



# ***THE GYROLOG***

**THE GYRO CLUB OF EDMONTON**

**Club Charter No.18, July 29, 1921**

**President-Chuck Gerhart, Past President-Bruce Swanson,  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President-Dunc Mills**

**Secretary-Barry Walker, Treasurer-Gary Campbell,  
Directors- Ron Trant, Doug Armstrong, Ray Dallaire,  
Dan Hasinoff, Fred Schulte (Ex-Officio)**

**Database Administrator-John Ross, Gyrolog Editor-Fred Schulte  
Club Website: [www.edmontongyroclub.com](http://www.edmontongyroclub.com)**

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**JANUARY 2021**  
**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Those celebrating their birthdays are **Cliff Revell** and **John Ross** on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Fred Otto** on the 12<sup>th</sup>, **Daryl Dyck** on the 18<sup>th</sup>, **Dunc Mills, 70 years** on the 24<sup>th</sup>, **John Boyd** and **Jim Lochhead** on the 26<sup>th</sup> and **Jack Brown, 85 years** on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Daryl** and **Anita Dyck** celebrated their 18<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**President Chuck Gerhart** welcomed 50 plus Gyros and Gyrettes to the **January 5<sup>th</sup> Zoom Video Teleconference**.

**Ron Trant** started the program with his recollections of News Years past. On New Year's Eve In 1979-80 he drove with his girlfriend from Nipigon to Sault Ste Marie in a blizzard 587 kms along the north shore of Lake Superior. They rented a motel and Ron collapsed from exhaustion. His girlfriend phoned her mother and complained that Ron was not wanting to celebrate the new year. Her mother was okay with Ron's decision!

In 1990, Ron and his friends celebrated the new year at Shaw Lake in the Lac La Biche area with wine skins and minus 29-degree temperatures. A couple years later New Year's was celebrated at the Hotel MacDonald with John Barry as M.C. There was a long Congo Line with the banging of pots and pans. In more recent years, there has been celebrations with fireworks at the Provincial Legislature.

**Jack Bowen** presented information about the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in the battle of Ortona, Italy in December 1943. This was a brutal campaign against an elite German army over a seven-day period that was described as "Little Stalingrad". Canadian losses were 173 killed and wounded. New Year's 1943-44 was a subdued and quiet celebration. **Brigadier James Curry Jefferson** was the Commanding Officer of Canadian troops at Ortona. Jim Jefferson joined the Edmonton Gyro Club in 1933, served as President in 1949-50 and District Governor in 1950.

**Michael Mant** indicated that New Zealand was the first sizable country to celebrate New Year's Eve. New Zealand is one of the first countries to observe New Year due to its geographical position close to the International Date Line. It began with firecrackers and rockets and over time evolved into a more modern display of fireworks. Guy Fawkes Day is celebrated on November 5<sup>th</sup> and is famous for bonfires and fireworks. Since it is summer in the Southern Hemisphere, Michael remembers going to dances and parties outside and to the beach on New Year's Eve.

**Martin Marshall** talked about the New Year's Levee, a Canadian tradition which is not celebrated much anywhere else. The **Levee**, from the French word lever, meaning "getting up" or "rising" was traditionally a daily moment of intimacy and accessibility to a monarch or leader. King Louis 14<sup>th</sup> started the tradition during his reign 1643-1715. *When the court of Charles II of England adopted the custom, first noted as an English usage in 1672, it was called a levee. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as the fashionable dinner hour was moved later into the afternoon, the morning reception of the British monarch, attended only by gentlemen, was shifted back towards noon.*

The Levée tradition was continued by British Colonial Governors in Canada, and subsequently by Governors General and Lieutenant Governors, and continues to the present day. Although receptions hosted by the President of the United States of America are occasionally referred to as Levées, over the years, the Levée has become almost solely a Canadian observance.

Today, the word Levée describes the receptions (usually – but not necessarily – on New Year's Day) held by the Governor General, the Lieutenant Governors of the Provinces, the Military, and others, to mark the advent of another year and to provide an opportunity for the public to pay their respects.

The Levée has a long tradition in the Canadian Forces as one of the activities associated with New Year's Day. In years past, Military Commanders garrisoned throughout the vast expanse of Canada held local Levées since, as Commissioned Officers, they were expected to act on behalf of the Crown on such occasions.

