

Burlington Mundialization Committee Apeldoorn Sub-committee 2018 annual report

Members of the Apeldoorn sub-committee include council appointed members of the Mundialization Committee and citizen volunteers:

Ed Dorr	Charles Minken	David Craig
Johanna Haan	Judith Genis	Arnold Koopman
Anne Koopman	Shirley Stafford	Janet Lawrence
Hassan Raza	Bill Stafford	Lily Yee
Peter Bridger	David Knapp	
Miles Ross (chair)		

Strong relationships between citizens and officials in Apeldoorn and Burlington continue to flourish, fulfilling the subcommittee's mandate to promote global peace through friendship and respect for all.

2018 Annual Report Highlights:

- Elementary school pen pal and art exchange
- Canada Netherlands Friendship Day celebration
- Burlington citizens' delegation visit to Apeldoorn
- Poem highlighting the twinning concept between our sister cities created
- Dutch Indonesian food and games evening

Elementary school pen pal and art exchange

This year, students from Pineland, Ryerson and Trinity Christian schools were involved. Exchanges were both one-on-one with a student from another country, as well as e-mails from class to class. Students in Apeldoorn are just learning English and our students were able to see how much English their partner understood and thus, respond accordingly (a great connection for them with learning French). Some of the art they exchanged will be exhibited at City Hall during our Canada Friendship Day in May 2019.

High school exchanges

For many years, these high school student exchanges have been a cultural highlight, resulting in many lasting friendships. However, the Halton District School Board no longer supports these excursions. As a result, our subcommittee is pursuing other avenues with the hope that our teenage citizens can once again experience an enriching, historical and cultural exchange with youth from our twin city.

Canada Netherlands Friendship Day (CNFD) May 5

This traditional event, which has its origin in the liberation of the Netherlands by the Canadian Armed Forces in 1945, fits our committee's mandate very well.

The Canada Netherlands Friendship Day event at City Hall on May 5, 2018 was one of the best, blending youth, seniors, musicians, veterans and honoured guests. Consul General of the Netherlands Anne le Guellec attended, as did Elizabeth Witmer, Burlington's Mayor, members of city council, and other dignitaries. The colour guard from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 60, the Alexander's Public School concert band, the Spurrell Choir, Burlington cadets, and students from Ryerson and Pineland public elementary schools participated. In addition, a poem by Dan Murray (see below) was well received by the large crowd.

Unfortunately, attendance by veterans is dwindling, which is why we are shifting our emphasis towards our youth; the veterans brought us peace, it is up to new generations to maintain it.

Burlington citizen delegation visit to Apeldoorn May 1 – 10

May was a busy month for our sub-committee. While some members were planning and executing our CNFD event, others were accompanying a delegation of Burlington citizens to Apeldoorn, where we were hosted by local families. The volunteer committee in Apeldoorn created the first part of the itinerary; afterwards, the Burlington citizens added visits to Delft and Amsterdam:

- A very warm welcome reception at City Hall by the Mayor's office.
- A visit to the Arnhem Open Air Museum, where Princess Margriet opened an exhibit.
- The Holten Canadian War Cemetery, where we received the V.I.P treatment; 1355 Canadians are buried there. Various dignitaries stressed the importance of youth carrying on peace and harmony in the world. School children placed flowers on all the graves.
- The "Nijverdal Memory Museum" was a grim reminder of war.
- Every May 4, the country observes the "Dodenherdenking" ('Remembrance of the Dead') and our delegation took part in the emotional silent walk from the Big Church to the Oranje Park where our committee members laid a wreath on behalf of the City of Burlington, which was very much appreciated by Mayor Berends. In his remarks at the reception afterwards, Mayor Berends again stressed the importance of youth.
- During that reception, the video of Burlington poet Dan Murray reciting his poem was presented. It was so well received, the Mayor and his wife asked that it be shown again.
- We visited the 'Burlington Park', which is very well cared for by the people who live nearby.
- After a great farewell party and an emotional goodbye with our hosts and new friends, we visited Delft (birthplace of the Royal Family) and Amsterdam to round out a great trip to a small country with a great culture.

Poem exchange

In 2017 Apeldoorn poet Hanz Mirck was commissioned to create a poem dedicated to our twinning relationship. In 2018, we were delighted to return the gesture. Dan Murray, an award-winning singer/songwriter and poet living in Burlington created a poem as a gift to Apeldoorn. The poem, which was videotaped, echoes the close bond between our two cities. On May 4th, it was presented in both Burlington and Apeldoorn for very appreciative audiences. A printed copy of the poem now hangs at City Hall. The video of Dan Murray saying the poem can be viewed on-line.

Dutch Indonesian dinner and games evening

The former Dutch Colonies brought a unique dish to the country which was quickly adopted as part of the Dutch dining menu. We embarked on this cultural adventure to bring the “Indonesian Rijstafel” to Burlington. The dinner was held at the Seniors’ Centre on November 24th, it became a major event for our subcommittee. Almost all the committee members took an active part and it was a tremendous success, a complete sell out! The catered dinner was followed by a silent auction and a sjoelbak (shuffle board) tournament. Although intended to be an event that broke even financially, a surplus of \$900 was achieved which was donated to the Red Cross for Indonesian tsunami relief. This has high potential for becoming a regular event.

2019 Work Plan Highlights:

Our activities will be a little more subdued in 2019 without delegation exchanges for two reasons: First, the efforts of the Mundialization committee will be directed towards the 30th Anniversary of the twinning agreement with Itabashi. Secondly, we will start now to plan activities for 2020, when Apeldoorn and the Netherlands will pull out all the stops to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of WWII and the 15th anniversary of the twinning with Apeldoorn.

The 2019 Work Plan includes:

- Elementary school pen pal and art exchange
- High school student exchange
- Dutch Heritage Month flag raising event on May 2 at Queens Park, Toronto
- Canada Netherlands Friendship Day on May 4 at Burlington City Hall
- Burlington Public Library events
- Dutch cultural food and games night

Elementary school pen pal and art exchange

In addition to the schools currently taking place, we hope to attract a few more schools. By making students aware of our sister city at an early age (grades 5 and 6) they relate this concept to their families and it facilitates future high school exchanges.

High school student exchange

As stated, the Halton District School Board no longer supports this program. The subcommittee will pursue innovative ways to resurrect this worthwhile project which has enriched the lives of hundreds of students since 2000.

Dutch Heritage Month flag raising event

This event was originally created by Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer, when she was MPP and Deputy Premier of Ontario, several years ago to recognize the positive contributions the many Dutch Canadians have made to the Ontario economy since 1945. As a result of discussion between the Dutch Consul General, the school teacher from Pineland public elementary school at last year’s CNFD was invited to participate in the 2019 Dutch Heritage Month flag raising event.

On May 2, 12 Pineland students (grades 5 and 6) with teacher and chaperones will travel to Queen’s Park to participate in this event. During the ceremony, the students will participate by

presenting and discussing art relevant to the two countries. Students will also be provided with a guided tour of Queen's Park. This will be an excellent way to have Burlington represented in Toronto and a great educational opportunity for our students.

Canada Netherlands Friendship Day

This time honoured event will take place on May 4 at city hall. Regular activities will include the raising of the flags and the singing of the national anthems for both countries. Student art will be presented inside city hall.

Burlington Public Library

In the past we have worked with the Library to be part of their educational program with a film or a lecture of Dutch art. It is our intention to pursue that again.

Dutch Indonesian dinner and games evening

Based on the great success of last year there was unanimous consent in our committee to not only repeat something similar, but to make it even better!

Miles Ross, Chair
On behalf of the Apeldoorn sub-committee