



The Probe

Volume 1 Issue 2

Newsletter of the Ottawa Alta Vista PROBUS Club

June 2001

The New City

All Ottawans want to know how the new City of Ottawa is performing. Will amalgamation bring lower taxes, privatization of many public services, better delivery of those services, more squabbles with the provincial government, ...? A good crowd of Alta Vista PROBUS members were on hand 23 May to hear from a man most qualified to answer these important questions - the local city councillor, Peter Hume. Peter served on the former city staff and as a Regional Councillor before election to his present job of Councillor for Ward 18 - Alta Vista.

He focussed on developments in Taxes, Hydro Service and Community Issues. This year, Ottawa may cut property taxes by 10 per cent. Such a cut, three years ahead of the planned date, will force fiscal discipline on the city staff. The need to close the budget gap will stimulate the search for operating efficiencies in the delivery of services. Efficiency will come from: greater sharing with business; common bills for utility services; hiving off Day Care and other municipal activities to community groups. The new fiscal discipline will also allow taxpayers to continuously monitor the City's performance.

The sale of Ottawa Hydro assets to the new company, Hydro Ottawa, coming in October, will give a windfall of around \$M700 to the City. Ottawa will also benefit from around \$M15 per year in interest income, plus the prospect of dividends from the new company. The transition to private company will carry the risk of financial and service problems. (Hydro privatization in other jurisdictions, such as Alberta and California, has not gone smoothly.) Eventually, consumers will see lower rates per kWh, but in the meantime they should beware of wild claims by doorstep vendors.

This is but a brief transcript of a wide-ranging and comprehensive talk by Councillor Hume, which provoked many questions and comments from PROBUS members. They were left with the impression of an active and dynamic municipal politician, working hard for his community.

Ken Kitching

To be or not to be ...

... that is about the only question not asked in Bob Haughton's illustrated talk at our April meeting. There is a high probability that the answer was given, it just needs thinking through. Perhaps that will be the lasting impression - the number of things that Bob put in front of us that need thinking through. We will be in good company - there were many sources for his apt and teasing quotations, from St. Paul to Einstein via a series of philosophers, scientists, Nobel prize winners as well as theologians. One of these was the late Sir James Jeans of Cambridge University whose book "The Mysterious Universe" piqued Bob's interest and studies as long ago as 1948.



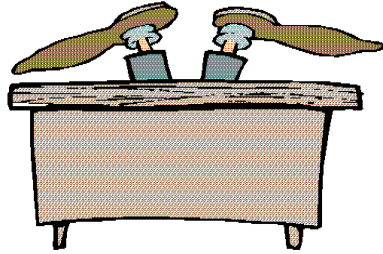
If matter is such that we are mostly space, what is space? What lies beyond the universe? How can seemingly unconnected events reproduce each other exactly? Coincidence falls far short of being an explanation.

If we are part of the mystery we are trying to solve, having John Wright introducing Bob, and John Wright thanking him, are just two more complications. To give an example of the elasticity of time, the April meeting was held on May 2nd.

Vital Purpose...

To stimulate thought, interest and participation in activities at a time in life when it is easy to become complacent and self-centred.

From the President's Desk



I have had a great time as part of PROBUS. I am particularly delighted with the tremendous support from all the executive as a good cooperative effort spreads the work load around and makes the work much more enjoyable. As President my objective was to carry on our club tradition of excellent monthly speakers/meetings while adding a few lunches a year plus about two to four special events per year. I am proud that our club sponsored a very successful Eastern Ontario PROBUS Club Hull to

Wakefield train ride (175 people), a spring luncheon (325 people) and are planning a special event for this fall. I am also proud this newsletter got started. Over the long term as membership expands beyond about 125 to 150 people, I would look forward to our club helping to expand to Blackburn Hamlet/Orleans and/or Nepean when the time is appropriate.



Jim Rader

Probe Us - Russ Hammond

Probe: *Russ, how did you get involved in PROBUS?*

Russ: We moved to Moncton when Eva was asked to manage the Royal/Lepage office. While she was there she was inducted as their first lady-member in Rotary. One evening, Eva's Rotary sponsor, Stan Steeves, hosted a dinner. I started dinner never having heard the name "PROBUS" and by the end of the meal I was vice-president of a newly formed Moncton Probus Club. By the time we left Moncton it had over 100 members and now has about 240.

