



WESTBEN: NOT YOUR AVERAGE BARN...

Story by Luci Hornell

Photos by Eric Blaikie

On March 10, Donna Bennett and Brian Finley made their way through inclement weather from Campbellford to enlighten and entertain us. After a short weather delay, Donna started their musical presentation by singing “Without a Song”, accompanied on the piano by Brian. This reflected the importance of music in their story. They are the founders and backbone of **Westben: Concerts at the Barn**, located in a cornfield just outside Campbellford. Entering its twelfth season, Westben offers a series of summer concerts in a 5100 square foot, 400 seat “barn”. Obviously, this is not your average barn!

During their presentation, Donna and Brian spoke of their own musical backgrounds as well as the background of Westben. Donna performed in Gilbert and Sullivan musicals at Campbellford District High School and went on to study music at the University of Toronto. There she met Brian, also a music student. After UofT, Donna studied for her master’s degree in opera in Munich and Brian obtained his master’s degree in piano. After several years of studying, performing and touring in Europe, the United States, and Canada, Donna and Brian returned to Donna’s parents’ farm and home in Campbellford.



Donna Bennett accompanied by husband, Brian Finley

Donna and Brian had performed for five summers at a farm/barn venue near Seattle, and that was the seed that turned their energies to Westben. The barn was built in April of 2000, and the first season began on July 1, with four weekends of concerts. This summer, there is music in the barn almost every day in July. Westben relies heavily on a sense of community, not just geographical, but a community of the audience, artists, sponsors and volunteers. The short video shown at the presentation reflected this sense of community, as well as showing the beauty of the barn and its surroundings.



Brian telling us about the upcoming season’s programme at the Barn.

This year, Westben’s line-up is a tribute to “dreamers, pioneers and visionaries”. Concert offerings cover a range to please any musical taste: opera, symphony, Broadway, Canadiana, jazz.

If you missed the brochure at the meeting, check out the Westben website at www.westben.ca. After the presentation, most of the audience would agree with Brian’s statement that “life should be a summer music festival.”

March 17: St. Paddy's Day Lunch at the Beamish

Staff Photos

There was music, courtesy of Garry Curtis but the noise level was loud enough to bury it! 18 members showed up for lunch and most of us were wearing something green—Lorna had her green cowboy hat and Garry his green wig. Willy had a lovely sequined green bowtie and Rosalie sported a tiny green top hat perched atop her head... A good time was had by all! Some even had green beer...



Lorna the green-hatted cowgirl!



Begorrah! It's the green leprechaun himself!



It was good to welcome Eileen and Russ Mountain back home from Portugal. Joyce Prince and George Grimes shared their table.



Willy and Rosalie Jakobi



John Ferguson, Doreen Sproule & Joyce Ferguson

Down Mexico Way... Story & pictures by Dave Strong

Hola from Mexico! Marilynn and I are spending the month of March at Lake Chapala, Mexico with our friends, Liz and Ted from Peterborough, who have rented a villa here for five months. We have our own suite in the Casita attached to their villa. The first day we walked down to the “malencon”, a walkway along the beach at the lake. The lake is about 50 miles long and the town of Ajijic where we’re staying is on the north shore about a quarter of the distance from the west end of the lake. Lake Chapala is about 30 km from the airport which is at the south side of Guadalajara. Liz and Ted love it so much here they have gone so far as to buy a villa of their own and take possession in August.

Ajijic dates back at least to the Conquistadores in the 16th century. Most of the properties are walled with gates opening off the cobble-stoned streets. Typical scenes range from beautiful trees in full blossom leaning out from villas over the streets to smaller Mexican homes with a shop in front and a horse and chickens in the back or along the side. The roosters start to crow at about 4 a.m.!

It’s been easy to lose track of time here. We’ve been busy, with local touring and activities in town. There is a very active community of expats here – Canadian, American and European – mostly retirees, many of whom have lived here for extended periods over many years. Most of the locals speak English and cater to the tourists and the arts community. The place feels quite safe and everyone is friendly and helpful. The weather is very pleasant – 70’s to 90’s in the daytime but cooling off to good sleeping temperatures at night. Arts & crafts include paintings, pottery, jewelry making, weaving, and carving. You name it, it’s here!