Today, as in bygone years, members of the various Canadian Forces units and Headquarters across Canada receive and greet visiting military and civilian guests in the convivial spirit of the first day of the New Year. During the Second World War, Levées were attended by female officers of the Armed Forces, and since then the "men only" tradition has given way to Levées attended by both men and women.

Refreshments were clearly an important element in the New Year's festivities. "Moose Milk" is a Canadian Military tradition and there are several favourites including "RCAF" Moose Milk and "VP 405" Moose Milk. Our GYRO Fraternity has also adopted the tradition at District and International Conventions with the "float away breakfast."

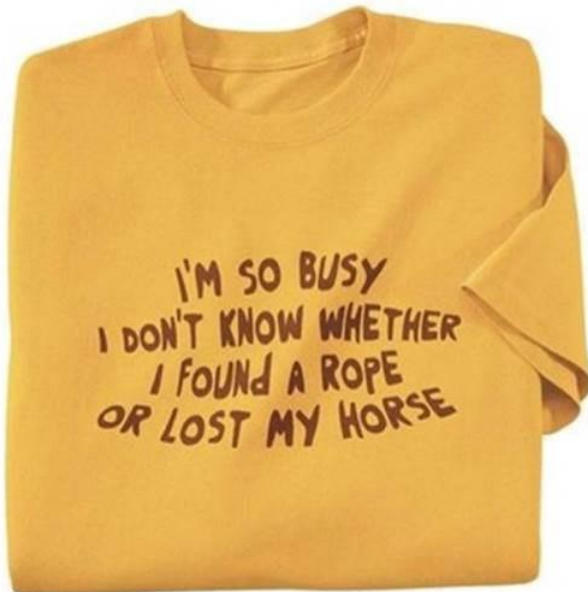
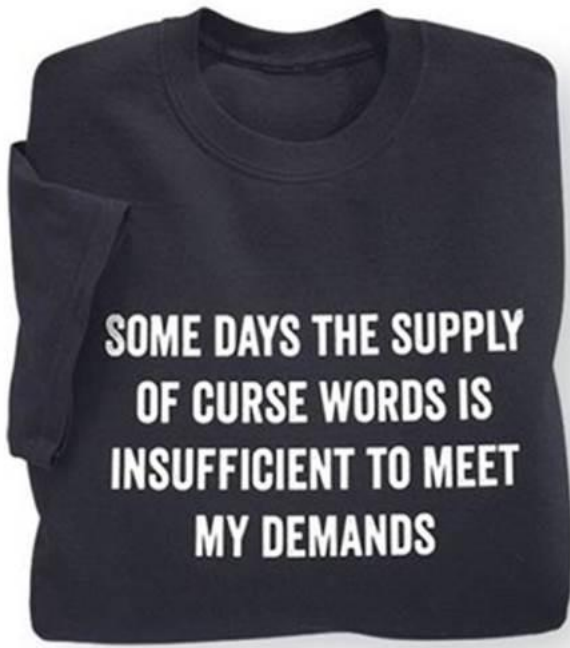
**John Boyd** spoke of **Hogmanay**, the roots going back to the celebration of the winter solstice among the Norse. *There are many customs, both national and local, associated with Hogmanay. The most widespread national custom is the practice of first footing which starts immediately after midnight. This involves being the first person to cross the threshold of a friend or neighbour and often involves the giving of symbolic gifts such as salt (less common today), coal, shortbread, whisky, and black bun (a rich fruit cake), intended to bring different kinds of luck to the householder. Food and drink (as the gifts) are then given to the guests. This may go on throughout the early hours of the morning and well into the next day (although modern days see people visiting houses well into the middle of January). The first foot is supposed to set the luck for the rest of the year. The house had to be cleaned and all debts settled. Traditionally, tall, dark-haired men are preferred as the first foot.*

