Sale in June in conjunction with Pioneer Days. Thanks to almost everyone in the church and a lot of other people, we were able to raise over \$7140.00 . The best part was the team work. We also provided some furniture to people from Slave Lake, thanks to the McMillan's and we provided lots of things to the Salvation Army and other charitable organizations.

The first Sunday in July we led the Church Service at Grace Lutheran. The theme was "Team Work". It is a privilege to be part of a team at First United. We have worked hard to overcome obstacles and we do not give up easy. We are practicing so that we are ready for the "Next Chapter".

Later in July we were able to finalize our plan to sponsor two children to Camp Kasota in partnership with Catholic Social Services.

In early October we presented scholarships to Michael King and Chris Liddle as they headed off to College. On November 5 we helped out the ladies with their Tea and Christmas Gift Sale. (Mostly we ate as much as we could.) The following week was the Annual Ham Supper at the Moose Hall. Due to restrictions on the time availability we had to start at 8:00 AM on Saturday morning and work through until 8:30 in the evening. This is the last time we have to pull that stunt I hope. We made a profit of approximately \$3200.00.

Dec 8 - A Carol Festival was held at Sacred Heart Church . It was a great success with all donations to Secret Santa and the Food Bank.

This brings another year to a close. We thank everyone for the support we have received in the past year. We look forward to the year ahead. We have a total of 25 members and there are several people that help out when the opportunity arises.



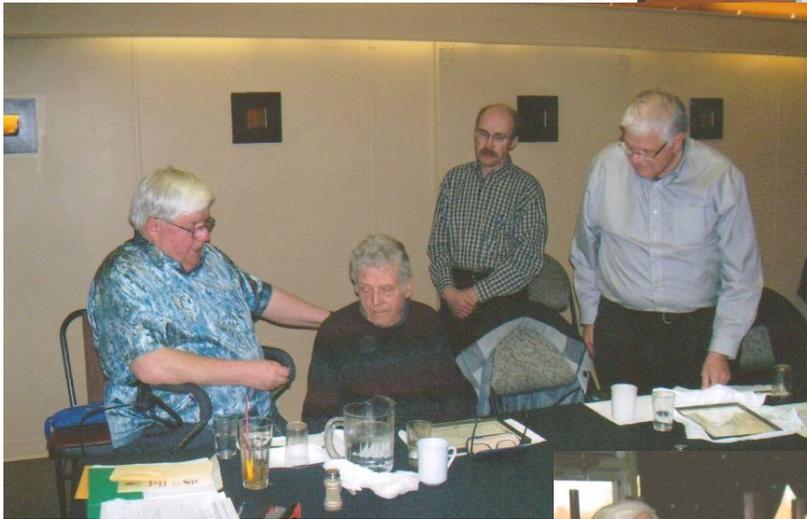
*"Old Faithful Gang" conducting church service at Baker Funeral Home.*



Bill Hughes - an original member of the first AOTS club in Wetaskiwin. Bill is "One That Serves" wherever he goes. He spends winters in Arizona organizing monthly community events just like he does here at home.



Art Smith - AOTS is short for "Art One & Only Smith" in Wetaskiwin. He does it all! Art is receiving his Life Time Membership Certificate.



Alvin Klause - receiving his Life Time Membership Certificate. Alvin has been the Treasurer of the club for over 15 years and he and his wife Hedy have organized the Annual AOTS Christmas Carol Festival since it started 17 years ago.



Walden Smith (sitting down) receiving his Life Time Membership Certificate from Wally Shultz (left), Bill Love (right) and Dan Liddle and Bob Silverthorne in the rear.



## Gaetz Memorial United Church, Red Deer, Alberta

### AOTS – As One That Serves – 2011

The year in review: A total of 10 get-togethers with food, fellowship, worship and song graced our gatherings throughout the past year. We were privileged to have had wonderful guests who shared their stories, knowledge and music at AOTS events in 2011.

We travelled to Turkey, spent a Ministerial Sabbatical in Tasmania where we met the people, learned of the history, the landscape, the flora, the fauna; an adventure beyond our imagination. We celebrated the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, India with Lynda Hare, who brought home the Bronze Medal in air pistol shooting. Red Deer's Wildrose Harmonizers performed for us and Bruce Drysdale and friend demonstrated and played the "small pipes."

Our members, as they are able, continue to see that the hedge trimming, the lawn mowing and other required landscaping needs are looked after. However, we are very appreciative of the much needed "help" that has been received from others within the congregation. With the contributions of so many, Gaetz United can be the warm, welcoming place for which we strive.

