

POLIO



POST

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You may visit our website at www.postpolionetwork.ca or email us at postpolionetwork@gmail.com

Presidents Report May, 2020

As I write this the world is still entrenched in the COVID-19 pandemic. So much in our lives has changed as a result of this virus—we are practicing safe distancing, many of us are in self-isolation and wearing a mask when away from home. We no longer greet each other with hugs and handshakes and we rely on technology to meet with family and friends.

This pandemic is reminiscent of the Polio crisis in the 1950's and now leaves the Canadian polio survivors physically vulnerable to COVID-19. During polio outbreaks schools, playgrounds were closed and families were quarantined. As with COVID-19, there was a scarcity of much needed equipment and a race to develop a vaccine against the polio virus. Manitoba was hit hard with the polio virus. The population of Winnipeg in 1953 was just over 350,000 and there were 2300 polio cases in Winnipeg.

To date, the Post Polio Network has cancelled the March Annual General Meeting, the April General Meeting, the May General Meeting and the Summer Celebration in June.

At this point in time, the hope is that the Annual General Meeting will be held at the September General Meeting, September 29th, 2020 at the Caboto Centre in Winnipeg. If there is a change, the telephoning committee will advise the members.

The Society of Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) has been rebranded as “Manitoba Possible”. Their services remain the same; but, switching over all aspects of the organization will take time.

The United Way of Winnipeg has put together a resource link with a wealth of information for non-profits and resources **for individuals** -- “COVID-19 Resources for the Non-Profit Sector”. The web site is: <https://unitedwaywinnipeg.ca/covid-19-resources-for-winnipegs-nonprofit-sector>

Please remember to forward your 2020 PPN membership fees and we will accept fees for 2020 until September 1, 2020. If there is an asterisk (**) on your mailing label then your 2020 fees are due.

Thanks for continuing your membership with PPN.

Stay Home! Stay Safe! Save Lives!

The Story of Polio

From: *Canadian Public Health Association Resources and Services*; cpa.ca/story-polo

Polio crippled tens of thousands of Canadians until the Salk vaccine was introduced in 1955. Polio (poliomyelitis) is an infectious disease caused by a virus. Polio can strike people at any age but children under age five are most at risk. Polio used to be called "infantile paralysis" or "thecrippler" because the virus can permanently damage the nerve cells that control the muscles.

Although the first polio outbreaks appeared in Europe in the early 1800s, the first known outbreak in Canada occurred in 1910. A little girl was taken to a Hamilton, Ontario hospital with what was thought to be rabies. She died, and it was later discovered to be polio.

At that time, no one knew if the disease was contagious or what could be done to prevent or treat it. Polio epidemics continued, usually in the summer or fall, and became more severe and affected older children and youth.

Provincial public health departments tried to quarantine the sick, closed schools, and restricted children from travelling or going to movie theatres. Over time, it became clear that these measures did not prevent polio's spread. Most provinces also provided a free "convalescent" serum when people became ill from polio. The serum was made from blood donated by those who had survived a polio attack, although there was never proof of the serum's effectiveness.

In 1930, Canada's first "iron lung" was brought to The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto from Boston. These huge metal cylinders regulate the breathing of people whose polio attacked their respiratory muscles. There was a rush to assemble more iron lungs to help keep people alive after a severe outbreak in 1937. The Ontario government paid to have 27 of

these devices assembled in a six-week period. Some women gave birth while confined in an iron lung and the Royal Canadian Air Force made emergency deliveries of these devices across the country. Iron lungs are still used in some countries.

A nasal spray designed to block the polio virus from entering the body was used on 5,000 Toronto children in 1937. After two rounds of treatments, the spray was abandoned because it did not prevent polio and actually caused a number of the children to lose their sense of smell.

An estimated 11,000 people in Canada were left paralyzed by polio between 1949 and 1954. The disease peaked in 1953 with nearly 9,000 cases and 500 deaths -- the most serious national epidemic since the 1918 influenza pandemic. The last major polio epidemic in Canada occurred in 1959, with nearly 2,000 paralytic cases.

