

Spartans Winter Newsletter 2011

The semi annual Spartan luncheons are of course the focal point of member activities although many cannot attend for reasons of distance, health and competing priorities. Faithful attendees, first time visitors and new members were warmly welcomed for our Christmas luncheon at the Voyageur restaurant in the Best Western Dorval Hotel for the nineteenth time at this location.

Older members were particularly pleased to welcome **Mike Morris** who gave a short synopsis of his career since leaving RCA in the 70s. Mike later provided an historic picture with comments (attached), from his days in earth station project management.

Special guest **Dr. Colin Franklin** joined us from Ottawa and gave a short address of recollection and appreciation. He holds an order of Canada as an aerospace pioneer and his high standards for robust and reliable spacecraft design have influenced the space industry here and abroad. Colin appeared to be enjoying himself, so I spared him from any tales from school that I may have gathered in the two years that I worked for him on the conceptual design of the Communications Technology Satellite (CTS, later Hermes).

We were pleased to have **Dr. Marc Donato** give us an update on business that is growing steadily. He gave us advance notice that a plant expansion at Ste. Anne is imminent to accommodate the growing business and staff.

Long time friend and colleague **Peter Garland** gave a summary of the realization and future for satellite technologies that were only speculative when most of us retired.

Ed Sorochan could not make it and assures us that he will retire soon after an exceptional 48-year career with RCA and successor companies. Prepare your welcome ladies.

We were also pleased to welcome **Tracey**, George and Dorothy's daughter

Administrative Items

The organizing committee welcomes **Gil Kerr** as member, and I am sure we will benefit from his experience and enthusiasm. Gil has agreed to take over the job of Luncheon Organizer. **Al Lawson** will continue to take care of the distribution of Newsletters to internet connected members, membership registration, the preparation and distribution of the Annual Membership Directory, and will act as official photographer at our Luncheons.

At our last meeting we decided to evaluate alternatives to the Best Western locale for our luncheons at least for the short term during construction around the Dorval location. We are very much aware of the generally good combination of access, cost and comfortable surroundings that would have to be matched by any alternative location.

We are also considering Internet based means of staying in touch with wired members such as a Spartan Web presence. **Margaret Gross** has experience and has generously volunteered to be our expert. Although she and Guss are currently lounging around in the sometimes-warm Florida climate, I will be contacting her shortly to set objectives for use of this modern medium, and will look for her evaluation of alternatives and recommendations. Are you listening Margaret? Non wired members are assured that regular mailings will still be provided.

George Larder as usual reported stable finances and membership levels that will allow continuation of the luncheon wine subsidy. Come along to the luncheons to enjoy this side benefit of attendance and a return on your membership investment.

A short reminder that the membership list is intended for Spartan social purposes only, and not to help the many other worthwhile activities

News Items

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

Mike Gondos succumbed recently after a long struggle with cancer. I visited the funeral home and gave my condolences to his wife Jean, and noted in the guest book that several Spartans had also visited to honour this fine person and good-natured colleague. As **Al Lawson** noted in his notification to members, he was well known, well respected and well liked. I met **Curt Ingerville** as he was leaving, and at 97 seemed as alert as ever.

Tony Luscombe The news from **Peter Oswald** of Tony's unexpected and untimely death while at work at MDA in Vancouver shocked and saddened all of us. He made critical contributions to the success of Radarsat and earned the respect of his colleagues and his employer. I sent my condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues, and noted that I had the highest regard for his technical ability and his quiet and effective work ethic. His diligence and success in Marathon running also impressed me. It is only coincidental that in the past few days I heard a medical report that endurance sportsmen are often vulnerable.

From his obituary we are reminded that, "Tony left England to join Spar Montreal in 1985 as a Specialist Member Technical Staff. He worked his way up to the position of Staff Scientist and remained with Spar Montreal until October 1998 when he left to join MDA in Richmond BC. Tony was one of the founding members of the Space Missions Group and a major contributor to the success of Canada's RADARSAT programs before moving into GSI to continue his world class work in the field of radar processing. In his position of Principal Engineer of MDA, Tony earned the respect of his colleagues and MDA's customers worldwide".

Eric Lavender From his obituary we are told that " he died in Kitchener at age 67 so his retirement was unfortunately very short. Eric was born in England and apprenticed as a toolmaker at the British Aircraft Corporation in the UK. He then worked in Australia for 2 years before immigrating to Canada in 1967. He lived in Montreal and worked in the manufacturing and aerospace industries for many years. His work provided opportunities for travel abroad, including Indonesia, China, Russia and many European countries. Since moving to Kitchener in 1997 Eric worked for MD Robotics in Brampton, Astrium in the UK, and COM DEV in Cambridge". We will all remember and will miss Eric's robust personality and presence.

