

Great Village Company Respected World-Wide



Mark Wood, President of Instrument Concepts and Ocean Sonics Ltd., Great Village, was guest speaker at the Legion Branch #72 Banquet. Mark and Legion President Joan Richard display a spectrogram, a visual representation of ocean sounds, while Desiree Stockermans (center), Mark's wife and the company's Operations Manager, holds one of the Smart Hydrophones. (Harrington Photo)

By Linda Harrington

Underwater listening devices could help predict a tsunami, prevent collisions between ships and whales and help protect our coastline. A company located in Great Village has been put on the world map, as a manufacturer of underwater listening devices called Smart Hydrophones.

Mark Wood, President of Ocean Sonics Ltd., was guest speaker at the Great Village Legion's annual Banquet. His business is located directly across from the Legion, in the former AA Hill house, and few people know what exciting technology is being manufactured behind the doors where a Funeral Home was once located.

Underwater listening devices are not new but what sets Ocean Sonics' instruments apart is first of all their small size, it can be held in one hand, but also the variety of things they can do.

The Smart Hydrophones can store sound data, convert the sound data to spectra and store it or listen for events and just store the event. All this data can be sent over a cell phone. The Smart Hydrophones have batteries, so they can run without

cables, allowing them to be deployed as low as 3500 meters below the ocean's surface.

Ocean Sonics was started in 2012 to manufacture and sell these Smart Hydrophones. It is a sister company to Mark Wood's other company, Instrument Concepts, which designs the products.

Ocean Sonics employs a staff of 7. The products are built and tested in Great Village, with parts machined in Dartmouth and the circuit boards built near Bridgewater. "We are proud of the fact nearly 95% of the parts in our instruments are purchased in Nova Scotia," says Mark.

The location of Ocean Sonics is a bonus for testing the instruments. "We have a site near Bass River, far out on the sand flats where we can set up at low tide," says Mark. "In a couple hours we'll have 12-14m of water overhead for our tests, and at low tide we can collect our instrument and repeat if necessary." He says when they need a quiet place for testing they go up to Sutherland's Lake.

Ocean Sonics Smart Hydrophone is able to process down the data as it is collected and this results in a file size of about 1/100th of

what would be received from a traditional hydrophone. Mark says they also have a program called LUCY, which is used to visualize the sounds.

LUCY produces a spectrogram. Mark brought an example of one to show how the sounds made by a passing ship or a pod of whales can be turned into a visual reference.

Mark says he pleased his company is now collaborating with researchers at Dalhousie Oceanography and Acadia. One project involved attaching one of the hydrophones to a sturgeon and letting it go. The hydrophone came loose and floated to the surface after a few hours but in that time a wealth of information was gathered.

"We also heard a 'click' from a mystery fish, that also made a squeak, like a dog's toy," Mark says, adding this has baffled researchers, as well. "But that's what makes this type of work so much fun!"

Two ocean observatories, Venus and Neptune that together make up the largest ocean observatory in the world have been using instruments manufactured here in Great Village for over a year. They have recorded some amazing events, including aftershocks from the Japanese tsunami. Scientists have been recording micro-seismic events with the hope it will one day help predict larger earthquakes on the west coast.

Mark Wood is very excited with some new contracts, just signed in the last few weeks. Ocean Sonics Ltd will be working with DOT, Office of Boating and Safety; an Ocean Observatory in the US as their sole supplier; and will be the sole supplier of hydrophone equipment for the Azerbaijani Navy in the Caspian Sea.

"What I like about my job is that we're making tools, some of the best in the world, that help us understand the health of the ocean and its inhabitants. And hopefully that can help ensure their long-term health," says Mark.

Great Village Legion Notes

By Ken Kennedy

November has been a busy month, as you might expect, with Remembrance Day activities spread out between Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands, and Londonderry, with the last two locations at the same time on the same day.

We started out on Nov. 4th with a church service and Legion parade at 1000 hours at the Economy Recreation Centre. I was thoroughly blessed by the minister's message on sacrifice as she brought together the examples of the poor lady in First Kings Chapter 17 and poor widow in Saint Mark's gospel Chapter 12 who each gave all they had to the work of the Lord. Why do we begrudge giving even ten percent to the work of the Lord in our local churches? There should not have to be bake sales and other fund-raising events in order to keep our churches financially viable.

On Nov. 8, some Legion members and other veterans were invited to Debert Elementary to be interviewed by young students. I was proud to be one of those interviewed by a couple of great kids.

On Nov. 9, some members were invited to WCCS Bass River for recognition by the students. I couldn't make it as I had been invited by VON Adult Day program care givers at H.A. Johnson Manor in Truro.

