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Bicycling from Winnipeg to Thunder Bay By Greg Swanson



Greg Swanson

Then I was diagnosed with cancer in the fall of 2019, my wife suggested that I should plan something that I could look forward to. Because I had bicycled from Vancouver to Regina in 2018, I decided that I would ride across the rest of Canada.

Because my immunotherapy treatments are every 4 weeks, I planned to start a trip about a week after a treatment. My oncologist advised me to avoid extreme exercise. So, I decided I would divide the trip up into short segments.

In August of 2020 I bicycled from Regina to Winnipeg (about 600 kilometres over 9 days). My wife, Dianne, picked me up in Winnipeg and drove me back to Regina.

In September of this year, Dianne drove me to Winnipeg where I began the next leg of my trip - Winnipeg to Thunder Bay (about 775 kilometres over 12 days).

When I planned this trip, I made a list of the towns and campgrounds that I would cycle past and the distances between them. Following the advice of my oncologist I planned to cycle between 60 and 80 kilometres per day. However, on this trip, because of the spacing of campgrounds, I had two 100 + kilometre days.

As I camp most nights, my gear and most of my food weighed 52 pounds. Every day or two I would pick up fresh fruit and



bagels for lunches.

Leaving Regina and travelling to Thunder Bay allowed me to experience several of the geographic regions that make up Canada. I rode through farmland, forests and the Canadian Shield.



As this was mid September, a few of the trees were turning colour. I would often see one

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lone tree with brilliant red leaves standing in a forest of green.



The terrain for the first 100 or so kilometres east of Winnipeg was relatively flat. As I moved into the Shield I encountered more and more hills, some smaller, some larger but none like the Lumsden valley hill.

For the most part, the daytime weather was relatively sunny and a good cycling temperature (about +16 C). I did experience a few nights of rain, which would delay my departure the next day as I tried to dry out my tent fly. (Wet gear weighs more than dry gear).

From Kenora, Ontario to Fort Frances, the weather was cold (about +12 C) and cloudy. I found this weather depressing and it got me wondering why I was so crazy to attempt a trip like this. I also began doubting my ability to complete this trip. As I rode into Fort Frances it looked like rain and I was tired of rain at night. So instead of camping I checked into a motel.

It did rain in the night. But the sun was shining in the morning and my spirits immediately lifted. As I left Fort Frances, I said goodbye to negative thoughts and only had positive ones for the remaining 5 days of the trip.

My research on possible routes recommended that in Manitoba I avoid most of the Trans Canada Highway. I am always asked if I am nervous about cycling on highways. I am not. However, on this trip, three sections were nerve wracking: leaving Winnipeg, arriving in Fort Frances and arriving in Thunder Bay. There was lots of traffic on these sections and for the most part no paved shoulders (gravel only). I constantly had to stop on the gravel shoulder and let the traffic go by. Approaching Fort Frances, I gave up trying to ride on the road and cycled a kilometre or two on the gravel until I got a flat tire for my efforts. In the time it took to change the tube, the traffic thinned out and I was able to ride the last few kilometres on the road.

That flat tire was the only bike problem I had on the trip. I did break a tent pole but being a former Boy Scout, I am always prepared and bring repair supplies.

My only other "adventure" was being chased by a dog as I approached Fort Frances. As I rode past the dog's laneway it barked at me and then it simply ran along beside me, giving up chase at the end of its property line.

Up to and including Fort
Frances, finding a place to sleep
each night had not been a problem.
My first stop after Fort Frances
was Mine Centre. I found the
private campground's washroom
building with a sign "closed
because of Covid" but I could not

figure out where the campsites were. I cycled back a few kilometres to a resort and asked to camp there but the woman in charge said "no" - her husband was ill, and he was nervous about having people stay at the resort. I went back to the campground and found a nearby resident who phoned the owner of the campground and then took me to the spot where I could set up my tent.

The next morning, I phoned the motel I was going to stay at that night and left a message to call me. My call was not returned until 2 days later! When I got to the motel, though there was only one car in the parking lot, the motel sign had the "NO" lit up on the vacancy sign. I cycled on a kilometre and camped at a resort.