Evelyn Feehan From her obituary: "It is with sadness in hearts to announce the passing of Irene Evelyn Feehan on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at the age of seventy-nine, a caring sister to Margaret Jensen (Peggy) and loving brother to Eamon Feehan. Auntie Evelyn as we affectionately called her was an early role model for women in the workplace, embarking upon a lengthy career at RCA/SPAR where she made numerous lifelong friends. Upon retiring she returned to school and obtained a Bachelor in Fine Arts degree at Concordia in 1989. Her passion for painting and photography also included her involvement in the Dorval Artist Association. Both her Montreal and Boston families will miss her dearly."

Reports

(I never miss an opportunity to post Joe's crusty comments Ed.) Hi Lorne just to let you know that Carmen and I will attend the luncheon on Thursday. Sorry I am so late. I have been having computer problems ever since I tried to install a Bell stick. Now I know why we never had world war III. This computer stuff seems to be some kind of random process. I have taken it to 3 specialists at a cost of \$165.00 and they all did the same thing, try this, try that for an hour and give up. I then had to go back and recover the computer which of course set me back to where I started but a little bit poorer with the same problem. Cheers **Joe McNally**

From **Mike Morris** we have the photo below he just dug out of his records



“This was the contract signing ceremony for the Pakistan Earth Station Project (East and West before Bangladesh was created) worth some \$12M (in 1970 \$= very big). You may recognize the RCA personnel:

1. Rear standing one from left...**Roy Machum** our intrepid sales dept. leader surrounded by his highly effective local agents Mohammed Ahmed on the far left and Naseem Qadir on the right. I learned later that Naseem had some kind of family connection to Yahya Khan the President of Pakistan which probably didn't hurt.
2. In the front left seated we have **Tony Lafleur** our legal counsel and **Jack Sutherland** the then G.M. signing with the PTT's O.H. Mohammed, the D.G., and his deputy Mr. Farooqi.
3. On the far right we have **Fred Richaur** our pricing expert and separated by Mr. Jamali from the PTT the RCA Project Manager in waiting (myself). The tall PTT man in the middle is Mr Faizi but I can't recall the gentlemen on his right and left.

One memory I have is of Jack picking up his pen, hesitating, then looking over to Fred Richaur and to everyone's embarrassment asking him "You did check this?"Fred smiled and nodded.”

Mike also sent the photo below with comments that raised some pretty hazy memories



The 1960 RCA Soccer Team

From left to right from memory: Neil Dulson, Kees Becker, Al Sherk, Ed Biernat, Joe Tarry, Armand something, Me, Jerry Valihora, Don't Know, Bert Something, Peter Something the Coach (real tough job with the material at hand). And in front, Max Weslingh (the goalie), Drav Murari & Peter Nwafor.

As I recall most of the Europeans knew something of the game (Kees Becker in particular was outstanding) while the Canadian born players were not sure what it was all about and made up with enthusiasm for what they lacked in skills. I don't remember winning any matches against the likes of Rolls Royce and Marconi or, honestly, even scoring any goals. However we did try and greatly enjoyed the post mortem(s) at the local tavern. I believe the photo was taken at Parc Jolicoeur not far from 1001 Lenoir St.

This was brought to mind at the lunch when Henri Claireaux told me that in his younger days he played a few matches with a professional team and wanted to actually be a professional player when he lived in France! The 1960's RCA team lasted a couple of years and then disappeared but was resurrected later on.

Best Regards,
Mike

Honorary Members

Denise Arsenault	Mary Buchanan	Letty Cox	Jean Gondos
Mathilde Grosswindhager	Ella Hall	Curt Ingerville (97)	Roy Machum
Hazel Osborne	Pierrette Stewart	Mary Zacharatos	

Regrets

- Unfortunately I am unable to attend the luncheon on Dec. 2nd as I will be visiting my daughter and family in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia **Bill McMath**
- I am sorry that I will not be making the Christmas Luncheon this year but I will certainly complete the application form and mail it in. I hope you are well. Take care of yourself and please express my best wishes and Merry Christmas to everyone. Thanks very much, **Jane Robinson**
- Hello Al, Thank you for your notice of the death of **Mike Gondos** - sad that another old acquaintance has gone from us. I am not very good at this computer business - so instead of sending you an email re my membership, I shall just mail it to you - the old-fashioned way! When I find your address but I think **Irma Carson** will be able to help me with this. I regret that I cannot attend the Christmas luncheon in December but I cannot leave my husband, as he is not very well. Please remember me to all the Spartans who remember me! And I wish you all a very happy Christmas and good wishes for yet another New Year. Cheers, **Barbara Walker**
- I will not be attending the Spar lunch on December 3rd. I do wish everyone a Happy Holiday and all the best in the New Year. Hopefully I'll be able to make the meeting in April. Sincerely **Merle McCubbin**
- I will not be attending the Xmas luncheon. A long drive into Montreal in the winter is no longer possible for me. Hope to see you in the spring. Wish everyone a good holiday. I am very well and heading to Aruba on December 20th to spend the winter with son Tony and family. Will be back in the middle of April/2011. Merry Christmas, Lorne. **Letty Cox**.