The widespread application of the Salk vaccine (introduced in 1955) and the Sabin oral vaccine (introduced in 1962) eventually brought polio under control in the early 1970s. Canada was certified "polio free" in 1994.

Sadly, some people who recovered from paralytic polio in the past may later experience post-polio syndrome (PPS). This nervous system disorder can appear 15 to 40 years after the original illness, bringing progressive muscle weakness, severe fatigue, and muscle and joint pain.

There is still no cure for polio but the global eradication of the disease is hoped for in the near future--another great public health achievement.

'There Was So Little Information':

Polio Survivors Offer Pandemic Perspective

Excerpts From: All Things Considered, NPR, May 12, 2020.

A fear of the unknown. The need to maintain an appropriate distance. An urgent desire to find a cure or vaccine. They're the hallmarks of the coronavirus pandemic, but they also characterized an earlier epidemic: when paralysis-causing polio ravaged the U.S. in the 1940s and '50s.

Now, the toddlers and preteens of that era are once again part of a high-risk group during a deadly epidemic of a highly infectious disease. Commonly transmitted person to person, polio led to social distancing even without official enforcement. People avoided public places and those infected were shunned.

Ina Pinkney was a year old when she contracted the disease in Brooklyn, N.Y. "When my parents would take me out ... you could hear everybody get silent and move away, which is very much what it feels like now," says Pinkney, who is 77 now and lives in Chicago.

Much like the coronavirus, when one person contracted polio, the entire family lived in anxiety of household spread. That was the case when Nancy Artinian Theoharis became sick more than six decades ago at age 14. Her daughter Liz remembers stories about her grandmother's efforts to protect the other children in the house, particularly her aunt, who shared a bedroom with Nancy. "My grandma would furiously take my aunt's temperature every day," Liz Theoharis says. "While everybody may have been exposed, there was fear that my aunt will come down with the virus as well."

As news reports of the coronavirus spread in the U.S. worsened, Margaret Nielsen started feeling a sense of *deja vu*, recalling memories of battling polio as a 4-year-old. At the time, people stricken with the disease like Nielsen could spend weeks isolated in the hospital. The 78-year-retired professor remembers how little the doctors knew about the disease, and how hard it was for her family to get updates on how she was doing. "They could call once a day and they would get a one-word response because there were so many families calling," says Nielsen, who lives in East Lansing, Mich. "So during the initial couple of weeks when I was infectious there was so little information."

Infectious cases peaked in the 1950s and people felt a great sense of urgency about when a vaccine would be found, says Carl Kurlander, whose documentary *A Shot Felt 'Round the World* chronicled the discovery of the first preventative polio vaccine. In 1955, a safe and effective vaccine became available to the public. "Church bell rang out, people screamed and were let out of school," Kurlander says. "Around the world there were headlines '**Victory Over Polio.**'"

Now, riding through another epidemic, Pinkney says that a coronavirus vaccine may not instantly reverse things to normalcy but "there will be a great sense of relief." And surviving that earlier epidemic has given her perspective: "I live with hope and I live with anticipation that we will [get] on the other side of this. I don't know what it looks like. It doesn't even matter, as long as people are not getting sick and people are not dying."

Members Page

Upcoming Events

Cancelled

See Presidents Report

Passages

Robert (Bob) MacAulay passed away on April 2, 2020. Bob was an active member of PPN and has been on the PPN Board of Directors for many years. Our condolences to his family.

It was not noted before; but, a long time resident of Riverview Hospital, David Borthistle passed away In August of 2019. Mr. Borthistle was the last polio survivor living at Riverview.

Do you have an interesting story to tell?