That night I called the next resort that I was going to stay at and left a message. My call was never returned. When I reached the turnoff to that resort there was no sign directing me to it. Not having heard from the resort I assumed it was closed. I cycled on, hoping I would find another resort within a few kilometres. But I didn't.

My next option was a town about 40 kilometres down the highway. I had already cycled about 80 kilometres this day and was running low on water. I turned off the highway onto Kabaigon Bay Road, hoping I could get drinking water from one of the cottage owners living along that road. I flagged down a car coming toward me and asked about getting some drinking water and whether there was a place in the area to

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camp. They offered me drinking water from their "camp" (what northern Ontarians call cabins or cottages). I followed their car back to their camp and in addition to giving me drinking water, they invited me to camp on their lawn, use their shower facilities and their deck and help myself to a beer



from their beer fridge. I was blown away by their kindness.

My last camping night was at Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park. The falls are a smaller version of Niagara Falls and are spectacular. There were no problems camping here. A couple from Toronto, who were avid cyclists invited me to their campsite for late afternoon coffee and snacks. Later, as I was making supper, they dropped off ice cream and a muffin and invited me for morning coffee before I rode my last 35 kilometres into Thunder Bay.

I was amazed to discover that Thunder Bay has the highest concentration of Finns outside of Finland. Unfortunately both the Finnish Community and Cultural Centre and the Hoito Restaurant (Finnish cuisine) were being renovated when I was there. Hopefully they will be open in 2022 when I plan to cycle from Thunder Bay to Toronto.

Before leaving Regina, I contacted a Thunder Bay bike shop and arranged to pick up a cardboard bike box for my bike's airplane ride back to Regina. Friends of a friend helped me pick up that box and get it back to my hotel. Over the next two days they also fed me several meals, showed me around Thunder Bay, including the Terry Fox monument and historic Fort William and took me and my gear to the airport.

I must conclude by saying how thankful I was for the kindnesses shown to me by strangers in the last few days of my trip.

Coming Events

ZOOM - Learn the Fine Art of Making Lefse Nov 23 - 6-8 pm

If you are interested in carrying on the old tradition of making lefse you can enroll in a Lefse class taught by a lefse guru, Gary Legwold from Minneapolis, Minnesota. His class includes four tips and techniques on how to make potato lefsa, from boiling potatoes to making the dough, to rolling out a good-looking round and tender lefse.

We have a Zoom class arranged for Tuesday, November 23rd from 6 to 8 pm. You will make lefse in your own kitchen using your own lefse-making equipment and lefse dough.



To enroll, contact Gary Legwold at <u>lefseking.com</u> and mention that you are joining the class with Linda Wacker. The cost is \$27 US and can be paid using any credit card.

The Club has lefse griddles that can be provided if you do not have one. Just let us know if you want to borrow this equipment.

This is an opportunity to learn the art of lefse-making from the best.



FISHY FRIDAY IS BACK!

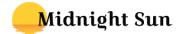
Where: Ricky's in Harbour

Landing

When: Fri. Dec.03 at 5:00 p.m.

No reservation necessary.

(Don't forget your ID and proof of vaccination)



President's Message



Linda Wacker

Can you believe summer is over? For much of it, we enjoyed Florida-like weather. A highlight for me was the Corn Roast. It was splendid to see so many of you and to visit in person was truly a novelty. Thank you to those who did the work and thank you to those who attended. While the wasps were plentiful and annoying, no one, except me, seemed to complain. The Corn Roast will always be Lauren Carlson's event but this year he handed it over to Laureen Smith

and her committee. He said it was "well done". A huge thank you to all who made it so.

We had hoped to hold a Christmas Party in December but it doesn't seem wise. Given the rate of infection and the warnings from the Medical Health Officer, the SCOR Board decided to not hold a Christmas Party, but to rather hold a party to celebrate the spring equinox in March or April. Surely by then the pandemic will be an endemic. We will begin planning for this event and welcome anyone who would like to help.

