



PROBUS Club of Central Edmonton Newsletter

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November - Letitia Ama Daewuo



SeedChange

SeedChange was founded in 1945 as the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada (USC Canada).

Our founder Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova inspired countless Canadians through her tireless dedication to making the world "a better, kinder place".



Letitia Ama Daewuo, Executive Director spoke to us about "SeedChange Canada" (SC). This organization was founded over 75 years ago by Dr. Lotta Hitchmanova. At the time it was know as Unitarian Service Committee of Canada (USC Canada).

SC works in 12 different contries across the globe. SeedChange partners with local organizations to support local initiatives, and civil society by using a framework of food sovereignty and solidarity. The support is available; in 5 ways:

- as trainers, facilitators
- sharing knowledge and connecting people
- funders for partners' work
- incubators for spread of ideas
- influencers through policy advocacy

Seeds of Survival

Our Seeds of Survival approach was born in Ethiopia during in the 1980s.

A global hot spot of seed diversity, Ethiopia was facing famine and seed loss caused by war and drought.

SeedChange worked with farmers and the national gene bank to rescue varieties, increase quantity and quality, and distribute seeds to farmers across the country.



Why a seed focus? It began with a request for support for Ethiopia in 1980 to help address the famine. SC learned that seeds are essential for food security. As a result, it developed methodologies to support farmers and their local varieties, using agroecological approaches. One issue she spoke about was identifying what approaches will work, for example a big western tractor would not help because it could not be maintained. A first

step was helping establish seed banks for local food plants. Other steps include look at water, markets and organizing coops, etc.

Why partnership principles?

Ideally, a partnership is a collaboration grounded in solidarity, equality and mutual recognition of shared values and goals. However, there are inherent inequalities in decision-making related to the funding role of larger or Northern NGOs.

We recently drafted principles to encourage and guide discussions around partnerships, internally and as we engage with partners.

SC established a “Canadian seed security system” to promote food security. They work with farmers to enhance seed diversity and community seed banks. This means organizing farmer training to increase on-farm seed production and variety improvement. They also work through Canadian Universities in seed management. To help farmers they have, amongst other initiatives, established training programs, hosted field days, workshops and developed guides. They helped build a group entitled Farmers for Climate

Solution.



A significant program for SC is “Rural Women Cultivating Change” established in east Africa. SC is working with up to 8 organizations to implement this program. Why does it make sense to work with women in contexts of food management. In fact, many the rural farmers in east Africa are women. Thus, the need to focus on them and in doing so to help with empowering them and to mitigate violence against them.

Included in this article are images extracted from her presentation. We appreciated the information shared; it gave us an understanding of the vital work of SeedChange. She then went on to deal with a great many questions from the audience. We thank Ama for her excellent presentation.

November - 26 Indigenous Peoples Experience

We toured the “Indigenous Peoples Experience” at Forts Edmonton Park. Upon entering the building, you step on a high-level view of the North Saskatchewan River valley. This is a living display, it shows the changes in the river valley over the centuries. First you see a herd of buffalo moving across the landscape with geese flying over, it moves forward in time to the present day, where one sees Edmonton. This display established the theme of the exhibit...the “River Valley”. As one walks through the exhibit it is trip along the river. The exhibits themselves are led to the Metis exhibit are housed in stylized Teepees. Various tribes are represented, as are the importance of buffalo to the people living in the area. We also see the changes brought on by the European immigrants. The following pictures will give an impression of the many displays set up in the building:



Our Guide Shani Gwin



This is typical of the displays for each tribe.



Boat beached on a rock



Buffalo Hunt Display



Start of the Metis exhibit



Inside of the stylized Metis building

We greatly appreciate Shani's assistance in our understanding of the exhibits, the people, and the challenges they faced as Europeans and others flooded in. Viewing this exhibit is highly recommended.

Interesting aside (I have quite a lot left)

1. My wife just found out I replaced our bed with a trampoline. She hit the roof.
2. What is the best thing about living in Switzerland? Well, the flag is a big plus.
3. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
4. Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of soda? He didn't get hurt because it was a soft drink.
5. The future, the present, and the past walked into a bar. Things got a little tense.
6. At what age is it appropriate to tell my dog that he's adopted?
7. I just found out that I'm colorblind. The diagnosis came completely out of the purple.
8. I bought some shoes from a drug dealer. I don't know what he laced them with, but I've been tripping all day.
9. My boss is going to fire the employee with the worst posture. I have a hunch, it might be me.
10. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
11. Smoking will kill you... bacon will kill you... and yet, smoking bacon will cure it.
12. I was addicted to the hokey pokey... but thankfully, I turned myself around.
13. Did Noah include termites on the ark?
14. The man who created autocorrect has died. Restaurant in peace.
15. I used to think I was indecisive, but now I'm not too sure.
16. My wife likes it when I blow air on her when she's hot, but honestly... I'm not a fan.
17. I really hate Russian dolls, they're so full of themselves.
18. The first time I got a universal remote control, I thought to myself, "This changes everything."
19. I refused to believe the road worker was stealing from his job, but when I went to his home, all the signs were there.
20. I recently decided to sell my vacuum cleaner — all it was doing was gathering dust.

Christmas is Near Find Joy in It...and have a Happy New Year

Stay Safe