

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Oct 15:	Oct 22:	Oct 29: Simon Matthews KEEPS (Kanaka Salmon Hatchery)
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Laurie Anderson** presided.

Guests: **Warren Dale**

Program: Fire Chief **Stephan Drolet**
of the Pitt Meadow Fire Department



Fire Chief Stephan Drolet

Introduction provided by Vanessa Reid, Fire Clerk of the Pitt Meadows Fire & Rescue Service, as read by Sharon Kyle:

It is my pleasure to introduce you to Stephan Drolet who has been an integral part of the Pitt Meadows Fire Department for many years. Appointed in July 2023 as Deputy Fire Chief of Operations, Stephan was pivotal in guiding the department through its transition to 24/7 coverage. These enhancements combined with the opening of the new Fire Hall and a dedicated Emergency Operations Centre will ensure that, under his leadership, the Fire

Department is equipped to respond to emergencies for decades to come. His passion for the safety and well-being of the community, combined with his proven ability to foster teamwork, contributes greatly to the continued success of Pitt Meadows Fire and Rescue Service. Stephan's professional journey stands out for his outstanding service, commitment, and profound grasp of the department's core principles and objectives. With an extensive background in protective services, he brings two decades of firefighting expertise, including 18 years as a dedicated paid-on-call volunteer in Pitt Meadows. Additionally, his 29-year tenure in municipal, provincial and national policing has equipped him with invaluable experience in law enforcement, emergency response, and leadership.

Stephan's Presentation: (as supplemented from material found online, shown in italics)

According to the historical record, the original Pitt Meadows Fire & Rescue Service came into existence immediately after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941. It originally operated under the Air Raid Protection system and the first Fire Chief was Hans Hoffmann. The first fire truck for Pitt Meadows was built by the members themselves. It was a 1929 Model A touring car which was torn down, rebuilt and outfitted for firefighting duties. This truck still exists today and is pictured here in its most common role now, that of the clown wagon for the Pitt Meadows Day Parade.



The old Fire Hall was located next to the Lions Den on Harris Road and served as the base of operations for many years, until 1983 when a replacement fire hall was built on the property at 19240 122a Ave. That Fire Hall was recently demolished and replaced by a new fire hall on the same site that became operational in early 2023. The new facility provides a healthy work environment with seismic upgrades, important training facilities, and a dedicated Emergency Operations Centre for first responders and staff.

During the four years during which the new fire Hall was constructed, the Department was temporarily situated at the airport.



The new Fire Hall at 19240 122a Ave, Pitt Meadows

The new Fire Hall includes:

- 3-storeys
- 25,000 square-feet
- 4-storey hose tower
- Emergency Operations Centre
- 4 tandem bays

Stephan noted that the Fire Department has undergone many changes over the years. It started as a volunteer department in 1941, and move to career chief, then an additional two career chiefs and an administrative assistant, and a full-time career Training Officer. In early June 2023 it changed to 24/7 coverage by 17 unionized firefighters supplemented by paid-on-call volunteer firefighters. The Department is currently looking for four more full-time firefighters.

The number of members has increased over the years along with the number of responses the department makes to calls for assistance. 40% to 50% of calls made to the Department are for medical assistance. In addition to house fires, many calls come in for car fires and grass fires.

Pitt Meadows has grown from a farming community to now being the location of the largest Amazon warehouse in North America, said Stephan. In order to reduce the occurrence and potential consequences of fires, the department proactively provides prevention & inspections programs as per the BC Fire Code.

In 2010 Pitt Meadows had 300 inspectable properties that the department was responsible to inspect, and this has now grown to 850 such properties. The department is now the first responders to situations at the airport, the train (which passes through the city) and on the water. Members are trained in about eight different disciplines and skills, and each must be excellent at each of them. The department needs eight personnel on duty during each shift 24 hours a day, which presents challenges in operating the department.

Pitt Meadows Fire and Rescue has one of the highest number of women per capita of other such departments in British Columbia. Each shift, 4 trained personnel per truck (including traffic controllers) are required on each call, whether for fire or medical or otherwise. The Pitt Meadows department receives approximately 950 calls for assistance each year which works out for approximately three calls per day. They sometimes receive six calls in one day. Says Stephan, the Pitt Meadows Fire department is now a full-time 24-hour department which has great firefighters and great equipment, but they are always looking for great people to operate it.

A modern fire truck is just a truck without the people to operate it, said Stephan. The need for a quick response is absolutely essential, he said. A fire can double in size every five minutes. A quick response to a medical emergency can make the difference between life or death of the person in distress. Department personnel can be on a truck and ready to leave the station within two minutes of the call.