We don't know what
Christmas will be like this year.
Chances are, we will need to limit
our contacts, something foreign
to our Christmas traditions. The
smells and tastes of Christmas
can be ours, however, and I'm
declaring Monday, December
6th as a kick off to a Cookie
Exchange Week. The SCOR
Board is wondering if some
members might be interested in
either exchanging a box of, say a
dozen cookies, or if you are not
inclined to bake, buying some

Christmas baking at a nominal cost. If you are interested in either, please let us know by contacting the Scandinavian Club at scoreventsregina@gmail.com or me at 306-586-8879 and we will get back to you. We don't know if we can recreate the cookies your grandmother used to make, but we can try to bring back some memories. I came across this statement by Bröte Aurell, the author of the book, "Scandikitchen Christmas":

"Food reconnects us in the form of scents, tastes, and deep memories of years gone by. In one bite your back home even if only for a brief moment."

I hope you enjoy reading this addition of the "Midnight Sun". Thanks to Andrea Ashton for editing and producing it and thanks to those who contributed. We are always grateful to members for their assistance.

> God Jul, Linda Wacker

Lynda and Michael Delaney

Goodbye and Good Luck

Sadly for us but happily for Lynda, the Delaneys are relocating to Victoria B.C. In December. They will join their 3 daughters on Vancouver Island.

Lynda has served as our treasurer since 2019. She has been a spirited and hard working volunteer and she will be deeply missed. Michael has contributed greatly as well.

Thanks to both of you for keeping our finances in order as well as your many contributions to our club. We wish you the best in your move. Know that you will be greatly missed.



Book Review

The United States of Vinland

Four Tales from North America by Colin Taber



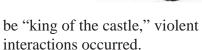
In this collection you will find the first four instalments of a glorious saga befitting the Viking age! The Norse settled Greenland in 985 AD and reached continental North America not long after.

It begins as the Norse are shipwrecked on the shores of Labrador. Those who make it to land will build halls and their first settlements and as the years go by will increase their numbers.

They encounter "Skraelings",

peoples who lived on the land for many years before. From these people they learned the plant life that was safe and edible and those used for medicine. Without the help of the Skraelings they may not have survived.

As settlements were established on the various fingers of the fjords, there were peaceful interactions amongst the various communities, in others the Skraelings were taken as slaves, and those slaves would plot to achieve their freedom. As different community leaders sought to



As I was reading this book our federal election was occurring as well as the worst pandemic of the planet; similarity of human behaviour was so evident in my mind.

The only criticism I could provide was it ended too suddenly. Perhaps there will be more books written about this saga by Colin Taber. Or perhaps evidence of why they did not remain in Labrador and Newfoundland has not yet been discovered.



Kelly Nelson

Hello members of the Scandinavian Club of Regina - it is nice to be in contact with you again.

On the matter of membership

Message to the Membership by Kelly Nelson

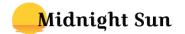
fees, in 2020 the board decided to waive the fees for 2020 and 2021. Any member who paid fees for 2020 when we had the Christmas Party in 2019 (raise your hand if you recall that party - that one way way back in December 2019 with Santa Claus and the brass band... yes, that one, the one at the Speers Funeral Home reception room) has three choices:

- you may ask for the fees to be applied to the next year in which we collect fees
- you may ask for a refund of the fees, or
- you may donate them to the club.

When we get back to collecting the fees you will be asked which way you want to go. We hope to be back "in business" in 2022 and able to collect membership fees but this will depend on the safety of gatherings. Having said that, when we do collect them I expect the fees will remain the same, at \$30 for a family, \$20 for a single person and \$10 for students."

Best Wishes for a "God Jul" and I hope to see you in 2022.

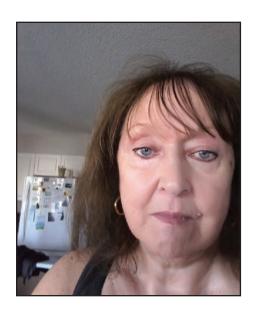




2021 Corn Roast



SCOR Members Share



Ifirst learned about the Scandinavian club way back when they had a pavilion during

Anita Huziak

Mosaic, they had dancing, open faced sandwiches, fruit soup and aquavite.

When I moved to Regina in 2014, I joined the Scandinavian club as I'm 100% Norwegian. The first event was a Christmas party, the kids get so excited for Santa and the samples of food were like a smorgasbord, and just about every food item of Scandinavian origin was there.

The corn roast is an event you don't want to miss, with Linda making sure we got a spot in Candy Cane park, even if she had to get up early in the morning before sunrise to stake a claim on a table.

