



St. Catharines Torch Club

October 2014 Newsletter

Abraham Rempel

Next Meeting

- Thursday Oct. 9, 6 pm social hour, 7 pm dinner.
- Best Western, St. Catharines.
- **Dinner:** Italian buffet: garlic bread, salads, pasta, meatballs, Italian sausage, tiramisu, coffee or tea.
- Cost: \$25.
- **Speaker:** Abraham Rempel.
- **Topic:** Evolution and "I".
- Please let your phone captain know whether you are coming.
- If you require a special meal, please contact Doreen Peever or Julia Frankel.
- If you need a ride, contact David Warren at 905-934-9765.

Abraham Rempel was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1945. He attended Eden Christian College in Niagara-on-the-Lake, followed by Brock University, where he earned a B.A. in Classical Studies. He is married to Barbara Rempel, and they have two children, Tyler and Sarah. Abraham retired from a career in financial services in 2006.

Abraham's book, *The Book of Nots In Science & Religion: a believers guide to reality*, is only weeks away from publication with Friesen Press. The back cover describes him as follows:

"Abraham Rempel is a Canadian, Mennonite-Anabaptist, happily married father of two, Brock University graduate in Classical Studies, retired business man, wannabe golfer, and an avid reader with a life-long goal to write. This is his first book."

Evolution and "I"

Well into his now famous book, *On the Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin made an astonishing admission. To paraphrase: The difficulty of understanding the absence of innumerable fossils, which according to my theory were accumulated before the Cambrian epoch, is very great. "I allude to the manner in which numbers of species of the same group suddenly appear in the lowest known fossiliferous rocks" (p 306-7). With utter frankness and becoming honesty, Darwin admitted that there were no fossils before what is known as the Cambrian Explosion, the epoch in which countless numbers of fossils suddenly appear, each highly complex, unique and fully formed.

The paper *Evolution and "I"* traces the ever unfolding problems associated with the Theory of Evolution, from the initial fossil evidence against the theory to the failed Neo-Darwinian hope in the 20th century discovery of cell structure, its DNA and information processing ability. Although not against the theory of Evolution per se, this paper discloses the acute implausibility of the theory in its current form. More important, a minority of scientists and a host of well-read layman are breathing new life into the age-old argument for *Intelligent Design*. Simply put, certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by intelligent causes. Hence, William Paley's 18th century "watchmaker analogy" has come back with a vengeance – the erudite publication of one well-known and "intellectually fulfilled" atheist notwithstanding.

Case in point is our own St Catharines Torch Club. This paper will begin and end with a genuine compliment, a compliment with a purpose. Charles Darwin has been credited with the expulsion of design from biology, leaving only natural causes or laws operating in the world we experience. Closely related is *materialism* whereby only matter is real and all causes are physical, not only in biology, but in mental phenomena and human consciousness as well. The theory of Evolution endorses both naturalism and materialism. But is that really how we perceive ourselves and explain our many and varied accomplishments? *Evolution and "I"* has a very different conclusion, vis-a-vis the lifestyles and achievements of the members of the St Catharines Torch Club.

St. Catharines Torch Club Meeting, Sept. 10, 2014

Location: Best Western
Time: 6:30 - 9:30 PM
Attendance: 37

Welcome: Anne Elliott (President)
Torch is all about sharing ideas in a life-long format, a phenomenon that we want to keep going.

Toast to the Queen: Michael Manley-Casimir (Vice President)

Grace: Doreen Peever (Hospitality)

Business:

- Planning for the Seasonal Social in December (Anne Elliott).
- Thanks to the past year's Executive and the Convention Committee (Dave Sydor).
- Thanks to all who participated in the Convention (Ivan Hrabowsky). Ivan was the Convention Chair in 2001 and 2014

Speaker Introduction: Yvonne (Bonnie) Stevenson has known Dr. Edgar T. Peer, the founder of St Catharines Torch Club, for more than 50 years. Bonnie and her husband Al Stevenson (1929-2013) enjoyed a long and happy relationship with Edgar, both as their family physician and a good personal friend

Lessons Learned from the History of Torch

Dr Peer began his talk with a note of concern. He was only 25 years old when he became involved with Torch. There are no 25 year olds in the local club now, and all the other Canadian Torch Clubs have ceased to exist. He also noted that the Hamilton Club had provided three IATC presidents.

Sept. Meeting Continued

Key to Dr Peer's talk was the traumatic experience of 1966 when he was the IATC President. One of his colleagues and a candidate for the presidency delivered a scholarly and well-written paper against the war in Vietnam to the consternation of the entire IATC executive, not one of whom would then support his candidacy. Nevertheless, Dr Peer nominated his colleague who was elected to the IATC presidency in the following year. The experience was traumatic because Edgar saw the incident as a betrayal of Torch values, and he came very close to resigning his position as President.

Edgar was willing to "rub some noses" at the time. But more important, it helped him to define Torch leadership and an effective paper. Torch can't "bet on a safe man," and we need "papers that scare us." Dr Peer's definition of a professional is "one who cannot be bought" and able to "follow his own conscience." Therefore we "need to encourage and support each other's integrity," seek for "more understanding," and learn from our "problems." Torch is no place to show off, but rather to teach in a way that gives us hope.

Edgar showed his own courage as well. He quoted Herbert Butterfield to show how little humans know their liberty, and how often they are the prisoners of ingrained systems and ideas. Nor was he afraid to invoke his personal faith, saying that a belief in God enables us to have more elasticity in our minds, and that Christians have less to fear from change. Dr Peer's conclusion: Torch needs have a diverse membership, be open to contentious ideas, and to learn the "difference between cleverness and wisdom."

The question and answer period was highlighted by Dr John Mayer's erudite plea to support the IATC Foundation monetarily.

The speaker was thanked by Abraham Rempel (Secretary) who was obviously moved by Dr Peer's courage, insightfulness and personal faith.

Closing remarks: Anne Elliott. Anne is making it a priority to set a new standard for the style, content and effectiveness of our local Torch papers.

Minutes: Abraham Rempel (Secretary)