RCMC

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, July 3rd 2025

Ron East – Secretary

The meeting was convened at 9:50 AM at Trinity United Church

Kerry Gennings presided, filling in for Warren Gregg, President, who is on holiday

Announcements:

New Board:

Warren Gregg – President

David Moller - Treasurer

Ron East – Secretary

Kerry Gennings – Speakers Committee

Ritchie Zelk – Communications

Martin Alderwick - Membership

David Rowley - House

Ken Marchant - Activities

Richard Rivkin – member at large

Ezio Di Emanuele – member at large

Ken Marchant announced the Rail Tour, Jesus Christ Superstar tickets can be purchased through Warren, and axe throwing on August 20th.

Martin Alderwick welcomed new guests attending the meeting:

Calvin Roberts

Glen Cerenzia

Shelby Korman

Phil McAllister

It was announced that there would be changes regarding meeting at the Boathouse starting August 2nd

Kerry then introduced our Guest Speaker : Annette Kavanaugh-Turner

Title: The Troubles in Ireland

Note: Annette's notes are hand written and not available, however her slide presentation is, thanks to Peter Turner. I have included notes from her presentation in the minutes.

Presentation description (Annette)

On July 3rd, Annette Turner, wife of Peter Turner will be presenting "Why the reunification of the island of Ireland is more likely now than ever before." To that end, Annette will give a brief history of how the partition of the six counties in ulster occurred, the ensuing unionist rule, the failure of British statesmanship, the creation of a sectarian state, the civil rights movement, the rise of the Irish Republican Army, the "troubles ", the Good Friday agreement and the resulting fragile peace, the changing demographics and political allegiances and the devastating effects of Brexit on the people of Northern Ireland. She will explain why, for the first time in over a century, the likelihood of reunification has never been more likely.

Bio:

Annette has had a lifetime's interest in all things Irish. Some might say it's in her blood. Her father was a Catholic from Dublin and her mother a Protestant from Belfast. Annette grew up understanding the sectarian and cultural divisions, and through many family visits to both parts of the island of Ireland, saw it first hand. Annette has an honours degree in history and Celtic studies from the university of Toronto. She was not only blessed to have visiting professors from Dublin and Belfast, but she won a scholarship to study at the Dublin institute for advanced studies. In retirement, Annette has been given the opportunity to indulge her passion for this subject, reading dozens of books and watching endless documentaries on this topic. In fact, in retirement, she and her husband have been privileged to visit her beloved Northern Ireland three times. She looks forward to sharing her knowledge and insights with our club.

Presentation minutes:

Annette introduced herself as an Irish Catholic Loyalist. Her Dad was an Irish Catholic and her Mom a N. Ireland Protestant – she is not taking sides.

N. Ireland had a religious divide. Annette sighted the "Derry Girls" TV series to get a sense of the times.

War broke out in 1922 – 23 resulting in Partition. The British manipulated the electoral roles to ensure Protestant rule – and the Ulster government had carte blanche control.

Between 1922 and 1972 there were successive corrupt governments in place ruled by the Orange Order, and highly discriminatory against the Catholic population. This initiated the Troubles, and the increased involvement of the IRA, resulting in virtual civil war for 30

years. The IRA enlisted the support of Irish Americans, and extended their activities to the British mainland itself. In 1969 the British brought in the army – they occupied N. Ireland for 30 years. This resulted in the use of internment without trial. 1,981 people were interned. Lon Kesh prison was notorious. The Bloody Sunday shootings took place on January 30th, 1972, resulting in direct rule by Britain. The IRA conducted a bombing campaign in Britain, killing 1,700 and wounding 10,000. This culminated in a bombing attempt on Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. This resulted in the negotiation of the Good Friday Agreement, signed in 1998. Belfast remained a divided city. The Agreement had 3 parts:

1) **The principle of consent**
2) **A referendum to end partition**
3) **Home rule**

Brexit disadvantaged N. Ireland, and the British had to provide 10 billion pounds a year in support. Now, Shin Fein is forming the majority in government, and reunification is inevitable. Annette predicts that it will be accomplished by 2028/29.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM. There were approximately 70 people in attendance

Ron East, Secretary