



Capital Connections

Newsletter of the Friendship Force of Ottawa, Canada

Sept. 2019 www.friendshipforceottawa.ca

2019 MEETINGS

GM – Oct. 7

AGM – Dec. 2

FFO BOARD 2019

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FFI web: friendshipforce.org

Message from Your President: Lynda Heffernan



The Friendship Force Mission follows:

"Our mission is to promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people. Each individual can make a contribution to global goodwill. The Friendship Force worldwide network of clubs and individuals seeks to overcome differences among people and nations."

The importance of this mission statement was brought to the Board's attention in Joan Kinnie's excellent report on the FFI conference held in Boulder, Colorado this last July. We often get bogged down in the details of planning both incoming and outgoing journeys and forget that the most important thing is our friendliness. We do remember the things we do and see on a journey but the things we remember most are the laughs and fun we have with our fellow travellers and our hosts. Its these things that lead to lifelong friendships among members of our own club and people around the world.

On a recent journey to Russia, Mongolia and China I injured

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my shoulder. This did not stop me enjoying the journey but the things that impressed me most were the concern, care and advice I received from our own members. I remember the laughs we had after



being caught in a tremendous rain storm with no protection except a useless umbrella. We enjoyed swimming in Lake Baikal and dancing on the beach. I remember the fun we had with our hosts when language barriers made communication difficult and how our hosts in Ulan Ude and Ulan Bataar were very calm when things did not go according to plan. These are the memories that are above and beyond the things that we saw and did and will help us enjoy the company of others and help us understand that the human condition is universal and the Friendship Force Mission is possible.

On a lighter note, our membership has increased to 136 since last January thanks to the good work of our VP Membership Joanne Curran and her team. Please welcome back Ralph and Carole Baker and welcome new members André Dimitrijevic and Vivien Runnels.

Fall is fast approaching with a busy hosting schedule so don't forget our next General Meeting on October 7 at the Tom Brown arena. Social time begins at 6:30 pm followed by the formal meeting at 7:00pm.

Lynda Heffernan

CONGRATULATIONS - JESSICA AND MERV SULLIVAN



Nominated by Joan Kinnie, Jessica and Merv Sullivan (members since 2005) are the most recent recipients of FFO's Honour Roll. This couple's contribution to our club is well known and so appreciated.

Jessica and Merv believe in the power of building a vibrant club which members can relate to on many levels. Recognizing that the Board is essential to the club's existence, Merv volunteered as Board Secretary for two years and then served as our Club President from 2010-2012. The couple also insists that FFO should add value to people's lives by offering different things to different people. Knowing how beneficial and fun meeting other members in a social setting can be, Jessica began organizing January's PotLuck Supper in 2010 and took over as coordinator of the Dinner Club from Lucy Nelms so many years ago she can't recall the exact year.

Jessica and Merv



The Sullivans believe wholeheartedly in FFI's vision to rely on people not governments to build friendships and ultimately peace around the globe. They have acted on this belief by travelling on 9 international journeys (acting as Coordinators for some of those) and hosting ambassadors on inbound journeys from 15 other clubs.

Merv and Jessica recounted how the new places, new cultures, new experiences Friendship Force have broadened their minds. Being given the opportunity to immerse themselves in the cultures of India and Russia pushed them out of their comfort zone and helped them become the 'Citizens of the World' they are today.

The first meal they had at their host's house in India felt awkward. The women of the house prepared and served the food and then ate separately in another room. But, as with so many Friendship Force experiences, barriers are often broken down during the journeys. By the

end of the journey their host was sharing their meals with them!

As long time volunteers (Jessica served for 10 years on the local Guiding committee, Merv was Chair of the Library Committee while serving as Nepean City Councillor and they both have volunteered their time with their church's Marriage Encounter) this couple deserves our thanks and applause for their continued involvement with FF. The fact that they can take credit for over 100 dives during the course of 10 years of scuba diving also deserves an applause!