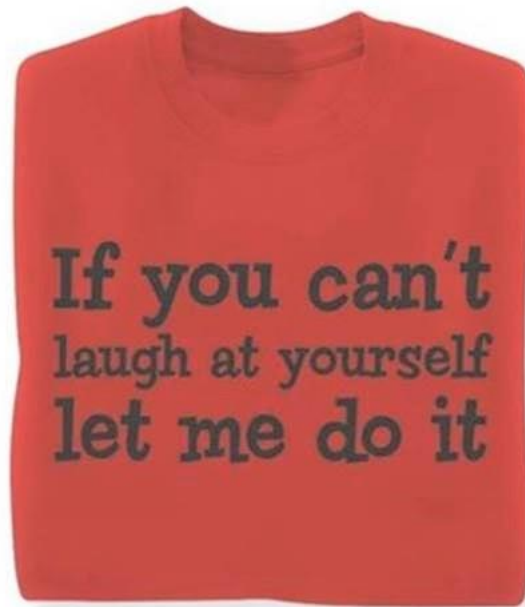
The celebration of **Christmas Day in Scotland** technically has a limited history; it was abolished in 1640 by the Parliament of Scotland, and only became a public holiday in 1958.

John indicated that the modern version of the old Gaelic song **Auld Lang Syne** is the second most celebrated after Happy Birthday.

**Vice-President Dunc Mills** completed the draws for the Virtual Free Lunches which were won by **Ken Willan** and **Vicky Garbutt**.







**President Chuck Gerhart** welcomed 31 Gyros to our January 19<sup>th</sup> Zoom Teleconference as we celebrate our **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.**

The theme of this meeting was 100 Years of Memories.

**President Chuck** welcomed **Marty Larson**, our longest serving member at 57 years. He was President in 1974-75, District Governor in 1986 and International President in 1993. He has also received virtually all Gyro awards including the Honour Key Award, Gyro's highest recognition.

Marty advised that he joined Gyro at the young age of 31 and that he and Shirley have attended 30 District and 30 International Conventions. In 1964, **Wes Van Dusen** invited Marty to his first Edmonton Gyro Club meeting. **Gordon Rennie** and **Russ Carter** were the first two members to welcome him into the club. **Alex Campbell, Gary Campbell's father** was also a member at that time.

There were a lot of military veterans in our club Including **Nelles Buchanan, Stan Smith, Russ Carter, and Wes Van Dusen.** Formal black-tie events were held at the Hotel MacDonald and many times the entertainment was by Edmonton Gyros. **Jack Jacknicke** played trumpet and **Russ Carter** was a great banjo player.



Several well-known Edmontonians had summer jobs as Gyro Playground supervisor positions while they were attending University. **Justice Tevie Miller** was one example. In addition, about 20 Gyro members had early careers as playground supervisors.

Edmonton Gyros were continually active in the attendance of District and International Conventions and this support was recognized in our budget.

The **1985 International Convention** held in Coeur D' Alene, Idaho was an extraordinarily successful event attended by the Larson's, Sheidow's and Mills. A large amount of homemade wine supplied by the Coeur D' Alene Club was driven back to Alberta. At the U.S. Border Crossing, they checked our trunks and found that the wine had exploded due to the 100-degree temperatures.

The **1996 International Convention held in Edmonton** was the second largest ever held in North America with 565 Gyros and Gyrettes in attendance. Our American Gyros were impressed with the room rates of \$79 in Canadian dollars. This event was well planned, and we had the foresight to use a fixed-term investment which matured in time to front end our financial commitment.

**President Chuck** introduced **Fred Schulte**, a 26-year member who was President in 2006-07, received the Award of Merit in 2016 and has been the Editor of the Gyrolog since 2008.

Our club received its Charter on **July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1921** in a gala celebration at the Hotel MacDonald. Thirty-two charter members under the age of 35 who represented many of the business professions operating in Edmonton were in attendance. The annual Club membership fee was set at \$7.50. The age limit for club members was **set at 35** but on March 13, 1924 that was **increased to 40**. At this stage of development, the Club did not want two or more members from the same type of business. The intent apparently was to extend the membership of Gyro to every walk of life. The Population of Edmonton was 59,000, so one can assume that the business community was tight knit.

