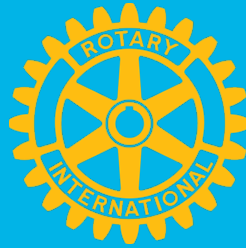


Rotary

Club of Cranbrook Sunrise



Sunday, July 14, 2024

Events

July 16th
[Cranbrook Sunrise
Weekly Club Meeting](#)

Speaker: Cheque
Presentations

Birthdays

Harley Lee
July 10th

Wedding Anniversaries

Allan W. Davis
July 9th

Harley Lee
July 11th

Dewayne Mark Penner
July 11th

Years of Service

Bob Bjorn
07-09-2002
22 Years

Ken Lo
07-10-2018
6 Years

Meeting Notes for July 9, 2024

By Dennis Parsons on Sunday, July 14, 2024

Guests: Kevin Brown - Executive Director of Fort Steele, Kevin Weaver - Board Chairperson of Fort Steele.

Inspiration: Steve Weatherall

It was a wonderful weekend at the Symphony of the Kootenays concert on Saturday between the trees and sitting in the shade listening to the concert. The local drummers were also present.

Club Notes:

Thank you for all the feedback from last week's discussion on structure, programs and activities. Hold off on the club report until after the program as we are going to have the presentation first.

[Read More](#)

Fort Steele Presentation

By Dennis Parsons on Sunday, July 14, 2024



Kevin Brown, the Executive Director, and Kevin Weaver, the Board Chair were our guest presenters speaking about Fort Steele, which is a provincially owned site (about 150 acres), and has been operated by Friends of Fort Steele for over 20 years.

Fort Steele includes 46 heritage buildings, a few reproduction modern buildings, a major historic park and a regional museum with provincial and national significance (they are trying to repatriate the assets that are in the museum). Most of the buildings are 100+ years old and they built McBride Hardware Store in 1998.

Kevin Brown has a BA in Canadian History and a Masters in Environmental Design as well as being a designer, builder, manager and heritage professional with 20 years of experience in historic sites.

Kevin Weaver is the Board Chair of the Friends of Fort Steele Society. He has been a volunteer at Fort Steele for 20 years. Kevin is a Forester by profession.

The Province will put a management contract out for this fall for Fort Steele, and they have to do Barkerville at the same time with a Request for Proposals.

Gold was discovered in 1857 and as the gold rush began in the spring of 1864, Sam Steele and the NWMP arrived in the summer of 1887. Much of the reason for the NWMP post has been ignored over time, particularly the role of the Ktunaxa. 3 Ktunaxa men were imprisoned by locals, for murder. They were held in a log building that is still on site and Sam Steele had to intervene. The chief wanted to deal with his men his way, and Sam Steele agreed with the chief. On a deathbed confession, one of the Ktunaxa men admitted that they had murdered the men because they had insulted them and had driven them off with guns.

Fort Steele was established as a heritage park in 1967. It is a seasonal tourism operation, not an all-year operation. First and foremost a Heritage Site, they have to take more of a business approach to be successful. Grants are almost 100% of its revenues.

In May 2023, there was a fire in the reception building which is of undetermined cause, but it was suspicious. Then a wildfire took out their power supply and water system on St. Marys River.

Last year, 35 schools visited Fort Steele between May and June. They are reimagining and rejigging a lot of their core operations, i.e. Kershaw store should look like a vintage store, not a 7-11.

Chilcotin people have genetically similar horses to what was in Fort Steele before the Europeans arrived. They want heritage livestock on site.

How many gun fights are in all of Canadian history? - 0! The outlaw Sundance Kid worked on a ranch in Alberta.

An American gunfighter came north and killed someone and the NWMP tracked him to Mexico and caught him.

Fort Steele needs a diverse group of youth, students, adults and retirees as volunteers. They have a shortage of skilled and unskilled labour. In January 2024, they became unionized. For a while this past winter, they halted volunteers for a period as the unionized employees had some concerns. Volunteers will be back in full force this summer.

They place the safety of their staff, volunteers, and visitors above all else. In 2024, they made the difficult but informed decision to park Engine 1077. A full independent review of the locomotive and the railway is being conducted.

Kevin Brown concluded his presentation by saying that Cranbrook Sunrise Rotary will be presented with some partnership and fundraising opportunities this year.

Closing Comments

By Ursula Brigl on Sunday, July 14, 2024

We are not makers of history. We are made by history.

Martin Luther King Jr.



There was a Girl Guide cookie draw for 2 boxes of donated cookies and the winners were:
Maggie and Bruce