Probe: *Are you a Maritimer?*

Russ: No, I'm a Montrealer, but Moncton is Eva's home town and we have a cottage there. It was very nice during the summer but left me at a loose end in winters.

Probe: *When was this?*

Russ: 1991. I had taken early retirement after about 40 years with Bell where I worked in marketing National and International Data Communications. I started in Montreal in 1950 when it was the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, and we moved to Ottawa in 1973.

Probe: *So from Moncton you came back to the Ottawa area?*

Russ: To our home in Manotick. I really missed Probus, the socializing and the fellowship especially. At that time the nearest club was in Brockville so the obvious thing to do was to start one closer to home. This was in 1995. Eva's Rotary contacts in the Ottawa-West Club agreed to become involved and we set up a meeting at the Baker's Oven. There were a few other likely looking fellows in the restaurant so we invited them over to our table. We talked about it and thought about it for a few days and then made ourselves into

an Executive and launched the club. The first speaker was a good friend, Frank Sorenson, talking about coin collecting, but more than that - about the history behind the coins. I asked Frank because I knew he would understand if there was only an audience of 10 or a dozen. As it turned out 30 came and the club has grown and flourished since then.

Probe: *How did this lead to a club in Alta Vista?*

Russ: As it happened we were invited to Allan's induction as Pastor at Pleasant Park Baptist Church and found we were in an ideal location for a club. I called a few people and we met for coffee at Denny's, on Bank Street. Dan Kelley of the Rotary Club of Ottawa was our sponsor and we were delighted that Allan joined the coffee group and has become a very active member. Doug Hughes, of the Kemptville Club, said that if we were looking at the Alta Vista area we had to get Jim Rader on board. The rest - as they say - is history.

Probe: *In 1995 the nearest club was in Brockville, now there are 5 in the Ottawa area. There's more to this than meets the eye.*

Russ: That's another story. I want to thank John Morris, Probus General Secretary for Canada, for his support. He was always willing to help and provide materials and I very much appreciated his advice. Our first speaker in Alta Vista was, again, Frank Sorenson, now a regular member.

Probe: *Beware Rotarians bearing coffee! Thanks, Russ.*

Issue 1

Although Issue 1 of Probe was generally well received, we have to report a headline on page 22 of the Ottawa Sun on May 11th, "Privacy Watchdog Slams Probe". We were so hurt that we couldn't bring ourselves to read the article.

Calendar

Speakers for Monthly Meetings

Wed. July 25, "The Netherlands and Canada: A Special Relationship". Mr. Rudolf Wagener, Counsellor for Economic and Commercial Affairs, The Royal Netherlands Embassy.

Wed. August 22, John Manley, M.P. for Ottawa South and Minister for Foreign Affairs (if available).

Wed. Sept 26, Donna Horner; the fastest growing reason to visit doctors.

Wed. Oct 24, Remembrance Day Tribute, Frank Feiller, The Last Great Sea Battle.

Flora McDonald (Reflections), Dr Charles Barrett (Conference Board), Judge Francis Muldoon (Courts), Dr Nelson Gadd (Geology) will speak as soon as can be arranged.

November 28 and **December 19** (3rd Wednesday), speakers will be announced as soon as arrangements are made. Please mark the dates.

Special Events John Kruithof is our special events co-ordinator. He is on the look-out for ideas and volunteers. (john.kruithof@sympatico.ca 739-1335)

The PROBUS Concept

PROBUS CLUBS provide the opportunity for those who have retired to meet regularly together without pressure and with minimum cost, in circumstances which provide new interests and new friends. They are autonomous, simple in structure, non-political, non-sectarian and non-fundraising

The Clubs are for those with professional, business and executive backgrounds and others who have had some measure of responsibility or achievement in any field of worthy endeavour.

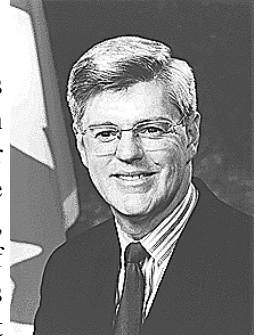
PROBUS Club of Melville, Sask.

An active organization in the 1920's, the Probus Club took its name from the Latin, meaning "good, excellent, virtuous". There were four committees: .. Intellectual, Attendance, Athletic, and Social. Guest Speakers were a highlight of the meetings. In 1923/24 the President was Fred Mawer.