Or do you know any good jokes, inspirational or humorous quotes or poems? Then you are invited to email them to:

postpolionetwork@gmail.com or mail them to:

Post-Polio Network (Manitoba) Inc.
C/O SMD Self-Help Clearinghouse
825 Sherbrook Winnipeg, MB, R3A
1M5

SOME HUMOUROUS MOMENTS

THEY WALK AMONG US:

-I was at the checkout of a local Walmart. The cashier rang up \$46.64 charges. I gave her a fifty dollar bill. She gave me back \$46.64. I gave the money back to her and told her that she had made a mistake in MY favour. She became indignant and informed me she was educated and knew what she was doing, and she returned the money again. I gave her the money back -- same scenario! I departed the store with the \$46.64.



-I walked into a Starbucks with a buy-one-get-one-free coupon for a Grande Latte. I handed it to the girl and she looked over at a little chalkboard that said 'buy one-get one free.' "They're already buy-one- get-one-free," she said, "so I guess they're both free." She handed me my free lattes, and I walked out the door.

-One day I was walking down the beach with some friends, when one of them shouted, "Look at that dead bird!" Someone looked up at the sky and asked, "Where?"

-While looking at a house, my brother asked the real estate agent which direction was north; because, he explained, he didn't want the sun waking him up every morning. She asked, "Does the sun rise in the north?" When my brother explained that the sun rises in the East, and has for sometime; she shook her head and said, "Oh I don't keep up with all that stuff."

-I used to work in technical support for a 24/7 call center. One day I got a call from an individual who asked what hours the call center was open. I told him, "The number you dialed is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week." He responded, "Is that Eastern or Pacific time?" Wanting to end the call quickly, I said, "Uh, Pacific."

-My sister has a lifesaving tool in her car designed to cut through a seat belt if she gets trapped. She keeps it in the trunk.

- My friends and I went out to buy beer and noticed that the cases were discounted 10%. Since it was a big party, we bought two cases. The cashier multiplied two times 10%and gave us a 20% discount.

-I couldn't find my luggage at the airport baggage area, so I went to the lost luggage office and told the woman there that my bags never showed up. She smiled and told me not to worry because she was a trained professional, and I was in good hands. "Now," she asked me, "has your plane arrived yet?" So I replied, "No Ma'am, The Pilot told us we're circling the airport, 3rd in line to land".....

-While working at a pizza place, I observed a man ordering a small pizza to go. He appeared to be alone, and the cook asked him if he would like it cut into four pieces or six. He thought about it for some time before responding. "Just cut it into four pieces. I don't think I'm hungry enough to eat six pieces."

COVID-19

Excerpt from: www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks

Those who are infected with COVID-19 may have little to no symptoms. You may not know you have symptoms of COVID-19 because they are similar to a cold or flu. Symptoms have included:

- cough
- fever
- difficulty breathing
- pneumonia in both lungs

In severe cases, infection can lead to death.

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known incubation period for this disease. Recent evidence indicates that the virus can be transmitted to others from someone who is infected but not showing symptoms. This includes people who:

- have not yet developed symptoms (pre-symptomatic)
- never develop symptoms (asymptomatic)

While experts know that these kinds of transmissions are happening among those in close contact or in close physical settings, it is not known to what extent. This means it is extremely important to follow the proven preventative measures.

As we continue to see transmission of the virus within different communities, we know that everyone must take precautions, even those who have not travelled outside of Canada.

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within communities and across the country, all Canadians are advised to:

- stay at home unless you have to go to work;
- talk to your employer about working at home if possible
- avoid all non-essential trips in your community
- do not gather in groups
- limit contact with people at higher risk, such as older adults and those in poor health
- go outside to exercise but stay close to home
- if you leave your home, always keep a distance of at least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others
 - ◊ household contacts (people you live with) do not need to distance from

each other unless they are sick or have travelled in the last 14 days

You can go for a walk if you:

- have not been diagnosed with COVID-19
- do not have symptoms of COVID-19
- have not travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days
- are not in quarantine (self-isolating)
- are not isolating

If you go out for a walk, do not congregate and always practise physical (social) distancing by keeping at least 2 metres apart from others at all times.