The breakfasts at Ricky's used to be good until Covid struck.

I haven't been to Norway but I hear it's the best place to visit. Oh well, I was born on the lone Saskatchewan prairie and the winters here are beautiful. With the hoar frost and blizzzards. We give thanks to our parents and grandparents, who made us and this land of Canada who we are, strong and free.



Jonina Adamancicz became a member of the Scandinavian

Jonina Adamancicz

Club of Regina in 1981 after learning about it through friends and publicity.

Jonina's heritage is Icelandic/ United Empire Loyalist. She spent her childhood in Toronto and summers were spent in Geysir, Manitoba.

Jonina's favorite memories of the club include the Scandinavian Club at Mosaic and their cultural events - particularly at Christmas. To this day she enjoys the social events organized by the club and would like to see more of them.

Jonina travelled to visit the country of Iceland in 2004 and found the experience to be very spiritual.

Thanks Jonina for sharing your memories of the Scandinavian Club of Regina.



We are Michael and Lynda Delaney. We

Michael and Lynda Delaney

have been members for two or three years now. We found the club by searching for anything Scandinavian in Regina. We wish we had joined 40 years ago, but better late than never.

Michael is half Danish and half Finnish with a pinch of Irish and Lynda is half Swedish with a pinch of Norwegian. Michael grew up In Alberta (Red Deer, Lethbridge, Three Hills and Red Deer again). Lynda grew up in Minneapolis, MN. We met at Winnipeg Bible College in 1974. Married for 46 years, we have lived in Regina since 1979.

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Walking Among the Saints

Margaret Roth (a long -time acquaintance and a dear friend) and Shirl (my "long time ago" best friend from high school days) and I embarked on a 3- day road trip July 30 -August 1. After being confined due to COVID-19, we felt like liberated folks as we headed east along the Trans-Canada highway and stopped in the community known as New Finland where my roots go down deeply in the soil.

New Finland is a small rural district where Finns began homesteading in 1888, forming the first Finnish settlement on the Canadian prairies. Some of the descendants of those first settlers still live there in a community that retains its Finnish character. (And a few folks still speak the Finnish language there.)

The geographic boundaries of New Finland are invisible but nonetheless real.

Those of us who call ourselves "New Finlanders" know where Uusi Soumi ends and where the rest of the world begins. New Finland measures about 12 miles north and south and 14 miles east and west within the modern municipalities of Willowdale and Rocanville. It is located more or less east of Whitewood, north of Wapella, west of Rocanville, south of Esterhazy and northeast of Tantallon.

After enjoying a tasty picnic lunch with friends who live close to St. John's Lutheran Church, we travelled on to Rocanville with plans to return to the community

by Darleen Harrison

on Sunday.

In Rocanville, where Shirl and I attended high school, we visited the site of the largest oil can in the world, a large replica of the Symons oilcans that were manufactured in the community in a factory established by Ernie Symons. Many a farmer had more than one of these world-famous oilers in their shops; many are still in use. The oilers were utilized overseas during WWII.



Largest oil can in the world in Rocanville

Rocanville is close to the Qu'appelle Valley so we decided

to explore Fort Esperance which is 17 km north of the town. The Fort was a North West Company trading post from 1787 until 1819. It was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1959 because it was one of the earliest and most permanent of the North West Company's posts in the Assiniboia basin.



North West Company Trading Post remains

On Sunday we returned to the community of New Finland with our first stop being at St. John's Lutheran Church which was

Below: Esperance National Historic Site





St. John's Lutheran Church



formally established in November, 1893. In 1906, a collection was taken to provide funds to build a church. The church still stands proudly with its crowning steeple that can be seen from far away.

In 1927 the congregation decided to build a parsonage to house the pastor and his family. In 1934 it was decided to move the church to its present location near the parsonage. The only way to accomplish the task was to cut the church into two pieces

and reassemble it on its present site. In 1945 a high steeple was added. The congregation still exists although worship has been temporarily halted during COVID-19.

