

Friendship Force of Manitoba Newsletter May 2024

Boston & Raleigh, September 2023

In September 2023, Marilyn Ouimet and I joined Friendship Force Greater Vancouver on a journey to Boston, Massachusetts and Raleigh, North Carolina. The group included seven members of the Vancouver club and one member of FF Winnipeg, all women.



Both host clubs welcomed us with generous hospitality and an introduction to local history and culture.

Boston is a tourist town and we visited many of the must-see destinations. At Harvard University, we took a short architecture tour, then visited the impressive Fogg Museum of Art. On our free day we chose the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, a charmingly eccentric collection of magnificent art.

Residents of Massachusetts pride themselves on their role in the Revolutionary War. We took a bus tour around the small towns of Concord and Lexington, the sites of the first battles in that war. Our costumed guide delivered her

history lesson with gusto, providing the standard history and occasionally debunking traditional stories with modern updates. The visit to Concord included a visit to Louisa May Alcott's house – beloved to generations of *Little Women* readers.

Another day we walked around Boston's old city centre, which preserves many buildings from the 1700s. We learned that an elevated highway loomed over the neighbourhood for decades, but the Big Dig rerouted vehicle traffic underground and allowed the old town to be explored much as it was 250 years ago. We visited the Old North Church ("One if by land, two if by sea") and other historic sites.



On a rainy day we took another long walk, lunching at historic Faneuil Hall and seeing public sculptures. We took a ride on the Duck Boat, a bus that transforms into a boat and drives into the river. Seeing a city from the river is always worthwhile to get a different perspective. We also visited the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, full of displays on John and

Jackie Kennedy and their era, as well as special displays on the military and other topics.

We all travelled together from Boston to Raleigh, and relaxed at Logan Airport when our flight was delayed. We discovered that Logan is a very nice place to have to wait out a delay. We arrived in Raleigh after dark, but our hosts found us and got us home.

Raleigh is another old city, now a part of the Research Triangle of Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill. The state's traditional economy relied on tobacco and cotton, which have been replaced by high tech and scientific research. We met several local FF members who moved to the area to be near their children, who had relocated there for work.

Overall, this second six-day journey involved more driving and less walking than the first. On our first day we drove to two small towns: Wilson, home of the Volls Simpson Whirligig Park, and Smithfield, to visit the Ava Gardner Museum. These were both unusual, but enjoyable.



Our hosts took us to a variety of attractions: the impressive North Carolina Museum of Art; Duke University in Durham, where we had an excellent guided tour of the well-known chapel; and the "Raleigh Trolley" tour of the city centre, laid out around the State Capitol building. We spent a day strolling down one of Raleigh's main streets that had been closed down for the bluegrass festival – many small stages and innumerable vendors of all variety of food, souvenirs, artwork, etc. We spent time at a state park that used to be a plantation, with a few of the original buildings preserved.

In Durham we toured a large complex of renovated buildings that used to belong to the



American Tobacco company and is similar to Winnipeg's warehouse district. The buildings have been repurposed into offices, restaurants, a sports venue and display areas, complemented by a spectacular watercourse.

In the evenings we enjoyed home-hosted dinners in beautiful homes and an outdoor meal on a farm.

The combination of Boston and Raleigh worked well geographically, and allowed some of us to take side trips to New York and Washington, DC.



I will add one detail that highlights the advantage of travelling with Friendship Force. In Boston one of our group became sick with Covid. A local member volunteered to host her as long as necessary, and the journey coordinators arranged for her to stay there while the rest of us went to Raleigh. She could then join the excursion to Washington. Quite the opposite of staying alone in a hotel and having to fend for oneself. That's the kind of caring our FF members provide for each other.

Submitted by Bev Phillips.

Journey Coordinator's Report

After years of COVID that resulted in multiple CANCELLED journeys, 2024 is shaping up to be a banner year of journeys for FF Manitoba members.

First up was our May 1–14 outbound journey to Knoxville, Tennessee and Western North Carolina. It is an 'extra' journey that our club was awarded after the initial journey assignments had been completed. Both clubs had limited hosting capacity. The six stalwart ambassadors are looking forward to warm temperatures and southern hospitality. I am the ambassador coordinator for this journey.