**Communication** was an important component in the day-to-day operations of the club. The first edition of the club bulletin, The **Gyro log**, a name suggested by Alex Mitchell was published by **Jack Oliver on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1923**. Some things never change as outlined in this first bulletin: *In last week's letter, a report was asked for from all of those who had charge of booths at the Carnival. Up to Tuesday noon, Charlie Macdonald has received five. What's the use of me putting*

*these things in the letter if you do not take any action? We might as well conserve the paper and ink supply!*

Jack Oliver continued as Editor until March 13, 1925 when **Bob Muir** assumed the role. The issue of meeting attendance and delinquent dues were priority matters outlined in the May 1<sup>st</sup> Gyrolog. *“Gyro means friendship, so cement that friendship between you and me with seven and one half bucks. Thank, you kind people.”*

There was also a statement, *“the following Gyro classifications are vacant: Retail Books and Stationery, Boots and Shoes, Cigars and Tobaccos, Coal, Electrical Goods, Meats, Furs, Furniture, Music and Lumber.”*

**The November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1930 Gyrolog** stated: *Gyros, the attendance last week was not good, in fact it was rotten and at a business meeting too. We cannot expect to be entertained all the time and the Club will not function properly with a half-hearted attendance”*. Club membership then was approximately 90.

**The December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1940 Gyrolog** noted that the Gyro International Convention had been held at the Jasper Park Lodge that year and that Robert Sommerville, General Manager of the lodge had passed through Edmonton on his way to winter quarters in Ottawa.

The Jasper Park Lodge hosted many Gyro District VIII Conventions over the years and most attendees took the train. In fact, the train was the favoured mode of transportation to other conventions in Calgary, Vancouver and Spokane, Washington. This was a safe and practical way to continuously party to and from conventions.

The Calgary Gyros claimed that they took Edmonton to the “cleaners” at the **Annual Red Deer Golf Tournament in June 1940**, but they couldn’t prove it. The Vair Anderson Trophy reposing for the last year at Edmonton, failed to show up because it is rumored the Edmonton gang was so sure it would stay with them that they didn't bother to bring it along with them.

In the **March 1942**, there was an issue regarding the difficulty the club was having with paying for the operation of the Gyro Playgrounds. By 1946, the city of Edmonton took over the management of the original three playgrounds: Patricia, Kitchener, and Tipton.

The **Gyrolog of April 5, 1952** indicated that there was a discussion about the candidates for Officers, Directors, Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Committee Members. *“Take a look at the attached list, you will find very few repeaters. It is suggested that the chairmen call a meeting of their committee as soon as possible, set plans for the coming year and give each man a job to do. No one has been intentionally passed up, with **95 members** everyone cannot be on a committee. If any member does not see his name, he only has to speak to the new*



*president who will fix it, that is if they want a job, and who doesn't? Let's pull together for another grand year in EDMONTON GYRO".*

The **September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1975 Gyrolog** contained a discussion about the time of meetings. There was a suggestion that the Edmonton Club look at the possibility of holding meetings in the evenings. **Russ Carter** advised that evening meetings would result in additional costs to the members and this coupled with the Initiation Fee would discourage new members.

The **October 30th, 1975 Gyrolog** referred to **\$20 NHL Hockey Pool tickets** under the management of Harry Mills, Boyd Slavik and Bob Sheldon. The Hockey Pool over the past 45 years has continued to raise significant funds for benevolence activities related to our core visions of helping children and older persons with playgrounds/playspaces and gerontology research.

Our Club Historian, **John Ross** recently provided me with a list of all Edmonton members inducted from 1921 to 1975. There were **440** members who contributed to our Gyro fraternity over that 54-year period. About 20% of these members joined other Gyro Clubs across Canada and some even returned.

The Gyrolog dated June 15, 1988 listed a new Editor, **Gordon Rennie**. An additional feature of the Gyrolog were the member profiles obtained by roving reporter **Allan Douglas**.

A new milestone was reached on February 22, 1994 when Gordon 'Retread Rennie' created the **first edition of the Gyrolog on the computer**.

**Allan Douglas** became the new Editor of the Gyrolog on May 2, 1995. The January 4, 2000 Gyrolog suggested that members might consider receiving the Gyrolog **by email**. This suggestion was accepted wholeheartedly by most members over the next year.

**Paulette and I joined the Edmonton Club in 1994** and we quickly learned of many Gyro traditions, some of which must go back many decades. The wearing of Tuxedo's by the senior Gyros for formal events was certainly an eye opener. The men looked great, but there were still the penguin jokes!

