

Spartans Newsletter Summer 2011

The focal point of these letters is news gathered at the semi annual luncheons, and mail from members often explaining why they cannot attend. We do not treat these as excuses but as honest attempts to stay in touch and share information with friends. The SPARTans Spring Luncheon was a great success when nearly sixty attendees enjoyed the new location of Ristorante Linguini with good food, excellent service and the additional bonus of adequate parking. We have already reserved the restaurant for the Christmas Luncheon on December 1st! We missed several of our members from the South shore due to anticipated traffic problems on the bridges that we hope will have subsided by the next luncheon. For those members who travel by train we again will offer transport to and from the Dorval train station.

By this letter we are announcing the establishment of a Spartan web presence that will give wired members timelier and broader access to shared information than the newsletter format allowed, and most importantly, an opportunity for active member participation. The printed newsletter will still be mailed to non-wired members as a summary of the much richer content of the web site. Although this is a work in progress, the purpose and general format have been agreed upon by the organizing committee, and Margaret Gross has generously volunteered her experience in setting up the site. Some of the site will be viewable by the general public but most information such as newsletters, pictures and stories, and member lists will be available only to paid up members using a password.

Luncheon report

There was a warm welcome to regular and returning members to this new luncheon venue, and particularly out of town visitors coming from a significant distance. Once again **Merle McCubbin** easily took the distance record with her trip from California to join us, but we realize that she also has friends and family to attract her to Montreal.

Vice President **Don Osborne** could not join us because of a business meeting with his boss, but **Ed Sorochan** gave us an update on the generally buoyant business in communications satellite payloads up the road at MDA.

George Larder received a phone call from **Hazel Osborne** (mother of Don) saying she will not be attending. She had a heart attack and is convalescing at the Sunrise residence in Beaconsfield and hopes to make the Christmas Luncheon. She will be selling her house as soon as she is better and will let us know the new address when that happens.

A reminder: the membership list is intended for Spartan social purposes only.

Announcements

I want to thank our committee members for their continuing efforts in maintaining our group:

Al Lawson	Membership Secretary, and picture taker
Nicole Bourdeau	Secretary and chief recruiter
George Larder	Wiley Treasurer
Gil Kerr	Luncheon organizer

Treasurer's Report

George Larder announced that our financial status is in good shape and we will be able to continue providing free wine with the upcoming Christmas luncheon. For 2012 we should be

able to maintain the annual dues of \$10.00 per household but to ensure that we will be able continue to provide the free wine and to have a comfortable surplus to cover unexpected expenses we will be holding a raffle with the prize being the very last of Curt Ingerville's famous mantle clocks. Hopefully Nicole Bourdeau will have her skilled sales team to make sure everyone has a chance to purchase the raffle tickets.

News Items

It is with great regret that I inform you of the passing of former colleagues and Spartan members.

Marie Biernat, (Townsend) – wife of **Ed Biernat**, 1939 - 2011 In Chateaugay, on March 21, 2011, at the age of seventy-one years

Abraham Benjamin Bell P. Eng.

Abe worked at RCA and Spar for 42 years in microwave and satellite communications. He was retired and living in Woodstock ON and died Friday April 15, 2011 at Stratford General Hospital after a lengthy illness with Parkinson's disease. He is survived by his wife Sally (Kalnitsky) of Woodstock.

My sincerest condolences go to Sally and to the Bell family and friends. Abe was a friend and colleague at RCA and Spar for many years and we shared the sport of skiing in the years before his marriage. We will all miss his smile and quiet humour.

Mike Boysen informs us that his wife **Elisabeth** passed away peacefully with family by her side at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay ON on Tuesday 19 April 2011 at the age of 80 years.

Reports from members

Hi Guys: Thanks a bunch for the newsletter. Having seen the pictures in it I searched through a box of old pictures and found this one which could be of interest to the Spartans. It is not of the best quality but the original is not very good. It was taken at Xmas time in 1983 (on mahogany row) of the contracts department staff. From left to right: Dave Schofield, Linda Baxter, Wilma Branchflower, Mike Gondos, Henri Claireaux, Mike Wesselingh, Andy Sztyk, Mary O'Brian. Missing are Lil Berman taking the picture and Louise King (later Louise Kaiser). Enjoy, **Henri Claireaux**.

[Editorial Note: Unfortunately, the picture is unavailable at this time, but will be included in the next Newsletter.]

