



**BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT
RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
(BCGREA)**

**South Okanagan/Similkameen (Penticton)
Branch 900**

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER – Spring 2018

The BCGREA currently has about 9000 members across the province of which approximately 250 belong to this branch. Our branch covers the communities of Penticton, Summerland, Peachland, Oliver, Osoyoos, Okanagan Falls, Kaleden, Keremeos, Princeton, Naramata and others within the vicinity. We are a social, educational and volunteer group. Meetings occur on the fourth Wednesday of each month from October to May between 10:30 a.m. and noon at the Penticton Museum Auditorium. We invite interesting guest speakers, enjoy light refreshments and have a brief business meeting to discuss the benefits we receive through the Public Service Pension Plan of B.C., negotiations with government on our behalf, and services that have accrued as a result of our lobbying efforts. We encourage all retirees in receipt of a superannuation allowance under the Public Service Pension Act of B.C. to join us and add their voice to our number. This is an opportunity to express your opinions and concerns to the Pension Corporation. Dues are very affordable at only \$20 a year.

Members of our branch visit other members who may be in hospital or unable to attend meetings for various reasons. Our social activities include a Christmas luncheon event, a June outing and lunch and other impromptu happenings.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2017/2018 YEAR

At our **October** meeting David Snyder, a retired English teacher from Penticton Senior Secondary School and author, gave us an entertaining presentation about well-known people from this area who served in the military over the years. Their accomplishments, both military and civilian, were remarkable and most interesting. Our beloved 1st Vice Chair, Joan Lansdell, was awarded the Honoured Member plaque and pin for distinguished service to the Association:



Our speaker at the **November** meeting was Dave Morgenstern. He explained how his father had immigrated to Canada from Poland and provided fascinating and amusing anecdotes regarding his adventures in travelling from Saskatchewan to Prince Rupert and eventually to the Okanagan. Two of our members attended the Remembrance Day services to lay a wreath of behalf of Branch 900 and a donation was made to the Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Fund. Elections for the Branch 900 Board were held and a full slate of officers was returned. A large number of Life Memberships were awarded to persons who have been members for twenty years or more.

In **December** 64 members and their guests enjoyed our annual Christmas Luncheon at the Penticton Legion. Thanks go out to all our hard-working executive and volunteers who managed ticket sales and worked together to create an amazing number of door prizes:



At our **January** meeting, Kevin Ritcey, author of “My Father the Soldier” gave an illuminating account of his father’s adventures during WWII.

February’s meeting featured retired RCMP officer, Rick Dellebuur, who spoke to us about scam and fraud issues and prevention measures that we might employ. Rick was a very engaging speaker and his topic was greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

Earlier in the month our President, Maurice Davidson, together with his wife, Cindy, and Paul Perkins, Area Director for Osoyoos, went to the Desert Valley Hospice Society in Osoyoos to present a cheque for \$300 in memory of those of our members who passed away in 2017:



Our **March** meeting featured local storyteller, André Sutherland Begin. André regaled us with a lively rendition of Robert Service`s poems, ``The Shooting of Dan McGrew`` and ``The Cremation of Sam Magee``. He also told us his personal story of being diagnosed with Alzheimer`s Disease and his passion for performing in care facilities where those residents with Alzheimer`s frequently respond to Service`s poetry, remembering it from their youth.

On **April 4th** some of our Executive went to Princeton to meet informally with members there. They had lunch at the Vermilion Fork and thoroughly enjoyed hearing about the pastime of geocaching from Hugh McLeod.

UPCOMING EVENTS

On **April 18th** Maurice will attend the provincial Directors' meeting in Tsawwassen.

On April 25th our guest speaker will be Bob Anderson of the ``Friends of The Penticton Oxbows``. His presentation will bring us up-to-date on the work they have been doing on the wetlands and the present state of the oxbows along the Okanagan River floodplain.

April 28th is the annual National Day of Mourning for workers killed on the job. A brief ceremony will be held in front of the McLaren Arena at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

Our wind-up tour on **June 6th** will be at Gorman Brothers sawmill in West Kelowna followed by lunch at the Gasthaus in Peachland.

Many thanks to our amazing Speaker Chair, Elvy Karlstrom, for organising such wonderful and engaging presentations for us throughout the year. Elvy always welcomes suggestions for future speakers or events from the members. She may be contacted at 250-494-1615. Our Chair, Maurice Davidson, may be reached at 250-493-1538 or by e-mail: mcindy06@shaw.ca