Notwithstanding the formality of dressing up, there were numerous occasions at formal dinners where I observed the **throwing of buns and cutlery when the speaker went on too long**. Founders Night Celebrations have also evolved, I can remember that initially that these were stag events when the four Edmonton area clubs, Edmonton Crossroads, Sherwood Park, St. Albert, and Edmonton met and celebrated the founding of Gyro and then got down to serious poker games. It is great to see that the Edmonton area clubs are continuing in making a concerted effort to celebrate together and include our partners and Gyrettes at Founders and Executive Officer Installations.

Our final speaker, **John Ross** was invited by **Allan Warrack** to join Gyro in 1982. John served as President in 1992-93 and received the Award of Merit in 2003. He is presently the Club Database Administrator and Historian.

John described how the Club Officer Elections were held in the 1990's at Kelly's Saloon at Fort Edmonton. These were contested positions with real races and campaign managers. **Roger Russell** was the nominated candidate for President but at the last minute a second candidate was identified. This individual known as **Russell Rogers**, a strong silent type who had display window experience promoted a reduction of dues retroactively. In the end, Russell Rogers withdrew from the Presidential race. It turned out that Rogers was a store mannequin replete with club jacket and hat.



**Russell and Roger**

John advised that a Veteran's celebration was held at the Air Museum on Kingsway Ave on November 11, 2005 to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Second World War. Six of our club veterans were in attendance.



Harry Nash Enid Green Owen Cornish Bryce Van Dusen Gordon Rennie Ernie Siegel

John then described the life of **Rev. Bill Graham** who joined the Edmonton Club in 1954 and then became a Chaplain for the Canadian Airforce in 1960 with time in Toronto, Cold Lake and Germany. The Rev. Bill returned to Edmonton as Chaplain for City of Edmonton employees and cemented his long-term relationship with our club as Padre. He was designated an Honourary President of our club in 1993-94. He was asked from time to time about the "other Billy Graham". His reply, the other Billy is a Baptist, I am a Presbyterian!

The Rev. Bill was a member of our club for 50 years and passed in March 2004.

**Dick Nichols** provided an update on the Hockey Pool for 2021. The pool will relate only to the 56 game Canadian portion of the NHL League. The \$20 tickets will be hand delivered to each member and the stubs and cheques will be mailed back to Dick. Thanks to **Dick, Val Pohl, and Bruce Foy** for organizing this fundraising event.

**First Vice-President Dunc Mills** gave an update on the planning for our **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** celebrations on July 29, 2021. A proposed structure has been identified; Program Chair-Dunc Mills with John Ross, and Fred Schulte.

Finance Chair-Gary Campbell, Entertainment Chair-Larry Dobson, Decorations Chair-Cathy Johnson, and Registration Chair- Chuck Gerhart.

Contingency plans are in place to hold the convention in September at the Hotel MacDonald if necessary.

**Jack Little** was the winner of the virtual draw for the Free lunch.

**“Fast Fred”**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Zoom Video Teleconference, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Speaker: Larry Neumeister**

**Topic: Energy Free Home**

**Team Leaders: Sheldon Weatherby and Ken Korchinski**

**Zoom Video Teleconference, February 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Presentation Topic: "A Celebration of Love"**

**Team Leaders: Cathy Johnson and Carol Dobson**

**Zoom Video Teleconference, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Autobiographies by Jack Brown and George Schuller**

**Team Leaders: Fred Schulte and Chuck Gerhart**

**Zoom Video Teleconference, March 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Proposed 2021-22 Budget.**

**Speaker: Jon Dunbar**

**Team Leaders: Gary Campbell and Alan Rusler**

**Zoom Video Teleconference, April 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Club Elections and Speaker**

**Team Leaders: Bruce Swanson and Ray Dallaire**

**Saturday Evening Dinner Banquet, Mixed Event, University (Faculty) Club, April 24<sup>th</sup>.**

**Executive Officers/Directors Installation and Speaker**

**Team Leaders: Chuck Gerhart and Dan Hasinoff**

**Gyro Club of Edmonton 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, July 29<sup>th</sup>.**

**Gyro International/District Convention and Gyro Club of Winnipeg 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. August 4-8, 2021.**