Mike Leahy writes: Hi George and thanks for your recent e-mail. Val S. (a mutual friend) is coming to BC to see an event in Victoria and is spending a few days with us on the way. Yes, I use the computer quite a lot to keep in touch with people; I also have an artificial larynx for speaking to Pam and others in the shops etc. Pam's desire is to return to the UK for the rest of our retirement years, she made a visit there last year and decided that N. Wales is attractive, particularly in the Llandudno area. Of course this is very much dependent on our being able to sell our house which is currently on the market. However, the market at the

moment is extremely slow, people are in a wait and see mode, especially since mortgage rates and interest rates are very low at present. Things should pick up in the Spring when the Govt. decides to increase interest rates and people decide it's time to make their move if they are going to. Not much news really. Feel free to use whatever you like in the newsletter
Best wishes to all in 2011.

He further writes in an exchange with George: Many thanks for the Winter Newsletter. Glad to know that many of us "old timers" are still around although I was surprised to hear of the passing of Eric Lavender, although I would have characterized his "robust personality" in other terms. Did he leave any family, wife children, behind? Two people I have not heard about in the past few years are **Claude Houssais** and **Tony Reynolds**; any news of them since I understood that they both moved to Ottawa. Re the photos from **Mike Morris**, I think I recognize him as the third from the right, standing. I definitely recognize Mr. Faizi as the director of the "Deh Mandro" earth station in Pakistan, he and I had many discussions on the maintenance of the earth station and the back-haul into Karachi. Best regards to you both and to any who remember me.

To which **Al Lawson** replied: Hello Mike, I guess that you are still contemplating that move back to the UK. **Claude Houssais** is currently working for Mitec, but is planning to retire this year. Claude had quadruple bypass surgery last year and has made a fantastic recovery, and is now in great shape. Claude is a member of SPARTans, so you will find his co-ordinates in the Annual Directory. As you will see, he still lives in Beaconsfield and is also a member of the Beaconsfield Cycling Club, of which I have been a member for the last 32 years. Wow ! Some time back, I asked **Bill Corless** if he had any news of **Tony Reynolds**. Bill said that Tony was working for Mitec in Ottawa. However, I think he meant Mitel, as Mitec does not have a plant in Ottawa. I have been unable to find Tony's co-ordinates. I wish you all the best. Good luck with your planned move.

And this is from former colleague **Roland Schwerdtfeger** who has established a correspondence with **Milt Lillo**. Hallo Milt, good to hear from you.

Yes, these damn computers don't really offer reasonable security for information. As I understand it, USBs contain small batteries, and therefore require periodic plugging into a computer ... but I may be wrong on this matter. At least paper can be stored, and only lost as in misplacement ... and by the time it ages to be unreadable, it is pretty well useless anyway.

My home e-mail address remains the same ... r.schwerdtfeger@att.net My hometown in Australia was Adelaide, and for the moment remains unaffected by the flooding. However, the flood waters have charged down the Darling River into the northern segment of Victoria, also inundated with heavy rains, and many parts are now also flooded there. So Australia is not having a pleasant summer at all. I hope you are having a pleasant time this winter ... I presume with much snow for a change, from what I can see from the weather reports.

One of the aspects of living in the USA ... one very infrequently hears anything at all about what is happening in the rest of the world, even Canada. I will send you some



money shortly, if you could kindly send me an address. (That was lost as well in all computer upheaval).

[t] 903 988 6081 (work #)

[m] 903 235 1373 (shirt pocket!) ... or as my brother calls (influenced by Jimmy Bond) "shoe telephone" !

Wishing you all the very best

Except for the moustache and a few grey hairs I had little trouble in recognizing Roland from Milt's picture, in spite of the thirty five or more years since we last met. If we had met, I am sure a moment listening to his distinctive voice with a trace of Australian accent would have eliminated any uncertainty. On his latest visit to Montreal this summer, when Milt took this picture, Roland gave him a copy of his book called "Microwave Reflector Antenna Design Concepts and Techniques" that is now in my possession on behalf of the SPARTans. I have only had time to review the early pages where the technology he describes so well is still within my grasp. I am sure this impressive and well crafted volume will become a reference text for both current and future generations of microwave antenna designers. I have a humble appreciation of the dedication and endless hours required to produce this excellent text. Well done Roland.