INBOUND JOURNEYS

Sept. 12-19, 2019

NORTH GEORGIA, Big Canoe

HC's: Bob & Eve Elliott

Oct. 16-23, 2019

TAIWAN, Taipei

HC's: Jaap & Maria Schouten

May 2020

VIRGINIA, Richmond

AC: Elaine Bradley

June 14-21, 2020

EGYPT, Cairo

AC: Joan Kinnie

Sep. 03-10, 2020

NEW ZEALAND

AC: _____

OUTBOUND JOURNEYS

Nov. 05-12, 15-22, 2019

NEW ZEALAND, Manawatu & Christchurch

AC: Sharon Bedier

Feb 20 -28, 2020

GUADELOUPE

AC: Pierrette Benoit

September 2020

INDONESIA - 2 weeks

AC: Joanne Curran

October 2020

GREATER DES MOINES & N. ILLINOIS (2 weeks)

AC: _____

2020 HALIBURTON, ON

AC: _____

V.P. Journeys: Anna Van Adrichem Rochon

INBOUND JOURNEYS 2020

We visited **Richmond, Virginia** a couple of years ago.

They will be visiting us during the Tulip Festival in May after Mother's Day. One of our hosts, Brenda Wingfield, will be the Ambassador Coordinator. She and many from the Richmond club are ready to work with FFO Host Coordinator Elaine Bradley to select dates. **Volunteers for this reciprocal trip?**



Cairo, Egypt will visit on June 10th to 17th on their way to Haliburton. Haliburton is well into their planning. Joan Kinnie has agreed to be the ambassador host coordinator for this inbound. She will be looking for volunteers to work with her. **Please sign up at the meeting in October.**

Manawatu, Wanganui and Horowhenua, New Zealand are doing an extensive 3-part Journey that includes Ottawa September 3rd to 10th. They will also visit Harrisburg, USA and Halle-Salle Germany as part of this around the globe trip. **Host Coordinator is sought for this inbound journey.**

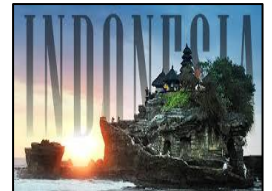


OUTBOUND JOURNEYS 2020



Guadeloupe will be receiving 18 ambassadors escaping from the Canadian winter from Feb 20th to 28th. Pierrette Benoit is the Ambassador Coordinator going to the sunshine with the other escapees. **NO spaces available.**

FF Solo-Surakarta & Surabaya, Indonesia are looking forward to this double Journey to their country in September. FFO Host Coordinator is Joanne Curran and **Spaces are available.**



Northern Illinois & Greater Des Moines enjoyed their visit to Ottawa in the spring and are anxious to welcome a group the second full weekend of October when the Madison County Bridges Festival is held (for those who are interested in The Bridges of Madison County) book and movie. **Spaces Available.**

Haliburton, Ontario has asked us to visit with them for a number of years. The fall is a beautiful time to travel to this destination – doesn't require a passport or airports. **Interested in being the Ambassador Coordinator for this domestic outbound Journey?**



The summer is quickly drawing to a close. I hope everyone has enjoyed their travels over the cottage and sunshine months. Gardens are at the peak of their production period therefore expect many are filling their freezers and making pickles, salsas, and relishes for the colder months that are expected yearly. As the maples are changing into their fall frocks, we will have guests from Big Canoe, Georgia in September and to help with our Thanksgiving celebrations, we will have ambassadors from Taipei, Taiwan. **Please extend a hand of welcome or host an activity when Ambassadors are visiting our beautiful city.**

A full Journey is heading to both the north and south islands of New Zealand. The ambassadors have recently been advised that visas are now required to this destination. It proves, again, that we cannot be complacent when checking document requirements - even until the last minutes before travel.