On our travels we made stops at five cemeteries where we walked with the saints. We visited Carnoustie cemetery where Shirl's parents are buried. Carnoustie is a district west of Rocanville settled originally by many settlers from Scotland. We stopped at the cemetery at Wapella where my oldest brother and his wife and son are buried. Our travels included a stop at Webster Cemetery, south of Rocanville, where are my husband Fred's ashes are interred and where there is space for me when my time comes.

Our tour with the saints culminated at two cemeteries in the New Finland District, aptly named the "Old" Cemetery and the "New" Cemetery. My grandparents and many other family members are buried in the "Old" Cemetery and my parents, one sister, four brothers and two brothers-in law are buried in the "New" Cemetery.



The cemeteries are full of memories; there is history to be found and a sense of connectedness with the saints who have gone before.



We were amazed at the pristine condition of these cemeteries, many of which are maintained by the locals. It is heartwarming to know that there are people who passionately care for the final resting places of the saints.

When I was a child, we were always told that we shouldn't walk on someone's grave but one of my favourite funeral directors always reminds us that we shouldn't worry about stepping on a grave because we are walking on the shoulders of the saints.

It was indeed a memorable trip!



Gimli, Manitoba

by Dianne Swanson



Dianne poses in front of the 4.6 metre fibreglass statue of a Viking in Gimli, Man.

Greg and I had toured in Iceland a number of years back. The trip piqued my interest in Gimli, Manitoba where there is a significant Icelandic population.

After watching Greg depart on his bike trip (see his article on page 1) from Winnipeg, I drove to Gimli on Lake Winnipeg. My cousin accompanied me, eager to see the air force base to which her father was stationed early in WWII.

We stayed at a sizeable hotel, due to the fact that Gimli holds an Icelandic festival every summer. We roamed the beaches, marvelling at the size of the lake, strolled the seawall covered with local art depicting the settlement years and visited the New Iceland Museum.

I learned that Gimli is named for "the great hall of heaven" in Norse Mythology. A series of natural disasters forced Icelanders to leave their island in 1874 -76. Lord Dufferin who had previously visited Iceland, got the Canadian government to allow them a reserve next to Lake Winnipeg which was then outside the boundaries of Manitoba. The reserve, called New Iceland, allowed the Icelanders self-government and control of education. In fact the priority Icelanders put on education was demonstrated by the fact they put in a requisition for a school before housing!

Life was very hard and the Canadian climate brutal. A smallpox epidemic took its toll. Although many Icelanders moved to warmer climes, Gimli survived. Manitoba became a province in 1881 and Gimli/New Iceland lost its self-governance and was made part of Manitoba.



Award winning poet Harold Rhenisch

We want to introduce to you Harold Rhenisch, an award-winning poet from British Columbia, who has just recently published a collection of poetry, entitled *Landings: Poems from Iceland*. He first travelled to Iceland in 2009, and instantly

Harold Rhenisch

Canadian Poet, Writer and Editor

felt at home in its pastures, lava fields, and shrub steppes. In 2013 he was writer in residence at Skriduklaustur, Iceland. His published books include *Two Minds*, a book of ghazals, and the poetic and photographic essay *The Art of Haying: a Journey to Iceland*.

We are hoping that he will be able to come to Regina this spring and honor us with a presentation of his work. This would include a reading from his book as well as a showing of his outstanding slides of his sojourn in Iceland. He would have his book for sale.

(His book is available from Burton House at a cost of \$20.)

A link to the review of Mr.
Rhenisch's book, done by Luanne
Armstrong of "The Ormsby
Review", a B.C. online magazine,
can be found at the bottom of this
page. The review is a wonderful
overview of the book, along with
a sample of his pictures from
Iceland.

Harold's book is available from Saskbooks, from McNally Robinson in Saskatoon, from Audrey's books in Edmonton, and on his website at

www.afarminiceland.com.

Read the book review here: https://ormsbyreview.com/2021/11/06/1276-armstrong-rhenisch-iceland/



SCOR Members Share

Cont. from page 7

Andrea Ashton



Above: 2017 in Denmark Below: 2019 in Finland



Ibecame a member of the Scandinavian Club of Regina in 2015 at the urging of one of my co-workers, Maureen Jickling who was a member of the club.