And this from **Gil Kerr** who met this former RCA employee by chance:

Hi Al, (**Allan MacLatchey**)

I enjoyed meeting you while admiring the sunset on Jekyll (reminder attached). I mentioned then the Spar retirees club the SPARTans (not all members are actually retired!), and that the club holds two lunches each year, one early in December, and the other early in May. Having complained about the quality of one of the main courses offered at the lunch last December, I got roped into the committee, and have been involved in finding an alternative venue (more difficult than I expected). Anyway, this year's Spring Luncheon will be on 5 May, so I've attached the flyer in case you are interested. The annual fee for a family membership in the club is \$10, much of which goes to provide a glass of wine to each participant at the lunch. At each lunch, Al Lawson goes round and takes photographs of everyone present, and distributes these, also by e-mail.

However, the Club also serves as a forum to collect and distribute news about former colleagues, which is pretty much done entirely by Lorne Keyes. To give you a flavour of that I'm also attaching the newsletter that Lorne produced a couple of months ago. Unfortunately the Club membership is declining, as mortality claims a few each year. Several members (for example those in BC, Britain, and Denmark) are in it only for the newsletters, and the photos of the attendees. Should you be interested in getting these, I have attached a membership application form.

After our few days with Chris and Paul Fryer on Jekyll, Pat and I did a Road Scholar program based on St Simon's Island, which was most enjoyable, with wonderful guides and speakers giving us an introduction to Low Country history, geography, culture, cuisine, and natural history, which also included a day on Sapelo Island. Having perfect weather the whole time didn't hurt either!

As a follow-up to Mike Morris' soccer picture and comments, he sent the following:
Hi Lorne, Hope all goes well.

I'm in the process of packing; getting ready to move from L'Ile Bizard to closer to downtown Montreal. We discovered a lot of forgotten stuff including income tax returns from the 1970's etc. and just a very few items related to RCA. One of the items was a Notice to the RCA Soccer team line-up for a game on June 4th 1964 against BMO, copy attached.

Not all the players named appear in that photograph I sent you earlier which was most likely taken some other time. I note the selected goaltender on this occasion was Mr. Iliakidis and not Mr. Wesslingh (who was in the photo) for example. The match was scheduled to start at 8.30pm implying it would end around 10.30pm. Way past my usual bedtime these days! Guess we had lots of youthful energy. I also note the venue was Newman Park. I now recall that Newman Park was near rue Jolicoeur. So my earlier comment about the photo being taken at "Parc Jolicoeur" was incorrect. Newman Park was our "home field". The Club Secretary who signed the document was I believe Al Johnson whom I remember vaguely.

METROPOLITAN SOCCER LEAGUE

GAME: Bank of Montreal - RCA Victor
DATE: Thursday, June 4, 1964
TIME: 8:30 P.M.
GROUND: Newman Park

The following players are requested to play:

A. ILIAKIDIS

G.R. WAGNER	F. SZABO			
R. DEMAAL	R. WYATT	N. DULSON (Cap't.)		
P. N'WAFOR	K. BEKKER	R. VIAU	M.J. MORRIS ✓	N. LEEHAN

J. TARI
T.I. O'KEKE
A.R. SHERK

Players unable to play, should please report to the Secretary,
so that other players may be notified. DON'T BE A "NO SHOW".

Cosch P.A. Caraf.
Secretary A. Johnson

Also found a cut out from an RCA newsletter dated July-August 1970...."Horizons". I'd forgotten this newsletter existed. Maybe others have some back issues somewhere? One side of the document was the photo I sent you earlier of the Pakistan Earth Station Contract signing. The other side is what you see attached.



This is part of an article by Bill Black, sometime Personnel Director. Noting his comment about information creation...little did he or any of us know that "we hadn't seen nothing yet!" He stated more information had been created in the last 10 years (1960-1970) than in the previous 4990 years. The attached graph (whatever it means) shows we have, in 2011, just reached the Zettabyte age. Who knew? I think it might mean that more information has been created since I started writing this e-mail than in Bill Black's 4990 years. The value or accuracy of the information is beyond the scope my comments. I also note that IDC (who created the chart) claim that in 2009 some 4 Trillion US\$ was spent globally on IT and related activities.....about \$12 Billion a day, or half a Billion \$ every hour. Could be there's something in this business after all?

Hope to see you on Thursday.
Best Regards, Mike

And this from our old friend and colleague in Denmark: Greetings Al, I sure want to remain a member of the Club SPARTans so I am mailing you a cheque for \$20,00 today. I so enjoy reading about the old friends after each luncheon meeting and hope that you and Lorne will be able to carry on your wonderful management of SPARTans affairs for many more years.