- Hi Al, I am in Denmark and returning to Canada the 2 of December in late afternoon but too late to attend lunch. All the best and a Merry Christmas to all. **Svend Berg**
- Yet another year that I will miss the fun. We arrive from Nanaimo BC into Montreal Dec 9th – close – but no cigar. Best regards to all. **Keith Ruthman**
- Thanks for the invitation but for the usual reason of the weather being a factor I will not be attending your Christmas get together but however I look forward to your next invitation sometime in the spring when I would most likely attend while coordinating a visit to Montreal. Please convey my best wishes to all those who remember John and I and pass along our very best wishes for Christmas and upcoming 2011. **Pierrette Stewart**
- Hi Al, I can't remember receiving your flier but I will not attend this time. I have just today had cataract surgery on my left eye. A month ago I had this on my right eye with great success. It is hard to believe how much better I can see. However with 4 kinds of drops to put in my eyes 4 times a day for the next month, it is a little uncomfortable. Merry Christmas to you and to all the SPARTans. Best regards, **Charlie Albright**
- Hi Al and Lorne, It seems that I am busier than I would like... all to say that I'm out of town yet again and will sadly miss this year's Christmas Luncheon. Please send my good wishes to all that remember me. When I read your email of the event I will surely enjoy the pictures and few comments of the highlights... I really enjoy that and thank you for making it happen. Best regards and a very Merry Christmas to all, **Doug Paul**
- Hi Al, Unfortunately I won't be able to make it to the Christmas Lunch 2010, as this is also the day the retirement/nursing home is having an event and I volunteer there each week, including helping out at this event. It is a shame to see so many lonely elderly people, and at these homes, they live in rooms about 10 x 10 and that includes a small bathroom, so there isn't much room for actual "living" or doing any activities. I hope everyone in SPARTans is well, and I've mailed my membership form and cheque to you. I hope you are doing well and enjoyed the great summer we had. I'm sure you were out on your bike a lot. We'll wait and see what kind of winter we get. Best regards and an early Merry Christmas to all, **Bronwen Williams**
- Al, I have some prearranged appointments for that afternoon like converting my RRSP to RRIFs by mid Dec deadline with a few financial institutions. Retirement is insight at 71 and 48 years of service, at least a 3-day workweek for the next year to ease into retirement? Definitely more free time to attend both luncheons next year. Best regards to all for Xmas **Ed Sorochan**
- Al, It was great to hear from you, however, once again I will not be able to attend. I would like to let you know that I am now living in Ottawa as I accepted a deployment to work with another department of PWGSC so hopefully I will be able to attend the next luncheon. I just cannot request vacation time as I started working for this group only on November 24, 2010. Please keep in touch. I am enclosing my new office e-mail address and telephone. **Heather Tanguay**
- Good morning George: Thank you for your phone call. I am disappointed that I will not be able to make the trip to Montreal next week, but we will try working on the Spring affair -

hopefully I will be on the other side of the woods by then!! It is another beautiful day at Bobs Lake - it looks and feels like Spring, but I realize that is unrealistic. The lake hasn't frozen over yet so the ducks and loons are still here and the beaver can be seen gliding by. While I am typing, four black squirrels are raiding the bird feeders outside the bay window. By the way, do Peggy and Greg Baylis attend the Spar dinner? Does Dr. Osborne attend? Do you have a list of the people who attend? After talking to you on the phone, I was wondering who the manager was in Communications. I remember now that I was bumped from my job in Aerospace to Manufacturing for awhile. I will send my dues by slow mail. Have a good day!
Muriel Munro (We subsequently updated Muriel on Greg and Peggy and the death of Dr. Osborne and will be given a list of luncheon attendees)

- Dear Lorne et al: Marietta is suffering from an acute and debilitating pain in the neck (I know what you are thinking, but this one is very real), and as turning her head is extremely painful and unsafe, driving is out of the question. The result is that I am the designated driver to her various medical and other appointments. All that is to say that, much to our regret, we will be absent from the SPARTans' fall luncheon. Regards to all and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and for a Happy and Healthy 2011. **Marietta and Richard Lubelsky**
- **George Larder** reports that **Eila Tallon** called to say James was down with a bug yesterday, (her word), and she had to attend to him. She said she was looking forward to the luncheon today and was quite surprised to find out that it was yesterday. Fortunately she called me before making the trip. He also reported that **Pat Hammond** stayed talking so long after the luncheon that he missed his train to Ottawa. (Nothing like a satisfied customer Ed.) I offered to at least drive him to the station but encountered so many detours that I finally let him off on a road near the station. Anyhow I got an email from him his morning so I assume he got home OK. George L

Also sending Regrets

Adam Mercik	Carl Gaul	Cecile Page
Chuck Mok	Claude Houssais	Derek Cox
Doug Jung	Evelyn Feehan	Frank Maxwell
George Skinner	George Symeonides	George Vaillancourt
Hazel Osborne	Jack Sutherland	Lloyd Slaven
Margaret and Gus Gross	Mary Zacharatos	Peter Gagne
Ric Allen	Roger Louie	Sim Shek
Tony Nachou	Wolf & Janet Rohde	Paul Weijers