



THE BULLETIN



Rotary Club of Etobicoke

District Governor: **Valarie Wafer**

RI President: **Ron D. Burton**

Week February 19, 2014

Board 2013-2014

President: Michael Bell, Secretary: Ron Miller, Treasurer: Don Edwards

February 26, 2014 - Speaker: Chris Mills Toronto Police Service Corporate Communications Division – Use of Social Media in Policing.

Reporting: Ron Miller/Ingrid Bjel-McGaughey

Pictures: Ron Miller & Peter Dusek

Big Ideas Forum Rosemary Sadlier – Black History Month



Our guest speaker at the Big Ideas Forum this week was Rosemary Sadlier, the recipient of numerous awards, including the Order of Ontario. She is the President of the Ontario Black History Society, the first and only such organization in Canada. The OBHS is responsible for initiating the local, provincial and national observance of February as Black History Month, as well as the local and Provincial celebration of August 1st as Emancipation Day. In celebration of the UN International Year for People of African Descent in 2011, Rosemary launched BIFF – the Black International Film Festival – at the ROM, on behalf of the OBHS. She's the author of 6 books on African-

Canadian history. Her most recent book is Harriet Tubman: Freedom Seeker, Freedom Leader.

Rosemary commented that Rotary's motto of service to others has been a guiding theme of her own life. Born in Toronto, of Canadian parents and grandparents, she nevertheless considers herself to be Black, with a capital "B". The distinction is deliberate, to honour the "Free African Black" ideals of her ancestors. She is passionate about challenging people's stereotypes and in educating people about the path taken by African-Canadian people. Her own family traces their escape to freedom on her mother's side via the Underground Railroad, and on her father's side in exchange for fighting on behalf of the British in 1783, in what is now New Brunswick.

The earliest African to be documented by name arrived in Canada in 1604 with Samuel de Champlain. He was an interpreter and negotiator between the explorers, coureurs de bois, and the First Nations peoples. It is noteworthy that he had a basic command of the Mi'kmaq (Micmac) language, which suggests that Africans could have travelled to the New World even earlier. Africans were also co-founders of cities in the U.S. like Detroit and Chicago. As such, there was much African travel to this continent prior to African enslavement.

The first documented African slave arrived in Canada in 1628 from Madagascar. He was named Olivier le Jeune. He was 8 years old. Slavery continued in Canada until the British Imperial Act of 1833, which was the first global declaration of emancipation. In Canada, slavery was abolished across the country on August 1, 1834.

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So what's the Big Idea for Rotary?

Yes, there was pressure from the abolitionist movement, and people who grew to believe that owning slaves was unconscionable. But financial pressures were just as strong – for example, the feeding, clothing and housing of large numbers of slaves was quite a financial strain, especially throughout our cold northern winters. But Rosemary concentrated on something that applies to us Rotarians even today – “people helping people to be free”: the Underground Railroad. The latter, the famous network of secret routes and safe houses used by slaves to escape to freedom in free states and Canada, showed the best of human nature. People took great risks to make a difference.

One person who's famous for her role in the Underground Railroad is Harriet Tubman. Born in Bucktown, Maryland, she began working at the age of 5 in her owner's family home. She endured much hardship and physical abuse at the hands of her owners. One beating resulted in a head injury so severe that she developed narcolepsy. This affliction ended up having an unexpected side effect: in pretending to have one of her “spells”, she was able to overhear bits and pieces of information that eventually allowed her to escape. At great personal risk, she returned multiple times to help free her family members and many others. As well, she worked in the Underground Railroad herself. It is believed that she helped plan and execute the rescue of over 700 people. She came to be considered so damaging to slavery that there was a reward posted for her return that would be the equivalent of \$1 million today.

It was an inspiring life story for us all. People helping people to be free.

Birthdays This Week



Stephen Mbonye - February 22

Ingrid McGaughey Feb 23

Happy Birthday to on your happy day... ..

Hand On Etobicoke – Out of Cold Dinner at St. Margret's Church



Rotary Club of Etobicoke provided and cooked dinner for patrons of the Out of the Cold Program on Monday, 10 February at St. Margaret's New Toronto Church in Lakeshore. Dinner was soup, chicken casserole with vegetables, pasta, salsa and ricotta cheese sauce, accompanied by haricot vert (green beans) and fried onions in mushroom sauce with garlic bread and followed by carrot cake and/or chocolate marble cake and ice cream. We were delighted to share this delicious meal with over 100 folks and also with the many wonderful volunteer workers from St. Margaret's. This was a great Hands-On Etobicoke event while enjoying a lot of fun in the kitchen and showing off our cooking and

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serving skills. Special thanks go to lead chef Maati and Theresa, Stephen, Amir, Lynda, Liz, Gill and Andre. .

Secretary's Announcements



International Services Committee Meeting. February 25, 2014. 7.00 PM. Andree & Gill Residence, 7 Crestridge Heights Road, Etobicoke.

- **Mia Thomas** - Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)
- **Joshua Crandell** - Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)
- **Neville Brown** - Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)
- **Veronica Tavares** - Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)
- **Lance Constantine** - Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)

Attendance:

Members -17
Visitors & Guests - 13
Total - 30

Banner for Cullinan



Visitors & Guests



Visitors and Guests:

- **Rosemary Sadlier** – Speaker
- **Alexander Carey** – Guest of Jay Carey
- **Rhena Fleming** – Guest of Jack Fleming
- **April Laforte** – Guest of John Campbell
- **Michael Chudy** – Guest of Maati Lahroussi
- **Carol Laimer** – Guest of Maati Lahroussi
- **Teyin Dada** – Potential new member
- **Lia Milousis** – Motivated Young People for a Strong Canada (MyCanada)

Nigel Brown had our banner framed and sent to Eben at the Brix (South Africa) Rotary Club “to hang in the foyer of the administrative wing at the Cullinan rehab centre, so as to proudly show the club was involved”. The Club supported this project in 2011.