



## AUGUST 14, 2019

Today's speaker was Bill Denning whose family has been in the funeral services business for four generations.

Basil Denning purchased a furniture store and funeral parlour in Strathroy in 1925. Today, the family operate in nine locations including Strathroy, Ailsa Craig, Rodney and West Lorne.

Bill was introduced by Rotarian Jennifer Hill.

Bill and his brother Brett recently purchased the Bowman Funeral Home in Chatham. Murray Bowman, the previous owner, was a long-time member of our club and currently lives in Erieau.

Bill talked about the history of the funeral business and about how embalming became so important during the Civil War when families wanted to bring the bodies of fallen soldiers home.

In small towns many years ago, the local furniture

store made the caskets and often looked after the funerals as well.

Funeral hearses frequently became the local ambulances since they were the only vehicle that could transport someone laying down.

The Denning family has many members that are certified funeral directors including Bill's mother and father, many uncles and also his grandparents. In fact, the family was recognized as the Canadian family with the most funeral directors.

Like many other businesses, the funeral business is changing. Today, cremation is becoming a larger part of the business.

Bill showed many pictures of old funeral homes, hearses and ambulances from his collection.

We thank him for his presentation today and our thanks were more formally expressed by Rotarian Tania Sharpe.



Speaker Bill Denning addressing the Rotary Club



The Rotary Club of Chatham

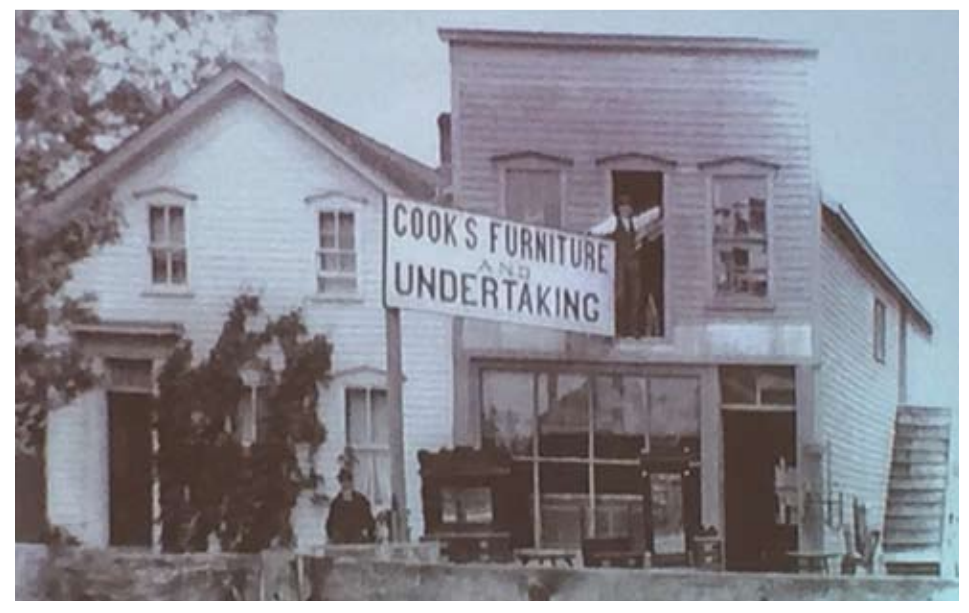
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*Tania Sharpe, Bill Denning, Jennifer Hill and President Paul Watson*

*Rotarian Jennifer Hill  
introducing our guest speaker*





## **BIRTHDAYS**

Jeff Comiskey  
August 14

Bruce Ross  
August 18

Karen Kirkwood-Whyte  
August 19



# Happy Notices

## **CLUB ANNIVERSARIES**

Brett Smith  
8 years August 18

Colin McGregor  
22 years August 20

Rotary TV Bingo has just finished the **250TH BROADCAST** this past Tuesday - 5 years!

Thanks to Les Herman, Rick Bodnaruk and all the volunteers that make this happen each week.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

August 21 TBA

August 28 Club Meeting

September 4  
President Paul Watson  
Club Vision 2019 - 2020

October 16  
Laurie Roeszler  
Access Open Minds



**Above: Rotarians from our club who recently visited Guatemala**



*The Rotary Club of Chatham gratefully acknowledges the support of Riverview Gaming Centre*