On Nov. 10 we were invited to present an evening Remembrance Day service at Wynn Park Villa especially for the veterans resident there. We had assistance from Branch 26 and 106 for this service. Members were piped in by Dan Wesley and it was a joy to

behold as those dear old veterans - dressed to the nines - gingerly stood for the anthems and the Last Post.

As November 11th dawned we could see that it was going to be a nice day for a change. As we gathered at the Legion Hall at 1000 hrs we knew it was going to be a fine day but cold. (We've seen a lot worse.) As we marched (I use that term loosely!) up the hill to the command of Arnold Williams and to the beat of the Old Scotia Pipes and Drums we could see there was going to be a good turnout of men, women, and children on hand for this solemn occasion.

At 1400 hrs, Branch 72 split up into two groups as some went to help Ronnie MacBurnie in the Five Islands Fire Hall, assisted by the Parrsboro Legion. Others of us went to Londonderry where Sally and John Richard had everything arranged. We were assisted as usual by the Debert Legion Branch 106 colour party and a couple of the smartest young Canadian Forces members I've seen in a long time.

There were more than 70 people at the Legion Banquet that evening as Betty MacNeil and the Great Village Fire Hall crew prepared a delicious roast beef dinner which was served by members of the Glooscap Trail 4-H club. Next came the presentation of long service awards. Can you believe that Comrade Myles Rushton is old enough to receive the 60-year Long Service Award? Walter Perrin is catching up his 55-year pin awarded. 20-year pins went to President Joan Richard,

Comrades Bruce Zwicker and Joe Fillion.

After the customary toasts and responses we were given a briefing by Comrade Arnold Williams on the events surrounding the horrible massacre of Canadian Troops at Vimy Ridge in WW1. Before we left the party we were treated to a mind-boggling briefing on underwater listening devices used by Mark Wood about his Ocean Sonics enterprise across the road in the Hill property. (www.ocean-sonics.com).

All in all, it has been another busy year for our little branch with a compliment of about 30 members. We're proud to report, however, that at most monthly meetings we have over 50% turn out.

Looking back over the year we see where the Wheels-to-Meals noon-hour luncheon continues to be popular. These are held on the first and third Tuesday of the month for cost of just \$6.00. We have held pancake brunches, cheese sales, poppy sales, craft sales, and decorated over 600 veteran's graves in June. We have been tasked with scheduled entertainment for those in the Veteran's wing of Wynn Park Villa where we use local talent with guitars, harmonicas, and bagpipes. (Not all at the same time!)

Unfortunately, the hall suffered some water damage in the basement after the high tides of October which cost over \$10,000 but has since been repaired.

Branch 72 executive and membership wishes to thank everyone who has supported us this past year and we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Great Village Elementary News

By Linda Harrington

Congratulations to students and staff on a wonderful Remembrance Day Service on Nov. 10th. Thank you to guest speakers Sergeant Logan Spencer, Petty Officer- Second Class, Diana Frizzle and Arthur Chisholm (Retired Reserve Member).

On Nov. 26th an assembly will be held by the P/1 class on the virtue of Friendliness. Parent-teacher interviews will be held on Nov. 28th from 6-8 pm and

again on Nov. 30th, from 9-11AM.

GVE will be having a raffle in support of the PTG. Items will be drawn for on December 13th, the night of the annual School Concert (6:30PM).

The school Bazaar will be held on Dec. 20th (9:45 -

11:30). This is a shopping time where the students purchase items for their families from gently used and donated items.

December assembly will be on Dec. 19th (9:45-10:15) on the virtue of Courage. Christmas break starts on Friday, Dec. 21st.

The Deadline for the January issue of
Shoreline
Journal is December 11

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A Message to All Non-Profit Groups in Nova Scotia

In Nova Scotia, a wide variety of human, social and health related services are offered by local community groups, non-profit agencies and government departments. Finding the right service at the right time though, can be a real challenge.

Beginning next February, a "211" service will provide Nova Scotians with a free, confidential information and referral program for the thousands of these services provided across the province. It will be available throughout the province, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by simply dialling "2-1-1" to speak to a helpful staff member, or by searching our on line database, which will be up and running when 211 launches.

To help Nova Scotians in every community find and make good use of your services and programs, we need complete and accurate information. We want to ensure all services provided by community groups have been included for each and every community in Nova Scotia. **211 Nova Scotia is inviting all non-profit providers of human, social and health related services in communities throughout the province to contact us to confirm that the 211 database has the right information about your service.** We are a non-profit association - there is no cost to any organization to have information included in our database.

You can reach our team members by calling **902-466-5721** or emailing **info@ns.211.ca**. We welcome inquiries from the general public as well. Information about 211 is available on our website at **www.ns.211.ca**

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