I purchased a fridge magnet on a Journey I took to Hannibal, Missouri, home of Mark Twain, because the quote speaks to FFI's mission. Twain is quoted to have said: **"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrowmindedness."**

FF Taipei to FF Ottawa – October 16-23, 2019 Host Coordinators Jaap and Maria Schouten



The Friendship Force of Taipei, Taiwan, will be represented by 12 ambassadors. All of their FFO night hosts have been confirmed. **Extra Day Hosts are still needed.**

Our FFO organizing committee has prepared a diverse program, highlighting various seasonal activities. It includes a French-Canadian-themed Welcome Brunch at Vanier's Sugar Shack, visits to local political institutions and cultural attractions, a hike and picnic in Gatineau Park, an outing to Parc Omega and a nearby cottage, featuring Halloween activities and pizza-baking, and a full day in and around Kemptville, where the Farewell Dinner will also take place. Afterwards, our guests will take the train from Ottawa to Toronto, where they will be welcomed and taken to Hamilton-Burlington for their next homestay. FFO day and dinner hosts will be confirmed by early September. An All-Hosts Meeting for the Taipei Inbound Journey was held September 25, 2019.

Outbound to FF Ulan Ude, Siberia and FF Ulan Baator, Mongolia July 2019 – by Joanne Curran

About 1/3 of the population of the Russian republic of Buryatia, located in east Siberia, live in the republic's capital city Ulan Ude. I was struck by the Russian and Asian facial features of the locals residents, the quietly busy city centre featuring the world's largest sculpture of Lenin's head, the wooden dwellings dating back to the 18th and 19th century that are adjacent to more modern buildings, and the ornate Orthodox Churches close by to Buddhist temples.

Although Buddhism is not the most practiced religion in Russia most Buddhists live in Siberia. Anna, our young, personable and very knowledgeable FF guide and Ulan Ude club member, accompanied us to Siberia's largest Buddhist monastery and learning centre, Ivolginsky Datsun.

This complex is comprised of 10 temples, a university building, a museum and most importantly, the well-preserved eternal body of Lama Dashi-Dorzho itigilov who died in 1927 in the lotus position. Anna told us that local Buddhists, like herself, make a point of visiting the Buddhist temples to get advice from the monks on the best day to start a business or get married or the best name for a new baby.





Whenever Plan A of the itinerary morphed into Plan B, Anna assured us that this wasn't uncommon and things usually work out. Initially I questioned her reasoning but learned quickly that Plan B was as good, if not better, than Plan A. Such was the case when we had to delay our visit to the island of Olkhon on Lake Baikal because of an impending storm and instead visited a healing and purifying mineral spring adjacent to a health centre surrounded by a pine forest and located close to a beautiful beach. After sampling herbal and oxygenated teas, dipping our hands/feet into the hot springs, and gawking at a herd of cows who seemed to own the centre of the resort town we ended the day with an impromptu group dance to Russian music blaring from a boom box on the beach. Only with Friendship Force you say ☺.



The following day we crossed Lake Baikal on two outboard motorboats to Olkhon Island. The natural beauty of this largely forested island was intoxicating and the connection the Buryat people had to it became apparent as we were introduced to the various spiritual sites by Anna. Later, many of our ambassadors braved the cold water of Lake Baikal, which is believed to have healing powers. The "sea", as it is known to locals, is the deepest freshwater lake in the world containing 20% of this planet's surface fresh water. For this reason, the Buryat people take great care to ensure it remains unpolluted.



Before crossing a mountain or a lake the cultural tradition is to make an offering of some sort (coins, rice etc.) as a sign of respect and to ask permission of the gods so the traveller will be kept safe. It was fascinating to me to see how Anna blended this Shamanist tradition with her Buddhist practices.



As is true of every country we visit food featured prominently in our itinerary. The meals were wholesome and simple (porridge with milk and butter, a broth of dill, potato and carrots with either salted fish or meat, dumplings with meat, pickled vegetables, and fried dough for dessert) served on a small plate or bowl with just a fork and possibly a spoon as utensils.