I hope all is well with you and your family, as it is with me. The years fly by so fast, but I am enjoying every day as it comes, well, some days more than others. We had a typical "Canadian" winter with snow and freezing temperatures from November to March and that I

could happily have been without, the previous ten winters back here have all been mild with never a snowfall lasting for more than a few days! However, the summer months make up for a lot of bad winter weather, I still marvel over the `bright` nights up here north of Copenhagen where one can go for a walk at any time.

I play a lot a bridge during the winter months and I have taught a lot of new friends that it is perfectly all right to have people in for a drink in the afternoon without having to set a “proper” 3-course dinner on the table, so yes I am enjoying life although I do miss my many good Spar-friends (all other friends I had in Montreal seem to have moved away from Quebec).

Best wishes,

Lilly Dyke

Thanks Al. The pictures are very good.

Three Sundays ago when we were running back from Beaver Lake, I tripped & fell on the road. I injured both knees, my hip & my right knuckle quite badly. Luckily I didn't break anything, just scrapes & bruises (including my ego).Ran for about ten minutes yesterday for the first time & had no pain, so I'm feeling pretty happy about that. I will try a longer run tomorrow.

Hope all is well with you.

Take care, **Roger Rak.**

Sounds really painful Roger but pleased to hear that you are recovering quickly.

In his usual cheeky manner, and as some positive feedback on the new venue, **Richard Lubelsky** wrote:

Hello George: The luncheon was great; it was wonderful to see so many faces from the years past. The only thing I cannot understand is how come so many who were there got so old so quickly; after all, back in the years gone by they were all young and full of pep (-).

New Member

John Barkwith

Honorary Members

Roy Machum	Curtis Ingerville (97)	Denise Archambault
Mary Buchanan	Letty Cox	Jean Gondos
Mathilde Grosswindhager	Ella Hall	Hazel Osborne
Pierrette Stewart	Mary Zacharatous	

Regrets

George Larder reports the following

Mary Buchanan called to say she cannot make it as she has a job and can't take the time off. She gives her best wishes to all.

Claude Couillard called to say that he cannot make it as he will be on vacation in Cuba. He's looking forward to attending the Christmas luncheon.

I hadn't heard from **Curt Ingerville** for some time so I called him to find he had just returned home after spending some time in the hospital with heart problems. He asked me to come over to receive another of his mantle clocks, (surely this has to be the last one, he said he has made 97!). I did and I can report that while his mobility is limited his mind is certainly not.

Since confirming my attendance, I have (accidentally) discovered that I have an extensive aneurism on the aorta and am currently at home until my blood thinners work themselves out of my system, at which time the hospital will call me in for the operation. It is therefore pretty certain I can't attend. Sorry to miss this, I was looking forward to the lunch and spending a couple of days in Montreal. Here's hoping for the Fall session! **Charlie Morton**

This touching and frightening message from **Janet (Pintar) Rhode** Wolf and I will not be attending the luncheon on May 5th. On Feb.14th I suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm, had surgery and spent 3 weeks in intensive care. I was extremely lucky that this did not kill me, and that I suffered no side effects [mental or physical] from this. The doctor found two additional brain aneurysms, one that is benign and one that will need surgery. On April 24th I had a MRI done and on May 12th I will see the doctor. Based on the results from the MRI, she will decide how and when she will operate. It has all been rather scary for all of us. Who knew that this was lurking in my brain. One minute I was fine and the next I was on the floor in such agony that I could barely crawl to the phone. So until this second one is fixed, I am not allowed to do anything stressful or travel any distance from home. I am also not allowed to lift anything heavy or do any housework. Poor Wolf and the kids have had to pull double duty and I must say that they have done a good job. They will be very happy to have me resume all the housework! Please say hello to everyone from us and I hope that we will be able to make the next luncheon. Regards, Janet.

Words can barely express our concern and earnest hope for a speedy and complete recovery for Janet, and a return to normalcy for this young family.

Also sending Regrets

Colette Besner	Wanda Daniel	Lionel Giasson
Mathilde Grosswindhager	Louis Laroche	Lloyd Martin
George Pastuszko	Doug Paul	Ted Phillips
George Symeonides	Georges Vaillancourt	

We look forward to your active participation by submitting stories and pictures, either by electronic or regular mail, particularly to expand the content of the new web site.

Your reporter Lorne Keyes