



Club #85, founded Oct 2, 1913

November 9<sup>th</sup> 2010

**Attendance:** Herman Alves; John Bishop; Bertrand de Cardaillac; Grant Effer; Mikkil Elsborg; Carlo Pugliese; Steve Sadler; George Shalhoub; Nemo Turner; Bob Velan; Drew Webster; Henry Zalzal; Mike Zivic. Visitors: Kim LeBech, Eddy Dumouchel, guests of Mikkil Elsborg; Francis Scarpaleggia, MP for Lac-Saint-Louis, guest of Drew Webster; Rick Sala. Guest Speaker: Major Okill Stuart.

**President Nemo** opened our Remembrance Day meeting asking us to reflect on the futility of war, not its glorification, and to remember those who gave their lives in the protection of freedom. After introducing visitors and guests, he dealt with several items of club business: 1) on Dec 14<sup>th</sup> for Christmas luncheon, plan to be here at Noon. Food service will start at 12.15. 2) the meetings on Dec 23 and Dec 30 are cancelled. 3) the first meeting in 2011 will be on Jan 4<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 am.

**Major Grant Effer** of the Salvation Army led us in a Remembrance Day prayer and **Herman Alves** recited the 4-way test.

**VP Bertrand de Cardaillac** introduced our guest speaker. **Major Okill Stuart** is a Second World War Veteran who took part in the D-Day landing and the Battle of Normandy. Since then, he has been very active in preserving the memory of the war and the sacrifices made by Canadians. He was a founding director of the Juno Beach Centre. Mr. Stuart currently serves as Officer commanding of the Fort St. Helene Garrison in the 78th Fraser Highlanders Regiment in Montreal and in 2004, he was responsible for a visit to Balmoral Castle where the Regiment performed before the Queen and Prince Philip. In Paris, in June 2009, he was presented with the Legion of Honour by the Defence Minister of France.

**Major Okill Stuart** was invited to remain seated, given the intimate nature of the meeting room, and this enabled him to convey his thoughts in a relaxed atmosphere. He spoke of the horror of the Juno Beach landing, of seeing the bren-gun carrier in front of his tank leave the landing craft and head for the beach in six feet of water only to hit a mine and blow up. He did not speak of the courage demanded of the 22 year old, which he was, but somehow made us more aware of it as he commented laughingly, on his concern of getting a bullet in his back from the colleagues he "cleaned out" in an all-night poker game



shortly before the landing. Later in his remarks, **Major Stuart** recounted his experience in Cadzand, Holland and invited Rotarians to google **okillstuartcadzand** to see and hear the details. He then moved on from WW2 experiences to current issues and the battle to preserve the Veterans Hospital in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. "The country once ran 18 hospitals. All are gone but one". Why is Canada talking of a transfer to Quebec when Quebec is overextended (look at the de-merger mess) and has no experience with veterans. It has not worked in the other provinces. Vancouver is already closed. As for empty beds, it



from **George Shalhoub**.

would not be an issue if Canada were to recognize allies who fought along side us (the Polish Division, for instance) and veterans of wars since the Korean war.

By way of thanks, Major Stuart received a standing ovation in addition to appropriate comments and a certificate of appreciation



Later he had an exchange of views with **Nemo Turner** and **Francis Scarpaleggia**, member of parliament for the riding in which the Ste-Anne's Veterans Hospital is located.

Next meeting: Nov 16<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 am  
Location: The St. James Club  
Speaker: TBA

For directions to The Saint James Club go to: [www.stjamesclub.ca](http://www.stjamesclub.ca)

To view District 7040 website, go to: [www.rotary7040.com](http://www.rotary7040.com)

For back-issues of Rotary Record, go to: [www.rotarymontreal.org](http://www.rotarymontreal.org)