Although the week day snow clearing has been contracted out, thanks to the two dedicated AOTS members assure that the job is done on weekends.



We look forward to celebrating the 125th anniversary of Gaetz Memorial United Church. AOTS will also celebrate! Yes, 65 years as a worshipping, welcoming, service group within this congregation.

About 10 years ago when membership and attendance began to slip, we made the decision to become a co-ed group. We operate with a co-ed Management Team who plan the monthly meetings with guest speakers and/or entertainment, as well as any fund raising projects.

If you are not a member now, why not consider checking us out by spending the first Monday evening of each month with us? For more information call Bert Loughheed at 403-343-3808 or Doreen MacDonald at 403-346-5324.

***Submitted on behalf of the AOTS Management Team.***

***Editor's Note:*** This arrangement "works" for them, don't knock it. Looks like a great group.



## The 'As One That Serves' (AOTS) Men's Club, Newmarket, ON

Trinity's men's club is as active as ever. In November of 2011, the club hosted a wonderful hot roast beef lunch, generating \$1,052.21 and a "Hardware Department" that brought in \$541.45. The money from the Hardware Department was sent on to the church's capital project of updating the audio/visual system in the Sanctuary. The club's largest donation in 2011 was \$1,000 directed to camping.

Our January meeting featured 'discussions' in which each table of men was presented with a topic for discussion, after 15 minutes one man from each table would report on the outcome of the discussion. One table discussed Canada's Senate - should senators be appointed, elected or should the Senate be abolished. Our club President, Peter Hardy, had this idea (of discussions) - a new style of meeting for the men.

Trinity's "Breakfast Club" (meet for breakfast on months that we do not have a regular meeting) had its second round, 8:00 a.m. Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 10 guys managed to make it to this grand event. A few men in the collective once again annoying the rest by eating twice the food and looking as slim as ever, the upside is that they're the odd ones, making the rest of us look quite normal...

The AOTS served pancakes once again on Shrove Tuesday (February 21<sup>st</sup>). We fed approximately 150 people, generating \$607.56 for the coffers of the club. It's always great when folks get together to share time, stories and memories and what better place than over a full plate of pancakes!

At Easter of each year, the men of Trinity offer their services as hosts during the overnight Vigil. The Vigil ran from 9:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday to 9:00 a.m. Good Friday morning with 12 men each sharing an hour of their time at the church's front entrance to assist in this event.

A few member Trinity's club will be attending "Jackson's Point" on April 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is the meeting site on the south shore of Lake Simcoe where the Central Canada division of the AOTS gathers for its annual conference. Items on the agenda include guest speakers, workshops, music, a Sunday morning service, fine food, accommodation and lots of good fun and laughter. It is a wonderful opportunity for the men to chat with old friends, meet new ones and renew their Spirituality.

Also at Jackson's Point, the Friday evening speaker is David Wilson, current editor of the United Church *Observer* magazine.

Our guest for the club meeting of March 28<sup>th</sup> was James Wardlaw. James works for a charitable organization known as 'Acorn', which is an acronym for 'Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now'. Acorn's main role is to help individuals have better success in correcting collective problems by bringing them together to work as a single group, realizing that an individual often struggles to make headway on his or her own.

The following meetings of the AOTS club are lined up: April - Games Night, May - Golf & Dinner out, June - BBQ with thanks to our host, Ron Anderson. The club will be providing the Father's Day service (June 17<sup>th</sup>) and our guest minister will be Rev. David McMaster from the Timothy Eaton Memorial Church in Toronto.

*Submitted by Jonathan Wardlaw*

You Handshake editor wants to take this opportunity to thank Jonathan Wardlaw (a former High School English Teacher) for his hard work and friendly advice in "proof reading" each of the Handshakes that I have produced since 2007. I give Jonathan an advanced copy in "black and white" and he returns it to me in "RED and white". As my wife Jean (my other proof ready) says, "Jonathan 'BLEEDS BLOOD' all over the page".

*Thanks a million Jonathan, the Handshake would not be the same without you.*

## WOW!!! A First - News from the Yukon

The United Church men of the Yukon don't have an active AOTS club, however they do have an active Men's Club that has been involved with supporting the community, youth and Christian camping since the sixties.

One of their main focuses is that the United Church is one of the main driving force behind the Braeburn Lake Christian Camp Association. This ecumenical group is made up of congregations from the Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and United Churches of the Yukon. The Association owns and operates a summer camp on the shores of Braeburn Lake.

