

Algonquin Section International Night and AGM by Andree Morneault

Huntsville was the site of the Algonquin Section International Night and AGM for the first time in many years. Over 30 people attended the dinner, presentation, and meeting at the Cottage Restaurant in downtown Huntsville and based on the noise level, everyone had a great time.

It all started at 5:30 with organisers and early birds having a cold brew and setting things up for the after-dinner speaker. Not long after, the rest of the crew started arriving and soon everyone was ordering, eating, and talking up a storm. In keeping with the Irish/Scottish theme of the evening, many of us ordered "Cottage Comfort Favorites": beer battered fish and chips, Effie's pot roast, Home-style shepherd's pie, Steak & mushroom pie, Yorkshire chicken pot pie, or Myrtle's country meatloaf. After dinner, Nancy Young, co-chair of the section, entertained and delighted us with her impressions of forestry in Ireland and Scotland. The pictures were fabulous (so nice to see fields of green in the middle of winter), and the similarities and contrasts between forestry in Ireland, Scotland and Canada were highlighted.



Members of the Algonquin Section AGM enjoying good food and companionship at the Cottage Restaurant in Huntsville, Feb 24, 2009

Our AGM started at 8:00 with a review of our extremely busy 2008. The bank balance at the beginning of the year was very healthy and, with a focus on increased membership and improving communications with the public, there was a deliberate attempt to draw down the balance by hosting events for the public and students. Al Stinson and Murray Woods prepared and presented a humorous slideshow highlighting the main events. These included last year's International night and AGM with Neil Stocker speaking on his experiences in Afghanistan, the 12th annual University of Toronto/Nipissing University tour, Algonquin College Awards Night, the Ottawa Valley Field Tour, the Algonquin College Ring Ceremony, the North Bay Leaf Peeper Tour, and the Inconvenient Truth presentation by Alison Luke at Nipissing University. Congratulations and thanks to the past executive and all volunteers on such a productive and entertaining year.

We elected our new council which consists of Nancy Young (Chair), Andrée Morneault (Director), Murray Woods (Treasurer), Margaret Penner (Secretary), Councillors Al Stinson, Brian Naylor, Frank Knaapen, Don Willis, Jeff Dech, Sue Pickering, Megan Smith, Alison Luke, and student representatives Trevor Rasmussen and Jordan Genrick (Algonquin College). Thank you all for volunteering to organise events and run the section for 2009.

Fred Pinto provided an update from National Office and Andrée gave a tribute to Kris Morgenstern, a long time member of our section who passed away in January. The full eulogy by Kit Yeatman will appear in the Forestry Chronicle.

Our plans are to continue the efforts initiated in 2008. Nancy and Megan are working on a logo and plan to have t-shirts made for sale at our events, Megan is reviving our website, and we are all working on ways to encourage membership, increase student involvement, and promote public participation in our 2009 events.