Our Siberia journey included a visit to the Old Believers, an ancient part of the Russian Orthodox Church who refused to follow church reforms in the 1600s. A bonus to this very interesting day was having Mary Jane and Colin recruited by this group to role play their recent marriage dressed in traditional costume.

We arrived in Mongolia after a 12-hour overnight ride in three vans. This remote landlocked country (home of the eternal blue sky with 250 days of sun a year) has a population of 3 million. It was startling to me to arrive in Ulan Baator and see innumerable cranes and high rises everywhere we looked. The population of this city has exploded in the last 10 years, to ½ of Mongolia's population, leading to construction and traffic gridlock everywhere.





One of the highlights of this journey was the Nadaam Festival which celebrates nomadic culture, honours Mongolia's independence from China and showcases an outstanding combination of arts and sporting events. Men, women and children from distant places converge on the capital to view and take part in the three main sports, horse racing, archery and wrestling. An unofficial fourth sport of the festival, sheep knuckle bone shooting, was a favourite of mine. Almost everyone dresses in their traditional outfits known as "dells" which are stunningly beautiful because of the richness and colours of the fabrics.

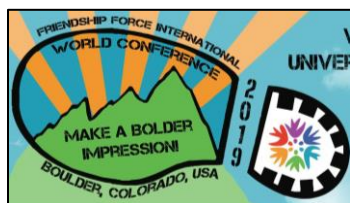
We spent a few days visiting a national park while also sleeping in a Ger camp trying to experience, if only a bit, the lifestyle of the nomadic herders that is



fast disappearing in Mongolia. From inside the Ger you can hear the wings of the birds of prey as they fly overhead, horses and cows grazing nearby and dogs barking at yaks that have strayed too far. It was impossible not to be impressed by the 131 m Genghis Kahn statue (yes, Mongolians revere him as a national hero because he was responsible for making Mongols a political and cultural force) and the 13th century historically accurate Mongolian Genghis era settlement. But what will stay with me forever is the breathtaking stark and sweeping landscape of the park that is located northeast of Ulan Baator.

A few parting comments. Many of our Mongolian and Siberian hosts were young (our Mongolian host Hasha is 22) which is not surprising, especially for Mongolia, given that close to 60% of that country's citizens are under the age of 30 and of those, ¼ are under 14! These hosts represented their clubs and culture so well I feel encouraged about the future of their countries. Lastly, all the ambassadors were so touched by how they were treated by the clubs of Ulan Ude and Ulan Baator, and their hosts in particular, that there was an impromptu sharing at the Farewell dinners of what the journey meant to each of us. The connections we made to the wonderful people and fascinating cultures of Siberia and Mongolia will live on in our memories and stories forever.

FRIENDSHIP FORCE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - July 2019



Following is a summary of the conference overview that Joan Kinnie presented to the Board. Please contact Joan for more details.

The conference presentations focused on how to:

- Draw attention to and live FFI's Mission
- Extend the mission across barriers, into our own neighbourhoods and beyond
- Create tools that will support FFI's move into the future
- Remind ourselves and others why we're doing what we're doing

FFI Conference Kick-Off

Jeremi Snook, CEO of FFI – The type of digital transformation that is needed to generate reliable and useful data includes resources available to all in the language of choice, individual portal access to the web page, member registration internationally, FFI teams to assist with journeys and development of new clubs.

Keynote Speaker, Dr. Michael D. English, Instructor for the Peace, Conflict & Security Program at the University of Colorado, Boulder remarked that we need to view ourselves as ambassadors of citizen diplomacy who, by building relationships worldwide, challenge the polarization that is becoming more evident globally. When people work, visit, eat and /or live together differences between people are reduced.