The camp hosts children from the ages of 6-15 for up to five weeks each summer. Traditionally children attend PeeWee Camp, Junior Camp or Teen Camp. Braeburn camp also has a successful Councillor in Training (CIT) program that encourages teenage members of our congregations to participate in camp and share in a leadership role.

Volunteers are the heart of Braeburn Camp. Whitehorse United Church has supported the camp with financial and human resources since the late 1960's.

One of the ways the United Church men help out with fundraising is that they host an ecumenical Men's Breakfast Group every month that brings in over thousand dollars every year. These funds are usually earmarked to special maintenance projects. Last summer the men built and put in a new dock for the camp and this past year they upgraded all the windows in the dining hall.

The Men's Breakfast Group is made up of men from church congregations in Whitehorse. The Group meets at 7:00 am on the first Wednesday of every month over breakfast, hosted on rotational bases at the Anglican, Lutheran, Catholic and United Churches. Funds are raised for Braeburn Camp from the monthly breakfast. The group also hosts an Annual Spaghetti Dinner (usually) on the first Friday in April. It was started to help pay back a no-interest loan to the Yukon Government for the installation of power to a remote camp that is way off the grid. The Spaghetti Dinner raises around twenty-seven hundred every year and it has been going on for roughly 10 years now. This year will be the final payment and then, if they continue with the Annual Spaghetti Dinner, it will mean more money for special maintenance projects or possibly other camp needs.

When talking with one of the Braeburn Camp representatives who has been on the camp board for over 20 years, Jennifer Moorlaig said "As the Camp treasurer the money is always a great thing but it pales to

the amount of hard work that these men put into the camp". She added "the dedication, commitment and passion that these men have for the camp is what keeps this place going".

*Submitted by Mark Browning*

### Editor's Note:

See the "SUCCESS STORY" in the February 2012 issue of the OBSERVER.



## Grace United AOTS, Trenton, Ontario



Grace United AOTS is the sponsoring body for the local Scouting group which includes Beavers and Cubs who meet weekly in the church basement. Each March, the Club treats the troop and leaders to an evening dinner of pizza, cake and ice cream. It is an event that the young people truly look forward to.

The above collage above is a combination of the evening with the Scouts, the Pancake supper, which is part of our fund raising in support of the youth, and the added picture of the men from Bay of Quinte Conference as they gathered to do “spring cleanup” at Camp Quin-Mo-Lac.

*Submitted by Al Anthony*



Long time AOTS member Layton Stewart presents a cheque for \$1,062.00 to the Sick Kids Foundation in Toronto, on behalf of the National AOTS Hospital Fund.

## From the Western Vice President



There have been a couple of changes in the west. Jim Upright has accepted the position of chair elect and will fill the role of the National President for 2013/2015. I ask everyone to support and pray for Jim during this stint in office. Jim has stepped down from the Secretary's position to take this important role in our organization. Mr. David Adams from Duncan, BC has accepted the one year position as Member at Large to the National Council. I met with Jim and David in early December and hopefully helped introduce David to this new position.

The Minnedosa Men's club are looking forward to hosting the National Executive Meetings for 2012 in Minnedosa, MB on June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012. It has been nearly twenty years since the National Executive visited Minnedosa. The meetings will correspond with the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Riding Mountain National Park Churchmen's Conference at Camp Wanacumbac, on the west shores of Clear Lake. The camp leaders have been very fortunate to acquire two excellent speakers and entertainers from Winnipeg. Mr. Dan Palson is a well know sports announcer and Christian leader and Larry Updike the CBC Winnipeg afternoon man, is another well-known radio broadcaster with a terrific ability to sing and play guitar. Both men have a fantastic story to tell. We all look forward to recharging our batteries during this retreat.

From left to right: David Adams, Jim Upright, Harvey Douglas

*Submitted by Harvey Douglas*

### ***The Haircut***

*A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and inquired of his father as to when they could discuss his use of the family car.*

*His father said he'd make a deal with his son: "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."*

*After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought up your grades and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut.*

*The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Sampson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair ... and there is strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."*

*To which his father replied - **"Did you notice that they all walked everywhere they went."***



## Trinity United Church, North Bay, Ontario

The first fund-raiser of each year, at Trinity United Church in North Bay, Ontario, is a soup tasting evening. AOTS members serve up samples of 28 different soups that have been made by members of the congregation. Also made and donated by the congregation, are the accompaniments of bread and desserts. Members of the UCW help out by coming early and making a salad to make the meal complete and very healthy. This has gone on for 8 years now, and Friday, the 20th of January, 140 people enjoyed the many varieties of soup. There were many variations of squash soup, pea soup, pizza soup, minestrone, broccoli, hamburger and potato leek with celery root. We even had a cold melon berry soup.

