

St. Nickolas Reunion Dance Party

In this photo: Algonquin College Dean Karen Davies accepts a painting that represents a financial donation from a recent reunion organized by the Dutch Canadian Club of Pembroke.

Morris VandenBaar, president of the organization, presented the Dean with his painting of a symbolic wooden shoe containing a donation of \$1,755.25. Dean Davies expressed her appreciation to Mr. VandenBaar and the organizing members of the club's reunion dance.

"We are so grateful to accept this wonderful donation for the new community college campus. The generous spirit of the Dutch Canadian Club is still alive today and we thank you sincerely for thinking of Algonquin College as a worthy recipient of your fundraising event."

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By Anthony Dixon, Daily Observer Multimedia Journalist



After an absence of nearly two decades, the Dutch Canadian Club of Pembroke, is returning to the dance floor.

On Nov. 20, some of the club's past executive along with some new, younger Dutch blood will host the St. Nickolas Reunion Dance Party at the Germania Hall in Pembroke. "It is going to be a very nice night. It will be good for us," said Morris VandenBaar, a member of the reunion committee.

Proceeds from the dance party will be donated to the building fund for the new campus of Algonquin College. While the evening is an opportunity for past participants in the Dutch Canadian Club to recapture some past joys, it is also a chance for new generations of people to get together and experience Dutch culture. He said the original club kicked things off with a big dance back in 1968.

"We were involved in the community. We took part in parades. There was a strong Dutch community. We had as many as 200 to 300 members come out at that time," he said. "But we've melted in the pot."

He said the reunion dance will help the Dutch community to see how willing the younger generations are to pick up the Dutch cultural torch. Some of the evening's highlights include a visit by St. Nickolas and Peter, Dutch chocolate for each woman and pickled herring.

Mr. VandenBaar said people at the dance will have an opportunity to "Go to Zandfoort," a favourite Dutch Folk Dance that emulates couples heading to the seaside on a warm, sunny afternoon. Music at the reunion dance will be by Sundance. The doors open at 8 p.m. with music from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

The popular Dutch Canadian Club of Pembroke enjoyed 30 years or more of existence, meeting along with the Germania Club at the current location of Bingo Country. However, when the building was sold, Mr. Vandenbaa said that left the Dutch Canadian Club without a hall and the club basically ceased to function.

Members of the Dutch community still maintained their relationships and in particular, their close relationship with Royal Canadian Legion Branch 72 Pembroke. "Still today we place every November 11 on behalf of the Dutch community, a wreath at the cenotaph to remember the Canadian soldiers who left their life in Holland," Mr. VandenBaar said.