Best Practises: Strengthening Clubs: **Bobbi and Robin Mulholland**, ADELAIDE Australia

FFI is faced with dwindling journey funds as clubs shrink worldwide. The ripple effect of this reality will be felt by individual clubs. Multiple strategies to counteract this trend include: increasing the maximum number of ambassadors any one club can accommodate; hold a World FF Day event; reel in potential members with a social event; arrange for a small group of members to meet monthly for a drink and have them bring a friend along; organize open themed journeys; introduce a photography social group; invite non-members to host or join a journey; reach out to likeminded clubs; use the slogan “travelling with a difference” to advertise your club; plan and execute inspirational journeys where the focus is people interacting with people rather than people visiting places.

Grow Your Club Via FF’s Core Missions and Culture by **Gwendolyn Needham, NZ**

Describe FF as an amazing organization focused on world peace and purpose. Explain that it accomplishes this by promoting cultural understanding, removing barriers, building community within clubs by organizing a mystery bus tour for your members and other interesting events, by using music and ceremony (e.g. at the beginning or end of each meeting read the mission or an inspirational statement, sing the national anthem or a well-known song that reflects FFI mission) and by using maps to inspire the breadth of your club’s reach.

Perennial Approach to Club Development by **Hiro Onishi**, Japan FF Nara

Create an Associate Membership - no fees to FFI, small fees to FF Nara and run member or inbound journey programs with cross generational appeal (e.g. teaching traditional Japanese activities to Associate Members and ambassadors).

The Powers of Google’s Free Software by **Allison Lindsey**, FFI Director of Program Operations - Using Google’s search engine, Gmail, Google Forms for surveys and Google Docs (word processor), Google Sheets (spreadsheet) to create/share/collaborate on documents may help to simplify, expedite and share the work done by local clubs.



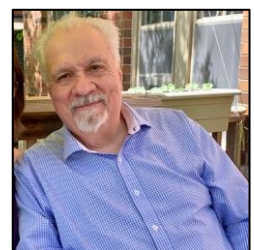
VP Membership, Joanne Curran

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to our two newest members **Vivien Runnels** and **André Dimitrijevic**.

Vivien is a Canadian originally from the United Kingdom. She has lived in British Columbia, and in Ottawa for the last twenty years. She is the mother of four children and a grandmother. She works as a researcher and volunteers with the Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OCAPDD), Human Rights Internet and Pay It Forward Ottawa. She loves reading, all types of music, especially live, and being physically active. Vivien is a life-long learner and wants to see the world.



André was a career public servant having held senior positions held with municipalities in Ontario, provincial governments in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and with the federal government. With an academic background in engineering and environmental studies, he has lectured at 3 universities. Since André’s retirement in 2008, his interest in theater led to active involvement in community theatre in acting and directing. André volunteers at a bookstore and at the Humane Society. Hobbies include drawing and glass blowing and fusing.



RECRUITMENT: Dinner clubs are catching on to the idea of **inviting new or prospective members to a dinner** when a regular participant is unable to attend. This approach has proven to be an extremely successful promotional tool for marketing the benefits of joining FFO. We will continue to leave the newly-designed **FFO business cards** on the eats at each GM in the hope that you, the members, will hand out these cards to friends and acquaintances who show an interest in Friendship Force.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

To join or for details, simply contact the conveners!

BRIDGE

Convener: Bob Elliott

FFO SINGERS

Convener: John DuVernet

DINNER CLUB

Convener: Jessica Sullivan

ART APPRECIATION

Convener: Janet Wilkinson

For Art Lovers... Hi to all our regulars who are on my distribution list and welcome to all new members!

Each fall, the National Gallery posts a list of guided tours they will be hosting in the upcoming season. Tours are given by gallery employees and never fail to expand our vision! Sometimes tours cover current special exhibits such as last year's Paul Klee and Anthropocene exhibits, and sometimes they delve into an aspect of the permanent collection, for example 'The Colour Tour' or 'Indigenous Art of This Land'. Since so many of us love to visit galleries when travelling, this is perfect for hanging out for an hour with FFO friends and friends-of-friends right here at home. Afterward some folks go across the street for a bite and a beer and some head straight home.

