



The Rotary Club of Williamstown, Massachusetts

Club Number 6549; District 7890 Every Tuesday, Noon, The Williams Inn

December 2016

Anne R. Skinner, Editor

Up, up and away!



Most of us have paid little attention to the North Adams airport. Trevor Gilman, airport commissioner, and Bill Greenwald, manager, came to tell us why that was a mistake. They started with some history. The first 'airport' in North Berkshire was a grass strip where MGRHS is now; the accompanying hangar was only recently taken down. This hosted a Williams College flying club. When Sprague Electric began to grow, the company needed proper air traffic facilities, and so the present site was developed. As well as housing the planes used by the executives, an airplane repair and maintenance operation was created. For a while there were even commercial flights (I remember taking my sister there to fly to Boston). People would come and eat at the little restaurant, watching the planes go in and out. When Sprague's needs declined, the R&M operation remained and is now Turboprop, well-known especially for the care of Beechcraft King planes, but also other types. In general, however, the airport was underutilized. Several years ago the commissioners decided to upgrade the facilities, using federal and state funds. They moved the runway more into Williamstown and created a new landing pattern such that in theory planes can land 24/7, although there are no lights. The last step, planned soon, is to reconstruct an administrative building where pilots can get information (via computer). The aim is not to restore commercial operations, but to make it possible for local companies wishing to do business elsewhere to get there conveniently, and, of course, vice versa. Other operations, such as the Mohawk Soaring Club, Col-East (aerial photography) and scenic flights will also continue. All of us should hope for a better economy anywhere in Northern Berkshire. However, while the commissioners did not mention this, the improvements have had several negative impacts on Williamstown, most notably the cutting of trees and the installation of roof-top lights in connection with the new traffic pattern. And Williamstown has no membership on the commission. This is unlikely to change.

Party like it's 2016!



Cynthia Payne hosted our annual holiday party. Many of us had not been in that building since it was the town library, and we were most impressed with what she has done. We were also impressed with all the wonderful food that people brought. That eternal favorite, lasagna, shared space with a fancy smoked trout salad (can we have the recipe?) and venison, while a beautiful salad from Pera provided greens. Lots of pies for dessert, great drinkables both alcoholic and non, plus a variety of dishes I haven't mentioned. But of course the best part of the evening was the fellowship of members and guests. Thank you Cynthia; thank you all the participants.

What was it like?

Adriana Brown thinks of herself as Dutch by birth, but in fact she spent her first 6 years in Germany, the daughter of a German mother and Dutch father. Her father was a farmer by upbringing, but had a minor position in the Dutch diplomatic service in Berlin. When Hitler came to power, although her father saw him as a threat the Dutch government (along with others including his wife) believed he wanted peace. Then came the invasion and occupation of the Netherlands and the Dutch diplomatic corps was pulled out of Berlin – all except Mr. Millenaar! Why is not clear; normally at least a first secretary would be left behind. Whatever the reason, Millenaar certainly went beyond the expected. For four years he worked tirelessly, visiting concentration camps to free prisoners, writing letters to document what he saw, and, what made him an 'enemy of the state', facilitating contact between imprisoned Jews and their families. Thus in 1944 Adriana and her family (but not her father) had to flee to Sweden, becoming refugees in a land that was not hospitable. Eventually they returned to the Netherlands, where her father was honored for his work. Adriana notes that it took many years for her to be able to write about the experience, but we are glad she finally did.



Club News

Holiday Walk



President Hall worked with Emily Watts to add a new attraction to the Holiday Walk, a German Christmas Market. (As I write this, we are mourning the attack on a 'real' such market in Berlin.) We sold pretzels (donated by the Inn) and cake (donated by Sweetwood), and other tables had food from Pera (okay, not German but very tasty and popular) and the A-Frame bakery. What would a German market be without beer – in this case from Bright Ideas! The commercial operations kept



their proceeds; we took in enough to cover expenses and a little bit more for the Berkshire Food Project from our 50:50 raffle. Certainly this should be tried again next year.

Speaking of fundraising...

Our big fundraiser, the casino night, is scheduled for Feb. 11, 2017. That's only about 7 weeks away. Get those gift cards NOW! Goal is 3 cards and one silent auction item from EVERY member! Anne Skinner will have a master list so that we don't hit the same place twice; give her your information as soon as you do the solicitation even if you don't pick up the card right then.

Annual Meeting

At the December business meeting, we elected officers for the 2017-18 Rotary year. President: Anne Skinner
Vice-President: Valerie Hall
Treasurer: Steve Wisniowski
Secretary remains TBA. We are lucky to have people to step up for the club.

Off-site visit

On January 17th we will have a tour of the new Manton Center at the Clark, with Vicky Saltzman. Meet at the Clark.

The party continues!

Toby Potterton, North Adams club president, has invited us to join him for an evening meeting on January 31st, where he will talk about home beer brewing! Time and place TBA; stay tuned!

Our sympathy to Maureen O'Mara on the death of her husband, George McMullin.

PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS

January Schedule

- Jan. 2nd — Board Meeting, 5 p.m., Williams Inn
- Jan. 3rd — Adam Falk, President of Williams College
- Jan. 10th — Matt Harrington, Bennington CoC
- Jan. 17th — Tour of the Clark Manton Center**
- Jan. 24th — Vincent Maphei, visiting professor of Global Studies
- Jan. 31st — Home beer brewing, joint with North Adams**

The editor thanks Fred Ley and Linda Sweeney for photos and notes.

More party pictures!



Visiting Prof. Vincent Maphei coming to speak in January

