

## HATT June Meeting

November 9, 2017 at Clymer Library

5:30 pm

Attendance - 24 Members and 14 Non-Members

*Speaker: Dr. Brian Alnutt — "Our Northern Neighbor: 150 Years of Canada"*

The meeting was opened by Doris Zimmerman welcoming all members and guests. A few announcements were made regarding cancelation of the "Home for the Holidays" concert in December. Programming will begin again in April 2018. All rose and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Doris then introduced our guest speaker, Dr. Brian Alnutt, no stranger to HATT since he has been with us for the past five consecutive years! His talk was to be on "Our Northern Neighbor: 150 Years of Canada."

Dr. Alnutt explained that he believed the topic of Canada was so important because so many U.S. citizens are not aware of the issues involved in the colonization and continuing history of Canada and its influence over the USA.

Canada's population is one-ninth that of the U.S., also by physical size it is the second largest country in the world, and one of the coldest. Over half of its population lives close to the U.S. border because many of the northern territories are so uninhabitable. It has a very varied border of ragged coastlines and is topographically is on the "Canadian Shield," which is solid rock with just a thin layer of soil. Therefore much of the land is not farmed.

There were native peoples of Canada, much like the U.S. They are called "First Nation" rather than Indians. The Creed was the largest tribe but there were many others such as the Huron, Iroquois, etc. The earliest visitors were the Norse around 1000 A.D., who landed and settled in Newfoundland, where they stayed just a little while.

It is interesting to note, he said, that most people of European descent can drink milk, but the rest of the world is lactose intolerant. The First Nation peoples, after being given milk to drink, walked away, bent over in belly pain!

Spain was the first to settle in a permanent manner in Canada, and claimed the Eastern part as their territory, from Canada to Argentina in the Americas. This was supported by a decree from the pope. However, Spain could not support the colonization and therefore, there were wars and disputes over the land between France, England and the First Nation peoples.

Samuel de Champlain (1608-1635) explored Canada and established Quebec for the French. The Hurons were his allies and he fought with them in many battles over territory. He was the one who named the land "Canada." About the same time there were other French settlers who arrived in Port Royal and named the area "Arcadia."

In 1621, King James of England claimed the same area — Arcadia, which is now called Newfoundland — for England, and recruited many Scottish to settle there. They called it Nova Scotia. ("New Scotland.")

A limitation with the French was that they only allowed French Catholics to settle in their territories, and this kept the population rather low. Another problem was that the Europeans brought disease, albeit without malice, to the First Nation peoples. The monks who were converting tribes people were eventually looked on as "death bringers."

Fur trade was big business, and many settlers migrated inland to track beaver, much sought-after for their skins. This also interrupted the French and the building of their empire because the land was so vast, there was nothing holding folks back.

The British set up their own fur trading operation known as the Hudson Bay Company. Thus brought direct conflict

between the two nations – fighting over land and resources. When the British won out in several areas, many of the French migrated to the southern French territory which is now Louisiana. They are now known as Cajuns.

It was different in the city of Quebec, where the English allowed the French to keep the Catholic Church (not signing allegiance to the Anglican Church) so that there were not as many who migrated to Louisiana.

At the time of the American Revolution, there were some British loyalists in the soon-to-become United States. They moved northward into Canada where they could stay true to the British government.

The language division between French and English, which still exists today, was an interesting process. Since Quebec was founded by the French, the language spoken there today mostly is French, even though English is the official language of the country. The Quebec region is surrounded by British established settlements.

A huge dispute resulting in the War of 1812 between the Canadian territories and the United States did not turn out well, with both sides losing lives and making no real progress toward gaining rights or land. But both sides claimed victory. It was during one of the battles, where the British tried to take Washington D.C. and burn it, that Frances Scott Key wrote the words to the “Star Spangled Banner,” set to an old pub tune.

Then in the 1830s there were uprisings over the northwest area and border between Canada and the U.S. It was not clearly defined. The Treaty of 1842 was a sensible treaty allocating Washington and Oregon to the U.S. and calling the Canadian land to the north “British Columbia” by order of the queen, who thought that Canada should have a “Columbia” also.

In 1867, an agreement was produced to organize Canada and call it a confederation. The only holdout, until World War II, was Newfoundland. The legendary John A McDonald is considered the “George Washington” of Canada and became the first prime minister. The country’s slogan was and is “Peace, Order and Good Government.”

The country began to pull together with the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, which tied the two coasts together and assisted in helping the country feel unified. Following this construction was the Canadian National Railroad. Settlements in the northwestern parts of Canada were very different than the settling of the “wild west” in the United States. The Northwest Mounted Police were established and put into place before large numbers of settlers moved west in Canada. This prevented the lawlessness found in the settling of the American west.

There were many waves of immigration, and it was encouraged. This did not last long and by the beginning of the early 20th century there was a wave of “nativism” which saw the establishment of exclusion policies for certain immigrants.

Canadians, as part of the British Commonwealth of Nations, fought in many wars for the Brits. The Boer Wars in South Africa was one where they lost many lives. Canadians participated in World Wars I and II with full commitment even before the United States became involved.

Interestingly, the sport in Canada was ice hockey and English football. Lord Stanley officially commissioned the prize – the Stanley Cup – for the annual winners of the hockey playoffs. And Lord Grey commissioned the Grey Cup for those winners in football.

In 1931, Prime Minister William McKenzie King began to lead Canada into more and more of an independent country, and Canada became fully independent with the “Statute of Westminster.” The job then became to build a Canadian identity. The country has been working on this since it has a strong and loud ally to its south.

There are still divisions of Quebec from the other provinces of Canada. The French culture is strong and held on to with not only language but with customs.

Dr. Alnutt took questions from the group. A lively discussion ensued. Doris Zimmerman thanked him for his service to us and the community with his presentations and gave him a certificate of appreciation. The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm Respectfully submitted,

*Peggy Rapp*

Peggy Rapp, Secretary