We went to a local bodega along the Carretera, which is the main road linking all the small towns along the north shore of the Lake. Here we enjoyed dinner and entertainment including a guitarist who played and sang and a girl who played the mandolin, and the jawbone of an ass - literally!!



“Floured” Marilynn – throwing flour or confetti is a tradition at Mardi Gras parade!



Dancing horse in the parade

March 8th was Fat Tuesday and Ajijic had a Mardi Gras parade. We thought the parade was to start at 11am; however, we waited until it started on Mexican time at about noon. The participants were local people, with many being known to the crowd so folks were waving and cheering each other. There were crowds of people gathered to watch the parade with little kids running the route dressed in costume, or not, throwing handfuls of confetti and/or baking flour at each other and the crowd all laughing and having a great time. We didn’t escape – see picture! Some of the costumes and acts were hilarious and it was all very colourful, noisy and fun.

We’ve visited the local hot springs, called the “Banarios” where we swam and laid about in lounge chairs reading and enjoying the sun beside the shores of Lake Chapala. There was a hot pool, sauna and a big pool that was also very warm as well as a restaurant at poolside.

On a typical day we might walk into the town, viewing various shops, and then to the Plaza for lunch before walking back to the villa for a siesta. In the evening after dinner we often play a Dominos game called Mexican Train which is quite popular here.

We took a bus tour to San Miguel de Allende and Guanajuato, 2 very interesting cities nearby, and hope to do a couple of local one-day tours as well. In the meantime, we are doing a lot of walking and plan to continue seeing the sights, partying and generally enjoying life in Mexico.

If you’d like to know more about this area, here are some useful websites providing information about Lake Chapala, local events and living in Mexico: <http://www.lakechapalasociety.org>; and <http://www.lake-chapala.com/lake-chapala-things-to-do.php>

We’ll see you all in April.

Marilynn and Dave

Grow a Tasty Garden

Photos: Carole Elliott & Eric Blaikie

On Thursday, March 24th, we welcomed Sabena Brazeau, the owner/manager of "Grow Tasty" located in Campbellcroft. Grow Tasty is a certified organic nursery where one can find over 300 varieties of potted edible plants and flowers, herbs, veggies, vines, berries and fruits. There are 40 varieties of lavender, 37 of which are winter hardy. (www.growtasty.com)



Sabena with blooming rosemary, carnation & angelica plants

According to Sabena, in olden times, women in their long dresses would brush against a scented geranium plant thereby leaving a distinctive, pleasant smell in the room. This didn't quite make up for the lack of hygiene but it did help.

Sabena would like to encourage people to use scented herbs and flowers in cooking. She herself uses them in baking with good results. Grow Tasty will soon be opening a Tea Room featuring teas made from scented plants and Sabena's baked goods so people can try them. There are also 54 varieties of heritage tomatoes with 25 new ones to be added this year. 130 different vegetables with unique flavours await those who will be heading out to the nursery as of April 22nd, 7 days/week till the end of June, then Thurs., Fri., Sat. & Sun. from July to October. Grow Tasty is open from 9am to 6pm.

Appies & Drinks

March 25 at John & Felicity King's home



Our happy hosts - Felicity and John



Delicious array of appetizers



Willy Jakobi, Wilson Gaudion and Joyce Prince sitting beneath two of Felicity's art pieces. What an accomplished artist she is!

50-50 WINNERS

Mar 10: Bruce Banfield won \$23.00.
 Mar 24: Felicity King won \$40.00

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April/May Crews

(The May Crews will be announced at meetings.)

CATERERS

Captain: Joan Bebee

April 14 Roger Ingram
 Lacey Ingram
 Henrietta Mills
Captain: Charlie Dobbie

April 28 Gwen Logan
 Bruce Britton
 Lynda Britton

Captain
 May 12 Michele Duval Lane

Captain
 May 26 Joan Bebee

GREETERS

April 14 Dorothy Spicer
 George Grimes

April 28 Joan Bebee
 Jan Blaikie

If unavailable to attend please find a substitute.