Next on the calendar is our inbound ambassador group from FF Raleigh, North Carolina and Greater Manchester, England. Manchester was a late replacement for the NorPeru club that will not be coming here this year. Even though we have two participating clubs, it looks like there will only be eight ambassadors in all. Thanks to new member, Joan Bluethner, for taking on the role of host coordinator for our only inbound journey in 2024. Planning for the journey is underway; the sign-up sheet for activities was available at the May dinner meeting.

Having had the experience of attending an FFI conference, I encourage all of you to go to the North American FFI conference in Milwaukee October 7–10. It is a Special Journey occurring at a driveable distance. Expect to connect with people from all over the continent.

November 5-22 will see 15 of our own FF Manitoba members in Australia. We start with a homestay in Adelaide, followed by a three-day whirlwind tour of Melbourne before relaxing on the Sunshine Coast for another week. Additional tours to Norfolk Island, Tasmania or some other exotic locations are still pending. Diane Schipper and Kathy Hansell have graciously volunteered to

be the ambassador coordinators for this exciting journey.

Our 2025 journey requests were submitted in mid-February. In the member survey our outbound first choices were South American destinations, Peru and Brazil. FF Lamphun, Thailand has indicated they would like to come here. We were successful in obtaining our requests!

Our 2025 journey assignments are:

Inbound:

Lamphun, Thailand to Manitoba, Canada – March
Greater Seattle, USA to Manitoba, Canada – August

Outbound:

Manitoba, Canada to Southwest Florida, USA – April
Manitoba, Canada to Nor Peru, Peru and Tere-Rio, Brazil – November
(NorPeru is the club that was supposed to visit us in September. The club is based in Trujillo. Tere-Rio is a club based in Rio de Janeiro itself.)

The dates suggested in this list are exactly that: suggestions. However, we anticipate that the Lamphun club does want to come early in the year. Please hang on to those extra winter coats in your closet, as whatever coats the Thai ambassadors come with probably won't be warm enough for our weather.

Remember that you can always check the Journeys tab on my.friendshipforce.org to satisfy your wanderlust. Joining one of the many Special, Club-to-Club or Independent Journeys offered there would provide a memorable experience.

Happy travels – with and without Friendship Force,

Susan Finlay,
Journey Coordinator

Celebrating World Friendship Day



On March 6, members of the Manitoba and Winnipeg Friendship Force clubs gathered at the Wellington Retirement Residence to celebrate World Friendship Day. The 58 people in attendance enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch along with plenty of opportunity to socialize.

Susan Monroe from Winnipeg Friendship Force thoughtfully provided all guests with Manitoba pins and a maple tree seed, a symbol not only of Canada but of the hope that can grow as a result of each journey the members undertake. "I hope people plant them," she said.



Lunch was followed by a presentation from guest speaker, Curtis Hall, Project Director at Climate Change Connection and lead author of the report, Manitoba's Road to Resilience: A community climate action pathway to a fossil fuel free future. Hall focused on the highlights of the report, including major areas where Manitoba can act towards creating a net zero future, such as transportation, food and

agriculture, buildings, and energy and electricity generation.

The presentation prompted a lively discussion, with many questions from those in attendance.



The World Friendship Day event also provided an opportunity for Kristina Ryan to take names and deposits for the Folklorama Bus Tour in August. Meanwhile, Diane Schipper and Kathy Hansell accepted letters of intent and deposits for November's journey to Australia.

Notices

*A new, size large ladies FFM club shirt is available for sale for \$50. If interested, please call Krystyna Ryan at 204-228-9108.



*The Hands around the World pins will be available for sale at the June 5 meeting for \$7 each.

Message from our President

Spring is here and another hockey season is winding down. Thanks again to Gail Keeley for putting together our newsletter, and to Marilyn Ouimet for getting it posted on our web page. I also want to give credit to those of you who submit the information and photos we all enjoy so much. It does not matter how involved you are in the club, there is always something in the newsletter that is indeed "news".

