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The Men's Probus Club of Lindsay Probus Banner Newsletter

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Vice - President



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Meeting Highlights :

- President Bruce Taylor called the meeting to order; followed by a group singing of "O Canada".
- He questioned the group to see who was interested in attending the luncheon after the meeting at Boston Pizza Restaurant.
- Bruce continued by calling upon Club member Dennis Eaton to come forward and introduce the morning's guest speaker, John Gayford.
- Dennis stated John was born in Australia and has travelled extensively across Australia, Indonesia and Tasmania. He met a lady named Jennette, who was a Canadian living in Tanzania at that time, and they were married thereafter. They presently live in Oakville and have three boys in their twenties.
- John's presentation was called "117 Days At Sea", and here is a brief outline :
 - o John started his presentation by stating, that is was a dream of his to build a boat and sail it to Australia;
 - o the journey itself would follow the route taken by the great clipper ships from North America and Europe on their way to South Africa and Australia in earlier periods;
 - o it would require him and his crew to sail a vessel over 12,000 nautical miles from Oakville, Ontario to Melbourne, Australia to complete this journey;
 - o one of his first tasks was to design and construct a sailing vessel that would be capable of carrying four tons of people and gear required for this long voyage;
 - o utilizing his mechanical engineering knowledge, he determined that he would need a boat that was at least 45 feet long in dimension to meet these requirements;
 - o after carrying out some research on sailing vessels, he discovered a manufacturer that produced a sail boat model, the Radford 14m sailboat, with a similar design that would aid him in his own drafting process;
 - o he purchased a copy of their construction drawings for this boat and by using them as a template, he recreated his own boat design;
 - o from thereon it was aluminum material everywhere, endless tools, welding machines, engineering problems, logistical challenges, help and ongoing homework;
 - o finally after six years of construction in June, 2007, this hand built vessel was completed by John and his team in Oakville;
 - o another one of John's earlier tasks was to put together a sailing crew that would be compatible and worthy of this demanding journey;
 - o His final four man crew consisted of the following individuals :
 - Douglas, John's brother, sailing experience;
 - Brendan Shadford, an environmental engineer, with great sailing skills, and great photojournalist who would be charged with documenting the voyage through his images;
 - Stuart Hamilton, also an environmental engineer and sailor;
 - Douglas Sandrin, who holds qualifications in computer programming, and would oversee the extensive computer driven equipment on the vessel.

Health and Welfare Update

Please notify RON MORGAN, Health and Welfare, if you have knowledge of any our members that are experiencing health issues at any time....
(705) 324 - 2318

Next Guest Speaker

TUESDAY, April 14th



Leora Berman.

" The Land Between "



Club member Dave Robertson (far right) thanking John for his presentation.



"WE MADE IT!"
 One very HAPPY crew!
 Doug Gayford, John Gayford,
 Brendan Shadford, Stuart Hamilton
 Doug Sandrin

John and fellow crew members pose for a picture at the end of their sea voyage in Melbourne, Australia.



President Bruce and Chris Guillard officially inducting new member George Sweetman into our Club (left to right).

Any corrections, comments or additions regarding this banner can be forwarded to the attention of the editor at :

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- o John continued by stating that he had to make sure that the all lifesaving equipment was in place. Emergency beacon on board, life raft, high frequency radio, and ditch bags, etc. He also had to make sure that all his crew had appropriate clothing, along with life-jackets and floater suits. John had to be satisfied that he done all the preparation as much as he could because when they are out there on the water and something happens and there's an oversight, he would have to bear the consequences.
- o The "Falcon GT" set sail from Oakville (October 14, 2008), but its formal journey would not begin from New York until November, 2008.
- o After setting sail, the crew did not have to wait long to find themselves in a rough situation, sailing into a brutal storm only three days after leaving New York.
- o For five days the storm violently tossed the sailboat around causing seasickness among majority of the crew.
- o John stated that sailing experts have calculated previously, that it usually takes approximately 40 days for an individual to get back his/her normal body functions aboard a floating vessel;
- o To help display one of the worst days or periods that the crew had to experience throughout their whole journey, he presented a video segment. This video highlighted the violent wave motions or actions that occurred during the high of that 5 day storm that they had to battle through at the very start. (You can watch this video again on the youtube site and just search for or enter "117 Days at Sea" to view it).
- o After 117 days and sailing an average of 150 miles per day, they finally reached their destination of Melbourne, Australia on March 06, 2009.
- o John also stated that this journey held another extremely important goal/task, and that was to raise money for cancer research through individual and corporation sponsorships. They in turn would donate a sum of money for each nautical mile sailed during the voyage. He stated their original goal of \$50,000 goal was not achieved, but they were still able to donate a grand total of \$22,000 on their behalf.
- o As a foot note, after his dream trip to Australia ended, he sailed once again in 2010 on another sea adventure which follow the New Zealand coastline. Once completed, he put his precious boat up for sale and a gentleman from Vancouver purchased it thereafter.

- Bruce called upon club member Dave Robertson to come forward and thank John on behalf of the Club members, for his very entertaining presentation and presented him with an honorarium.
- Following a short break, President Bruce proceeded with the "Club Business" part of the meeting.
- Bruce informed the membership that one of our members, Ron Richards had passed away on February 26th. He stated that Ron's funeral was held on March 4th at St. Paul's Church which was pretty well full which was a measure of a very popular and respected man. Ron was also a member of the Masonic Lodge and the founder of the Kawartha Manufacturer's Association, Bruce informed the membership that a donation of \$75.00 was made to the charity of choice and an appropriate card on behalf of the Club was sent to Ron's wife, Lorraine. Next Bruce asked the membership to stand for minute of silence in Ron's honour and to remember his time with us.
- He then called upon Past President, Ted Abbot to come forward and introduce George Sweetman who was officially inducted into our Club's membership by President Bruce.
- Before adjourning the meeting and the members making their way to the Boston Pizza Restaurant for the luncheon, Bruce presented a little humorous story regarding an overnight stay of a 85 year old lady at a very expensive hotel.

(Glb / March / 2015)