

President Warren Gregg opened the meeting @ 9:52 with 62 members present. He followed with a somber moment to think about Bill Richards, Klaus Doerig, Charlie Burns (who has had a stroke), and Tom Beale's wife (who is undergoing cancer treatments).

Announcements

House Committee – Bob Berry

Bob Berry was called upon to introduce the members of the House Committee: Len Bickerton, Ken Alsop, Bruce Ryan and Bill Rowley. Bill was not present because he is recovering from a heart attack and a lung issue. There is a card on the welcome table to sign for Bill.

Bob mentioned that as of last fall we started to use paper cups for coffee because it required too much time for the House Committee to clean up afterward and some committee members missed the presentation. The additional cost of the paper cups is about \$250 per year. Thus we encourage the members to bring their own re-usable cups/bottles.

Activities - Frank Webster

There are sign-up sheets for the following activities:

- A tour of the Guelph Humane Society is scheduled for Tues. March 18th @ 10:30 am.
- A tour of the Toyota Manufacturing Plant on Wed. April 16th, 2025 @ 9:30 am. The Tour is mostly by tram.
- The first Drayton performance to see is "Crazy For You" at the Hamilton Family theater in Cambridge and is scheduled for Sat. April 26th @ 2:00 pm with ticket price of \$49 per person.

Membership – Martin Alderwick

Today's guests are Mel Van Harten and Eric Huber. Also a welcome back to former member, Ray Biffis.

Kerry Gennings introduced today's guest presenter, Ken McGoogan – *Shadows of Tyranny – Defending Democracy in an Age of Dictatorships*

Bio

Ken McGoogan is a globe-trotting, history-loving storyteller who survived shipwreck off Dar es Salaam, chased the ghost of Jane Lady Franklin from Russell Square to Van Diemen's Land, and placed a John Rae memorial plaque in the High Arctic. He is an award-winning Canadian author and speaker who recently published his seventeenth book: *Shadows of Tyranny*.

His previous books on Arctic exploration history – among them *Searching for Franklin*, *Fatal Passage*, *Lady Franklin's Revenge*, and *Dead Reckoning* – have won the Pierre Berton Award for history, the UBC medal for Canadian biography, the Canadian Authors' Association prize for History, and an American Christopher Award for "a work of artistic excellence that affirms the highest values of the human spirit." Ken is a fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the Explorers Club and sails with Adventure Canada as a resource historian. He has lived in Guelph for three years.

Presentation:

(Ken's presentation was accompanied with a slide presentation that can be found on the Club website under Speaker's Notes)

Twentieth-century novels such as George Orwell's 1984 and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* conveyed visions of dystopia that evolved out of past tyrannies. They warned that if history doesn't repeat itself, certainly it extrapolates and often it rhymes. In *Shadows of Tyranny*, an audacious work of nonfiction, acclaimed author Ken McGoogan shows how the current resurgence of authoritarianism in the United States recalls Europe in the 1930s.

In Nazi Germany, a charismatic demagogue contrived to unify right-wing extremists bent on seizing control of the state. The most powerful nation in Europe ran amok, invading and occupying its neighbors. Defenders of democracy had to contend not just with Hitler but with Franco, Mussolini,

and Stalin, who together defined the First Age of Dictatorship. Today we have entered the Second Age. With tyrants ruling Russia, China, and North Korea, among other countries, Donald Trump has never met an autocrat he did not admire.

In the 1930s, many welcomed the dictators, resorted to scapegoating, and fanned embers of anti-Semitism into a conflagration. *Shadows of Tyranny* celebrates those who fought the racist wildfire – soldiers, of course, but also novelists like Orwell and Sinclair Lewis, journalists like Matthew Halton, Dorothy Thompson, and Martha Gellhorn, and singular figures like Hannah Arendt, Norman Bethune, and Winston Churchill.

McGoogan takes a biographical approach to history, creating a montage of individual experience while inviting readers to engage in discovering an overarching narrative. He melds conventional history, political analysis, and literary observation into a genre-busting work of “cautionary nonfiction.”

END

Following the presentation there was a discussion and Q&A.

President Warren Gregg thanked Ken McGoogan and gave him a token of appreciation.

President Gregg reminded members that the annual dues of \$90 remain the same as last year and are now due as of April 1st.

Next Meeting: Thurs. March 27th, 2025 @9:30 with Ron East on Imagination

Adjournment @ 9:58 am.

Recording Secretary: Kerry Gennings