Introducing “Manitoba Possible”

Excerpts from email to PPN from Lindsey Cooke, Director Provincial Services, Manitoba Possible May 4, 2020

The Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) is now **Manitoba Possible**. Unfortunately, the public launch and celebration scheduled to introduce Manitobans to the new brand was not able to go ahead. Instead, a “slow launch” is underway, starting with the unveiling of their **new website** :

<https://manitobapossible.ca>.

The new name comes at a time when they are advancing their service offerings and expanding their provincial reach, while celebrating 70 years of leadership for Manitobans with disabilities. As a service provider, their focus is on working together to eliminate barriers to full and equal participation for people with disabilities, and Deaf and hard of hearing individuals in Manitoba. The SMD name has itself been a barrier for those who don’t identify as persons with disabilities - the new name now reflects the aspirations of those they serve, which in turn fuels the drive behind their purpose.

Manitoba Possible believes that an inclusive and accessible society is possible, and don’t just want to keep pace with the evolving needs of the individuals and families they serve – but intend to lead the charge.

Manitoba Possible

1155 Notre Dame Ave
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3G1

manitobapossible.ca

The MANITOBA 55 PLUS GAMES

Another COVID-15 cancellation:

This year the Manitoba 55 Plus Games that were scheduled to be held in Selkirk MB – June 16th to 18th, 2020 have been cancelled due to COVID-19. The organization committee has released the following “After much consideration, and as a precautionary measure, AAİM, the Selkirk Host Committee & the MB 55+ Games Committee have decided to cancel the 2020 MB 55+ Games in response to the evolving public health situation with coronavirus (COVID-19).”

And in addition, the Canada 55+ Games that were scheduled to be held in Kamloops, B.C. – August 25th to 28th, 2020 has also been cancelled. “The health of our participants, volunteers, and organizers will always be our top priority, and given the uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic this decision was made with everyone’s safety in mind.”

DONATIONS

As a non-profit charitable organization, the Post Polio Network appreciates our donors. Special thanks go to the following for their kindness and consideration:

- The United Way donors
- The Strategic Charitable Trust Fund
- Joe Smithson, Christine Portelance, Irene Cassels, Donna Nicholson, Fern Massey, Darlene Byers, Ron & Teenie Conti, Isabelle M. Wishart, Jean E. Burgess, Marie Waldron, Marilyn Hendzel, Sharon Gray, Nancy Boboski, Annette Fenlon, Karl D. Surber, Marianne Friesen, Doris K. Jones, Marilyn Friesen, Marie-Anne Britton, Jessica Matchett, Edna Ewacha, James L. Rodger, Jean Knight, Marie-Anne Britton, David Petrie, Dianne Hutchison, Marilyn McWilliams, Roberta Hurtig, Patti Campbell, Doris Benson, John Warkentin, Cheryl Currie, Beatrice McLean, Margaret Sucharov

Membership Application Form



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check one or more of the following options:

New Membership - \$15/year ____ for 20 ____

Membership Renewal - \$15/year ____ for 20 ____

I wish to make a charitable donation of \$ _____

(Tax deductible receipt will be issued for donations over \$10.00.)

Total \$ _____

Please make cheque payable to: Post- Polio Network Mb. Inc.

Your NEWSLETTER delivery preference by: ____ mail or ____ email

Please mail this application form and cheque to:

Post-Polio Network, 825 Sherbrook St., Wpg. Mb. R3A 1M5

For further information please phone 204-975-3037

Signature

Date

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You may visit our website at: www.postpolionetwork.ca or email us at postpolionetwork@gmail.com

If at any time you wish to opt out of any services, simply contact us by phone (204-975-3037) or write us at 825 Sherbrook St., Wpg. Mb. R3A 1M5 and we will gladly accommodate your request.