Pitt Meadows Fire and Rescue Service provides the following services to the residents and visitors to the City of Pitt Meadows:

- *fire suppression, rescue and investigation*
- *first responder medical as requested by BC Ambulance*
- *fire prevention inspections as required by legislation and Council policy*
- *planning pre-incident response to businesses, multi-family, institutions and farms*
- *fire prevention and public safety programs; please note that the department is not currently offering hall tours, school visits or group hall visits*
- *fire response to Pitt Meadows Airport*
- *administration and enforcement of the City burning regulation bylaw*
- *delivery of ongoing training programs for career and paid-on-call firefighters*

Youth Firefighter Academy Bursaries- Our Meadow Ridge Rotary Club each year provides bursaries that support this valuable program. Last year's bursary was for \$3,000.

The Department also participates with Pitt Meadows Secondary School to facilitate the Youth Firefighter Academy to provide fire service training as part of the school's work experience program. Four students were in the program last year, which is responsible for students going on to become firefighters not just in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge but also in other parts of British Columbia.



Our own **Mark Forster** – who has been elected **Mason's Most Worshipful Grand Master**, chose as the theme for his year in office (before knowing what this year's theme of Rotary International was going to be): **"THE MAGIC IS YOU"**. He spoke to us about it, and also presented to us a poem that he created to celebrate the occasion. (Maybe we should create a new club position and elect Mark as our Club's Poet Laureate?)



"THE MAGIC IS YOU"

Dear Rotarians and Guests,

As you are all aware, I was recently elected Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of British Columbia and Yukon. During COVID, I created a theme for my year, which by coincidence is very similar to our Rotary theme this year. The theme could be used universally by many organizations and may fit some of our ideals as well. My theme this year "The Magic is You!", resonates deeply with me as I reflect on the essence of our craft. Freemasonry is indeed a remarkable journey—a journey of self-discovery, enlightenment, and service. Each of us brings a unique blend of talents, experiences, and perspectives that enrich our lodges and communities. The magic of Freemasonry lies not in mysticism but in the transformative power that each of us holds within ourselves.

As Grand Master, I am committed to nurturing and celebrating this inherent magic within each member of our fraternity. It is through our collective efforts and individual contributions that we uphold the timeless values of brotherly love, relief, and truth. Together, we will continue to be beacons of light in our communities, promoting harmony, compassion, and understanding.

My theme – "The Magic is You!" may sound like I am encouraging magic shows for the GMOV's. Far from that, my theme is all about freemasonry and what we get from it, what it teaches us, how others perceive us. The Magic is You is both collective and individual as we move from the rough ashlar to the smooth ashlar. We can only do it through individual effort and the assistance of our brethren. It covers how we act in our daily lives, in our Masonic relationships, in the virtues we believe, teach and practice, in our meetings, at home, at work, and in public.

It is up to each one of us to practice and demonstrate the many virtues we teach. Together, we will continue to be beacons of light in our communities, promoting harmony, compassion, and understanding.

Thank you! The Magic is You!

Oh, brethren of the square and compass, gather 'round this ancient hearth,
Where secrets whispered by the moon find refuge in our hearts.
We wear our aprons, worn and frayed, like badges of a hidden kin,
And in our eyes, the embers glow, for we are more than flesh and skin.
"The Magic is You!" the Grand Master declares, his voice a compass needle true,
And I, a humble bard of lodge and light, shall weave his theme in verse for you.

In the dim-lit lodge, where shadows dance, I glimpse the magic's subtle art,
As brethren gather, hand in hand, to mend the world, each broken part.

The trowel spreads mortar, bonds renewed, and columns rise, both strong and fair,
Yet deeper still, within our souls, the alchemy of brotherhood we share.
The apron's lambskin, pure and white, bears witness to our sacred trust,
And when we square our actions true, the Great Architect, He smiles,
He must.

The gavel falls, the ritual unfolds, and words like jewels adorn the night,
But listen close, my brethren dear, for hidden meanings take their flight.

The Magic is You! In every grip, in every step upon the floor,
In every whispered sign and signet, the Craft reveals its ancient lore.

We trace our lineage through the ages, from Solomon's halls to modern day,
And in our hearts, the flame ignites— the magic of the Master's way.
So let us raise our cups, my friends, to fellowship and mystic ties,
To charity that knows no bounds, to secrets shared 'neath starlit skies.
And when the Tyler guards the door, and darkness yields to morning dew,
Remember well, my brethren dear: The Magic Is You - it's always true.

Club Announcements

October 23: **Hometown Heroes Banquet** at Garibaldi secondary school – induction of 2024 HomeTown Hero wrestler Ivy Threatful Please support by buying a ticket or donating a silent auction item.

October 26: **International long table/club Thanksgiving dinner** at Adrienne and Warren's home - speak to Adrienne about this and confirm your attendance.

Watch for it: **date TBD** - Campfire **Social** at Matt and Lynda's property - fire ban is now over - bring your marshmallows and good cheer.



Quote for the Day:

A quote by Bob Hope overlaid on a background of moss and a tree trunk. The text is white and centered. The background is a close-up photograph of a tree trunk covered in green moss, with a dark, out-of-focus background.

I grew up with six
brothers. That's how I
learned to dance -
waiting for the
bathroom.

Bob Hope

BrainyQuote®

Submitted by Laurie Anderson