We are thrilled to welcome all the new members who have joined over the last six months, and celebrate your involvement on committees and journeys. The more involved you are, the more you will benefit from your membership. I hope everyone continues to reach out to their family and friends who may be interested in joining us to continue to grow our membership.

As I write this, a number of our members are packing to head south to Tennessee and North Carolina. Another group is preparing to welcome the group from Manchester, England and Raleigh, North Carolina in about six weeks. A third group is planning their trip to Australia in November. I hope you are part of at least one of those three groups, even if only as a day or dinner host in June. The itinerary was available at the May meeting for you to sign up to join us on the many activities scheduled that week. I also encourage you to consider attending the North American Conference in Milwaukee in October.

A major change this year will be to move the date of our AGM to the October meeting. All but one of the board members will be away for the November meeting so we will dispense with a meeting in November and have instead a "Let's Eat Out" event. One of our members will be choosing a restaurant and the phoning committee will be in touch with details.

The change to October means our Nominating Committee needs to be struck immediately and

have a slate of officers ready to present at the September meeting. As your outgoing president, I will be chairing this committee and will be speaking with members over the next few weeks to recruit members for this committee. Contact me if you are interested.

I appreciate your continued support and involvement. I know many of you are busier than when you were working! One of the most valuable gifts you can give is your time, and we appreciate it.

See you next meeting.

Denise Lawson

Member Profile: Christine Hanlon

I was introduced to FF by Susan Finlay, who I met while traveling to Cuba in 2001. At the time, I was working as a freelance writer and later spent 10 years as an editor. I've also had the opportunity to author several books about Manitoba.

Newly retired, joining FF felt like a natural fit, as I love learning about new cultures and meeting new people. My husband and I have traveled to such far flung places as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Australia, and Peru, as well as to many countries in Europe, including Portugal, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg, Italy, Greece, and the UK.

I am very excited about the 2025 trip to South America. In the meantime, we have applied to join FF Koralev, Russia on their 2024 trip to India and Nepal. Along with helping Gail Keeley with the newsletter, I enjoy reading, cycling, swimming, and gardening.



Information through the Member Portal on FFI Web Site

Marketplace

Check this out if you are interested in joining additional journeys

- Accessible from the Home Page on the left-hand side under Journeys.
- All journeys are listed for the year.
- Searchable by type, date, or region.

Online Training Sessions

- Accessible from the home page on the right-hand side.
- Training sessions for June include “How the Matching Process Works” on June 10 and “New Member Orientation” on June 20.

North American Conference

- Takes place in Milwaukee on October 7 to 10.
- Registration open.
- Accessible on the Home page in the center caption

Upcoming Events

June 5 Meeting

TBA

June 17 – June 23

Inbound group from FF Raleigh, North Carolina and Manchester England.

August 15 Folklorama Tour

Showtimes: 6:45pm – Korean Pavilion
8:15pm – Brazilian Pavilion
9:45pm – Celtic Ireland Pavilion

Spots still available! Phone Krystyna Ryan at 204-228-9108.

September 3 Meeting

Venue TBD

Presentation by MPI Safety Services Manitoba.

October 2 AGM

Venue TBD

Presentation by the Down Under Club.

With thanks to the Program Committee for organizing the above events.

For all you need to know about Friendship Force Basics, see the following page!

FF Basics

Membership renewals:

Memberships run from January to December.

Renewing member: \$70

New member: \$70

Associate member: \$40

All members are being asked to complete a membership renewal form at the time they pay their membership.

Address changes:

Have you changed your address, email, or phone number? Please tell our President Denise Lawson right away so she can update our membership list.

Club website: friendshipforcemanitoba.org

FF Canada website: friendshipforce.ca

FF International: Go to friendshipforce.org for up-to-date information.

My.friendshipforce.org gives you access to the latest new messages and allows you to pay journey fees.

Newsletter: To contribute to the Keystone Klippings, contact either Gail at gailke@hotmail.ca or Christine Hanlon at christinekhanlon@gmail.com