My grandfather came from Sweden so I was interested in my ancestry. It wasn't long before I ended up on the board as a one of the directors, then soon after I took on the roll of secretary, and then after that I revamped the website to its current look. What really piqued my interest though, was in 2016, when then President Greg Swanson started talking about organizing a bike trip to Denmark.

I wasn't a cycler at the time, but it was something that interested me, so in the spring of 2017 I purchased a new bike, and my husband (Terry) and I committed ourselves to the Denmark bike tour. Terry and I were the only two to join Greg and Dianne Swanson for this bike trip and we loved it and have been biking ever since. In 2019 we did a second bike tour – this time to Finland. This time in addition to Greg and Dianne, we were joined by Kelly and Denise Nelson and we had fantastic time cycling through the Aland Islands with them.



Laureen Smith

My heritage is Norweign. I have been to Norway and it was awesome. I have been a member

since about the mid 1980's. Now I am serving on the SCOR executive as a Director.



"To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake it is necessary to stand out in the cold."

Aristotle

In Remembrance of our Members



Carl Haakon Graupe died peacefully in the loving arms of his cherished wife Cornelia on May 22 at 10:46 p.m. at the Pasqua Hospital. This was just one day after their 17th Wedding Anniversary. Carl battled with many health issues during his life, including COPD. His lungs and heart failed at the end.

Carl was the oldest of four in the Graupe family, born in Bracebridge, Ontario. The family

then moved to the Hagen/Birch Hills area where Carl grew up.

Carl was predeceased by his parents Sigmund and Ragna Graupe, his youngest brother Dwight, numerous aunts, uncles and in-laws.

Family and friends left to mourn and miss Carl's warmth are: the love of his life, his wife Cornelia; son Craig (Pam); daughter Carleen (Darcy); brother Loren (Shirley); sister Elaine;

three beautiful granddaughters
Taylor, Jessica, Danielle and
one great-granddaughter
Diamond, and several nieces and
nephews. Carl was very proud
of his granddaughters and greatgranddaughter. Carl's passing
is also mourned by his friends
and relatives across the ocean
in Norway (the Ekre families)
and in Germany (the Siedenstein
families). Last but not least, his
best friend ever Allan Hingston,
who is now residing in Ukraine
with his wife Tanya.

Carl started his career first in the banking system, then building many houses in North Battleford. After he achieved his certificate as Interprovincial Journeyman Carpenter, Carl established his own business Instaltec here in Regina. Over his carpentry years, Carl installed "tons" of windows and doors of many shapes and sizes in homes of Regina and area. He did this with extreme precision and great care. While working on any installations, somehow Carl always managed to strike up interesting conversations that over the years led to many friendships.

As an ardent "armchair" sports fan, Carl never missed a football game especially with our Riders in it or curling championships and golf tournaments. As a matter of fact, he even instilled a passion for curling that now his wife shares. Carl and Cornelia were also both active members of the Scandinavian Club of Regina for many years before Carl's health deteriorated.

Carl and Cornelia traveled to visit Carl's relatives in Norway and Cornelia's family and relatives in Germany many times. Carl was very proud of his Norwegian heritage, especially his middle name Haakon, who at the time of Carl's birth was King Haakon VII of Norway. In addition to his Norwegian roots, Carl had also become an honorary citizen in the small village of Bruen (Cologne area) where Cornelia was born. Both enjoyed their time share

in Las Vegas, where many dear friends were made, and taking in the phenomenal sights of the Grand Canyon and Mount Rushmore. Carl loved history and always had to read about everything in detail along the way.

Knowledge and education were very important to Carl. He always encouraged his wife to continue her passion for teaching and he supported her in her professional career and educational advancement. Up until recently when his health was beginning to fail, Carl loved to participate in the school functions and activities of his wife's school at Luther. His favorite was always the magic of the Candlelight Performance at Christmas.

This obituary was found on **Dignity Memorials**



Thanks Linda Wacker for the photo of the surprise Corn Roast guest!

The Scandinavian Club of Regina's newsletter Midnight Sun is published quarterly.

This publication has been created by a committee which includes Linda Wacker, Lynda Delaney, Andrea Ashton. If you have any ideas or stories you would like to share with us please contact ashtona@sasktel.net



Members of the Board

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Lauren Carlson Kelly Nelson Laureen Smith Darlene Harrison