This paragraph accompanied a picture of 26 young men. It appeared in a history of the town and comes to us via 'Wib' Head (White Rock/South Surrey) and the PROBUS website.

John Manley

The Honourable John Manley has been our "local" M.P. since 1988. An Ottawa native, his education, career and political life have kept him close to the city. In 1993, at the age of 42, he was appointed Minister of Industry, a position he held until his move to Foreign Affairs in 2000. Just taking two things from his extensive achievements at Industry: he worked to ensure that all public schools in Canada were connected to the Internet (SchoolNet) and he has consistently pushed to ensure that Canada would be a global leader in high technology.



Rudolf Wagener

Our speaker for the July 25th meeting, Rudolf Wagener, currently Counsellor for Economic and Commercial Affairs at the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ottawa, has an extensive background in international trade policy affairs. Apart from having had postings in several countries, he really has travelled the world on professional assignments for the Dutch Government.

In a world of globalization his topic for our meeting is one of a purely bilateral nature: the special relationship between Canada and The Netherlands.

We're not exclusive

Club members find familiar faces from other organizations at our meetings. Several members spent their working careers in the same company or government department, many belong to other clubs. It would be interesting to know what clubs are represented and what their objectives and activities are - maybe we can increase membership both ways.

Stop the Presses (I've always wanted to say that)

A hot item from the June 6th Exec. meeting is a plan for a BBQ after the July meeting. It will be set up in the parking lot and later we can adjourn to the Billings Estate for a visit and tea. Cooler heads will prevail on August 8th when we have been invited to the Hammond's in Manotick for iced tea and scones following a tour of the town.

Montebello in the fall? Leaves and lunch? Sounds good? John Kruithof is looking into the details.

Spring Luncheon

PROBUS Clubs of Eastern Ontario held their Annual Spring Luncheon on May 15th at the Tudor Hall in Hunt Club - Ottawa. The Kanata and Alta Vista PROBUS Clubs jointly hosted over 300 members from twelve St. Lawrence River and Ottawa area Clubs, as well as a contingent from Bracebridge. The latter were special guests of the Ottawa - Rideau Valley Club. The two Clubs are experimenting with hosting and visiting each other, an idea we could all explore. A large delegation from Cobourg declared its presence in colourful fashion: filling the Hall with the sound of bagpipes and the booming voice of a costumed town crier addressing all assembled.

Alex Munter, Councillor for Kanata, delivered the welcoming address, including a letter of best wishes from Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli. Reverend Allan Mac Lellan led in Grace. Everyone enjoyed the superb hot and cold buffet, particularly those who had travelled far to attend.



Cobourg PROBUS Club arrived with their own Piper and Town Crier

Entertainment was provided by "Capital Chordettes - Ladies of the Day". Their song and dance routines on themes appealing to the audience made them a great hit. Versatile entertainer Tom Kemeny then stepped onto the stage. With talent, wit and charm he brought out the best in the art of international cabaret, ideal entertainment for our world-travelling members.

On behalf of the Kingston and Kingston-Frontenac Clubs, Doug Logsdail announced that next year's spring luncheon is to be held in Kingston.

Concluding the event, co-emcees Joyce Shaheen and John Kruithof thanked the management and staff of Tudor Hall for the excellent facilities, the performers for their entertainment, the committee members for their hard work and the regional Clubs for showing up in such numbers. Many guests took the opportunity of touring the capital and visiting events associated with the Tulip Festival before returning home.

John Kruithof

Welcome new members ...

The most recent additions to our membership rolls are:

Norma Hedgecoe	Doug MacGillivray
Mrs. A. Simpson	Jack Strath
G. Charles Purvis	Marilyn Bender
Graham and Pat McClenahan	

Please make them feel at home.

... and guests

At our April meeting we had several guests - Helen Duff, Marj & Bill Fowle, R.N. Purvis (from N. Ireland), M.E. Corkery, R. Anderson and Peter Edwards.

We enjoyed their company - "Come again soon, stay longer!"

How to find us

Our meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Pleasant Park Baptist Church, 414 Pleasant Park Road.

Pleasant Park Road runs from Riverside Drive to St. Laurent Boulevard. The church is a few yards (even less metres) east of Fairbanks.

Pastor Allan Mac Lellan is a member of the club and a regular attendee. He will be happy to tell you more about the church and services.

(p.s. In case you don't recognize it, the white stuff at the bottom-right of the picture is called snow.)



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