All are welcome – including former members, friends, family and neighbours. **Always on a Thursday at 6:30pm**, since Thursday evenings are free (for members AND non-members) and for everyone, there is always a tour fee of **\$8 per person – pay as you go**.

Once we know possible tours and available dates, I'll try to offer dates when there is no inbound or outbound journey scheduled. AND attempt to avoid the heavy snowbird migration season. ☺

SO... let me know if you'd like to be added to the distribution list and I'll keep you updated.

Here's to another beautiful season, right here at home!

FRIENDLY WANDERERS: Presentation by John Cooke & Danielle Allard on Jun 3, 2019 – Barley Mow Pub Westboro



FFO's "Friendly Wanderers" group got together at Ottawa's Barley Mow Pub to have dinner followed by a presentation by inveterate FFO travellers John Cooke and his wife Danielle's 2018 travels in Southern Africa: Botswana, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

John put on a great show that was well attended by 50 members and their guests. This was an excellent opportunity for our members to hear about non-Friendship Force travels by fellow members. Several FFO members invited their friends/family to see what an FFO event feels like and to consider joining our club.



This was the first time that a Friendly Wanderers presentation was held at the Barley Mow Pub. The manager was highly adaptable and flexible, and, the best part is that the downstairs room is free!

Should any FFO member want to organize a similar night, please contact John Cooke and he will explain the process required for presentation and dinner set-up.

So who will be the next Friendly Wanderers presenter?

Wondering how Solo activities happen?????



It starts with YOU and an idea! Next you send an email with the details of the proposed event to members of the list. Anyone who wants to go responds to you, the person who initiated the event, (not to the entire list) and then the fun starts!

On Tuesday August 13th, 16 Solos and friends converged at the Upper Canada Playhouse in Morrisburg to enjoy a matinée performance of a new Norm Foster play,

'Lunenburg'. The story unfolds with typical Foster wit, romance and compassion. Naturally, the sold-out audience responded with a standing ovation! After this lively show, the group dined at the McIntosh Inn, where we were joined by **André Dimitrijevic**, a new FFO member. Our group was given a table large enough to accommodate all of us, in a space where we were the first group, which facilitated conversation and socializing. The food was delicious and the service was excellent. A lovely experience all round.

Earlier in the summer a lively group of Solos filled 2 tables at the first Murder Mystery Dinner, presented by the Nepean Seniors' Centre at the Sportsplex. **Barbara Stiles** in the persona of 'Zany Winsor, Handywoman Extraordinaire', was a member of the cast. There were 3 scripted acts, one before each course of the meal, in which the murder was discovered and the characters and their possible motivations were all revealed. Then each table was to decide who the murderer was and what caused the murder. These hypotheses were then collected and read aloud by the cast, to great mirth. Finally, the writer/director distributed the script for act 4 to all of the actors, who read aloud, not just the dialogue, but also the stage directions. Certainly the outcome was a surprise to all! The audience participated with enthusiasm at every step of the evening and also enjoyed the meal, catered by 'Tulips And Maples'.

CANADA DAY is special in itself. But when organized by **Claire Fortin** with a good meal and fireworks as the offering, this was a guaranteed way for 12 solos to have fun and celebrate this special day.

Linda Miller Nesbit organized a trip to Almonte to a home and garden tour on Saturday, July 27th. She was joined by 3 other Solos.



Photography Interest Group

FFI has set up a Photography Club Cluster and is encouraging local clubs to start one as well (minimum of 3 people is needed). Access to FFI online photography technique resources will be available to club clusters only. The purpose is multi fold: attract members to our club who are interested in developing their photographic skills, offer another social activity for club members, AND take world class photographs (not simply snap shots) that will capture the essence of building peace through friendships (FF's mission) in pictures.

Interested in setting up a FFO Photography Club Cluster?
Simply contact Joanne Curran, V.P. Membership to find out more!