55th Wedding Anniversary

Georgina & Bryan Rose



We were both born in Coventry England and we met at work. After finishing my apprenticeship and two years in the RAF, Georgina & I were married in 1956. Ten years later we decided to come to Canada with our three boys, ages 18 months, 7 and 9 years old. We lived near Woodbridge for a while then settled in Peel Village, Brampton. Georgina worked for a small engineering firm, then moved to the MTC traffic office working up to be a Traffic Analyst (Project Manager), and retiring in 1994. I worked for Fruehauf Trailers and left the company 1989 and did renovations until retiring in 1993.

In 1990 we had the shell of a house built in Elizabethtown and finished the interior ourselves, moving in mid 1994. It was a good move, with more friends and interests than in Brampton. We both enjoy doing various crafts & now have five grand children, and are enjoying our retirement in Port Hope.

New!

Ganaraska Valley Probus 5-year pins!

Five years ago saw the birth of a new Probus Club in Port Hope. A pin is now available to commemorate the occasion. Members can obtain one from Garry Curtis at a cost of \$5.50 each. (Pins are slightly larger than our member pins.)

Order yours today! See Garry at meetings or email him.

gcurtis@sympatico.ca

Pet Corner for April



David Broughton's Lucy with a friend. Of doubtful ancestry, she is probably a Lhasa Apso/Poodle mix. Dave says her mission in life is to ensure that all of the vet's kids get to go to university! Lucy is 10 yrs old...maybe.

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

SPRING FLING

Wednesday May 18 at the Evinrude Centre in Peterborough (across from the Canoe Museum). Doors open at 8:00am and the program will run from 9:00 to 4:00pm. Muffins and coffee are available at registration.

APRIL 28 MEETING:

Members of the Port Hope Probus Club have confirmed that they will be joining us for our meeting. Our speaker is **John de Visser**, one of Canada's foremost professional photographers.

UPCOMING BUS TRIP on **Monday June 27** in conjunction with PH Probus Club. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir at Roy Thompson Hall followed by dinner. Cost: \$135.00.

Betty Curtis 905-885-5304

APPIES & DRINKS

At Elaine Simmon's home in Newcastle on **April 15**. 30 people max. From 2 to 6pm. Maps will be available from Elaine at the April 14 meeting.

WALKING DAYS at the Town Rec. Centre. Join your friends for 'walk 'n talk' from 8 to 10am Mon. – Fri.

LUNCH BUNCH

Following our **April 28** meeting at The Mill in Cobourg at 11:45am. Lunch: 4 choices from \$8.99 to \$10.99. Maximum 45 people. Sign up at meeting.
Maggie Colborne 905-885-1722

WESTBEN CONCERTS AT THE BARN

Thursday July 21st at 2 p.m. "Broadway at the Barn". Tickets \$32. Dinner following at 5pm at Christ Church Anglican in Campbellford at a cost of \$15. Max. 30. Sign up and pay by May 12.
Lorna Turner 905-446-0146.

HOBBY DAY on **May 26**. 4 members will share their favourite hobbies. More information at next meeting.
Steve Snell 905-885-9929.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

April 14: Pastor Kevin Fast will undoubtedly talk to us about his 'strongman' pastime.

May 12: Blake Holton retraced Farley Mowat's footsteps down the Thiewiazta River.

May 28: Hobby Day

GANARASKA CURRENTS

http://www.probusnorthumberland.com/ganaraska_news.htm

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ONGOING EVENTS & CONTACTS

PUB NITE

Join us for dinner, conversation & drinks.
Last Tuesday of the month
6:00 PM at the Beamish House

Coordinator: Eileen Mountain 705-632-0575

APPIES & DRINKS

Bring an appetizer and your own drinks

Coordinator: Marilyn Dunne 905-786-2549

EUCHRE

Every other Tues. at Ruth Clarke Ctr.

Coordinator: Lois Meadows 905-885-6715

LUNCH BUNCH

After the last meeting of the month at 12:30pm at various restaurants.

Coordinator: Maggie Colborne 905-885-1722

BOWLING

1st Monday of the month at 1pm at Northumberland Mall Bowling Alley

Coordinator: Ken O'Neill 905-885-4872

CHESS CLUB

Meet at Port Hope Library every Thursday at 6:45pm. All levels welcome. Beginners too!

Coordinator: David Broughton 905-885-1870

CONTACT INFORMATION Ganaraska Valley Probus Club Executive 2010 – 2011

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Vice President

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Past President

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