

# COG

## The Rotary Club of Calgary

The Rotary Club of Calgary is an organization of professional and community leaders who come together through commitment and fellowship to create opportunities and a better future for generations to follow.



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## Len Maier – King Christian Island Gas Well Blowout

Chuck Simpson introduced Len Maier who presented a video he produced as a tribute to the successful capping of Canada's biggest, and the world's most northerly, gas well blowout.

The presentation began with a tribute to J. Campbell "Cam" Sproule, one of Canada's most noted geologists, and a pioneer of High Arctic exploration for oil and gas. He was instrumental in founding Panarctic Oils Ltd. in 1966 to bring a number of small players into partnership with the federal government to develop northern resources and strengthen Canada's claim to arctic sovereignty.

Two of Panarctic's first four wildcat wells found very large gas fields, and both blew out of control. The first, located at Drake Point on Melville Island, blew out in July 1969 while the drilling crew was extracting a drill pipe to replace a worn out drilling bit. As the drillers scrambled to safety, a plume of mud, water and gas surged to the top of the derrick at rates of up to 40 million cubic feet per day of gas, and 40,000 barrels of salt water. It took \$2.7 million and two relief wells, drilled over a period of 16 months, to cut off the flow from the blown well. Drake Point was the only Panarctic discovery that Cam Sproule was to witness, as he died suddenly in May 1970.

Panarctic's second discovery on King Christian Island was even more spectacular. This well blew out of control in October 1970 at a rate of 400 million cubic feet of gas per day, ten times the flow at Drake Point. As this gas flow was not accompanied by the release of any water, it burst into flames and burned at rates equivalent to consuming more than 2.5 million gallons of gasoline per day.

Len's video is a tribute to the men who worked tirelessly to bring this runaway well under control. Conditions were so extreme that the heat of the fire melted the permafrost, and subsequently ignited additional fires in the cracked permafrost that made even approaching the site extremely hazardous. In addition to the fire, the team working on killing the well endured challenging weather conditions, including wind chills to minus 110 degrees F.

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**February 28 Issue**  
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Club Co-Sectary Chris Harper is "tweet'n the meeting"



Leprechaun Potyondi invites everyone to our St. Paddy's event at Belfry Gastro House

Burning for 91 days with the flame column reaching as high as 250 feet, the fire was extinguished by pumping 60,000 barrels of sea water into the relief well in the dead of an Arctic winter. The equipment mobilization, setup and killing of the well is an incredible testament to the ingenuity and toughness of Canadian oilfield crews.

John Boyd thanked Len Maier and presented a certificate to acknowledge our donation to CAWST, which was made in honour of his presentation.

## Meeting Highlights

Our meeting in the Crystal Ballroom began with Michael Pierson playing as the head table marched in, and again leading us in the singing of *O Canada*. A special thank-you went out to the volunteers in the front entrance (Bill Gillott, Donna Livingstone, Barbara Young Pen Pearce, Rotaractor Kelly Forbes) for getting us all in and seated. As always, our thanks go out to Carl St. Laurent and Keith Visser for ensuring our meetings always go smoothly. This week's COG Sponsor is Tom Hickerson of the University of Calgary. Thanks Tom!

Club co-Secretary Chris Harper welcomed our visitors and guests. He went on to explain to us that some people provided feedback that he should not have been texting during the Mayor's State of the City address. However, he was actually live tweeting the important points from his address. Following his explanation, Chris concluded by announcing the week's birthdays. We welcomed former Club President Bill Keech, now a Canmore Rotarian, back to the Rotary Club of Calgary.

Al Potyondi announced the club's St. Patrick's Day event on March 15<sup>th</sup> at Belfry Gastro House. Please see Ken Moraes for tickets.

Al McMillan introduced Pat Romerman as our newest member. Pat is a well known Rotarian from Red Deer, and is a current Assistant District Governor. He is also an active volunteer with *A Better World*, a Central Alberta-based international development agency.

Terry McMahon updated us on our centennial year's 100 in 100 fundraising campaign. We are well on our way to achieving our goal, with 68 members having made donations to either of our two foundations. He also announced that the following individuals have been inscribed as Level 1 contributors on our club's Mayhood Honour Roll: Michael Broadhurst, Michael Colborne, Bruce Fenwick, David Field, Marmie Hess and Bob Junker. In addition, five club members have advanced to Level 2: Chuck Simpson, Gord Graham, Walter Haessel, Tom Loucks and Larry Shelley. Thanks to you, the legacy of the Mayhoods lives on.

The son of Curly Galbraith, Dr. Roger Galbraith, gave an uplifting account of progress in Uganda. Dr. Galbraith has travelled to Uganda twice in the past fifteen months to teach leadership and management to leaders from health care centres in rural communities. Uganda is verdant, with abundant water and great agricultural potential. Its political stability and its core infrastructure (including cellular services) are improving, and access to good education is growing. A third reason for optimism is the work that Rotary is doing, and the Curly Galbraith Global Memorial is a significant component of this. He told us that his father's true legacy is the great work the CGGM is doing.

## Upcoming Meetings

- March 11    **Camp Victoria**  
Lunchbox Theatre – please note the change of venue
- March 18    **Scott Berry, Empowering Minds**  
Fairmont Palliser Hotel

## Rotary Club of Calgary Centennial Gala Tickets

Get your tickets at [www.rotary100.ca](http://www.rotary100.ca). Tickets are \$100; that's just \$1 for each of our 100 years.

## TRF & CRCF Matching Points Program

As part of our club's centennial celebrations, a goal of 100 Foundation donors in our 100<sup>th</sup> year has been established; and your participation is encouraged for this Rotary year. Please note that Member donations to either the Rotary Foundation (TRF) or Calgary Rotary Clubs Foundation (CRCF) will be matched by the Club with Paul Harris credits on a 1:1 basis, *up to 500 matching credits per year*.

## Thank-you Tom Hickerson and the University of Calgary for sponsoring this week's COG Newsletter

### LIBRARIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES - Taylor Family Digital Library

More than a Library! The following exhibitions have recently opened in the Nickle Galleries and at the Founders' Gallery.

#### IN THE NICKLE GALLERIES

Taylor Family Digital Library, 410 University Court NW  
[www.library.ucalgary.ca/nickle](http://www.library.ucalgary.ca/nickle)



**FROM 31 January - 26 April 2014**  
**BILL RODGERS: JOURNEYMAN, A TEN-YEAR SURVEY**

Curated by Liz Wylie, organized and circulated by Kelowna Art Gallery with support from Nickle Galleries, University of Calgary

Bill Rodgers, *Majolica*, 2010, mixed-media construction, 79 x 140 in. 1998. 1 x 40x 4 cm. (100). Collection of Nickle Galleries, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta.



**FROM 24 January - 5 April 2014**  
**FOLLY: CHÂTEAU MATHIEU**

Presented by Nickle Galleries in collaboration with M.N. Hutchinson, Walter May, Gloria Mok, Greg Payce, Laura Vickerson and visual arts writer/ curator Diana Sherlock

#### AT THE FOUNDERS' GALLERY

4520 Crowchild Trail SW  
[www.themilitarymuseums.ca/gallery-founders](http://www.themilitarymuseums.ca/gallery-founders)



**UNTIL 7 March 2014**  
**FORGING A NATION:  
CANADA GOES TO WAR**

Curated by Lindsey V. Sharman and William Bewick

Image Credit: WB Wollen Second Battle of Ypres  
Courtesy Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry  
Museum and Archives, Calgary



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
Libraries and Cultural Resources