The event sees the participation of over 60 people. Last year our minister Ted Harrison, and the chief chef, John Sheridan, did an enactment of the "Stone Soup" story. This year we did something different called "stump the chef". We asked members of the congregation to bring in items for the main soup of the evening. Its interesting how it seems to be the one that is eaten up first.

Obviously this many people make a late night for the dishwashers but, that too becomes a fun and entertaining part of the event.

*Submitted by John Sheridan*



***L to R - Bill Clark, Bob Cooney, Mike Bugo, Dave McKenny, while Bob Cook discusses strategy with kitchen leader Rae Brown Lee***

# 2011 Biennial Roundup a Great Success

Over 60 attendees spent a wonderful weekend together as AOTS National and Central Region participated in a joint Biennial/Roundup convention entitled *Celebrating Men's Work in the Church - Making a Difference*.

Keynote speaker Michael Blair provided great insight into the act of celebration by focusing AOTS members on celebrating the future as opposed to the past. In his opening address Michael posed three questions:

- What is the legacy you want to leave for those who come next?
- Why make a difference and for whom?
- What does it mean for you to share your *faith*? How do you share your faith?

He spoke of "presenting" the work of the church by contemporizing the situation we see on our horizon. This is complicated by our desire to be hospitable and act as "hosts" to those we wish to welcome and come as our guests. Relationships become defined over time as host and guest. We become stuck in the past. In this sense, we need to dispense with our notions of hospitality, set it aside and practice a future based on equity, recognizing that we all do not start from the same place. If our goal is to make a difference in the world, we need to dispense with relationships that keep us in the past.

Michael's three keynote presentations had a profound impact on the weekend convention, which was also finalizing significant changes to the AOTS Constitution, making us a slimmer and trimmer organization for the times we are in. John Cooke led this work and he will be working closely with new president Dave Morris in transitioning us through to the full implementation of those changes.

John Groeneveld led us through numerous wonderful sing-a-longs and also led our choir for our Sunday service. John's work was splendid throughout the weekend and we were blessed with his leadership.

The pace for the weekend allowed considerable time for fellowship. As usual the big screen at Jackson's Point was posted to the respectful hockey game or curling match for all to see and euchre games were played throughout the common area.

George Bishop did a wonderful job providing leadership on the weekend. He organized a Ladies Program for spouses of AOTS members which included a performance of the "Famous People's Players". He led a workshop and a wonderful Saturday morning meditation.

Bob Gardner provided Sunday's morning meditation, in a moving and focused remembrance of his dear wife Eugenie.

Workshop topics included: Outside of the Box Thinking, Making a Difference, Rethinking Our Direction and Bible Study. Workshop Leaders for the weekend were: George Bishop, David Battaino, Jim Upright and Jim McKibbin.

Entertainment for Saturday evening was provided by "Cruisin Acappella Quartet". They were very well received providing lots of laughs and great harmonies.

*Continued on next page*

Reverend David Estey provided us with spiritual leadership throughout the weekend in his capacity as worship leader for our Sunday worship.

Throughout the weekend we were ably hosted by the staff of the Salvation Army Jackson's Point Conference Centre and our own registrar Keeling Little.

After he was installed as National President, Dave Morris thanked the outgoing executive. He said he looked forward to the road ahead and determining how we can celebrate into the future by making a difference in the world now.

A report on the Dondi Project was presented to the convention indicating that the AOTS supported initiative had raised over \$400,000 in total and that all monies raised through the drumming circles and Drumathon would be directed to rebuilding the Lutamo school in Angola.

Convention decisions included the location of the 2013 Biennial in Gander, Newfoundland, in August. Jim Upright was selected as "President-elect" and Mark Browning took on responsibilities as Recording Secretary. And to the delight of everyone Harold Lorenz agreed to continue as editor of the Handshake. We are greatly blessed.

*Submitted by Jim McKibbin*

### Random shots of 2011 Biennial-Roundup by Central VP Edwin MacDonald



Convention/Central Roundup - Relaxing



All photos by Central VP Edwin MacDonald

# Convention/Central Roundup 2011 - Hard at work



All photos by Central VP Edwin MacDonald