



The Probe

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NEWS MAKERS

New PROBUS Committee

Bob French, the Rotary District 7040 Governor, has recently appointed **Russ Hammond** to a new committee covering all the Probus Clubs in the District. District 7040 has an international spread, encompassing Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec and Northern New York State.

We will be interviewing Russ on the purpose and operation of the committee for the next Probe.

Past-Presidents Pinned

A brief ceremony at the start of our May meeting honoured **Russ Hammond**, **Jim Rader** and **Jim Kingston** with the presentation of Probus Past-President's pins.

Ken Leaney - President Probus Canada

At the Annual Meeting, Ken Leaney of Qualicum Beach, BC, was elected President of Probus Canada for the year 2003/2004. Other positions are:

Vice-president - **Maureen Huismans** (Newmarket)

Secretary - **Beth Hickerson** (Ancaster) (replaces Jim Coombs)

Past-president - Carl Ingebertson (Brampton).

John Morris (Alliston, ON) continues as President Emeritus, Bernard Nadeau (Wasaga Beach, ON) was reappointed as Publisher and Reg Whynott remains the Managing Director.

Ontario Directors

In a fierce 12-candidate race for 3 positions, the Ontario clubs elected:

Eric van Allen (Oakville),

Maureen Huismans (Newmarket - 2nd term) and

Nancy Troyak (Kitchener).

Canal Roots - Peter Conroy

Peter Conroy is in love with a canal. He shared that love with us at the May meeting. His talk was based on his book "Our Canal" which includes old black and white prints from both the national archives and the city archives as well as his own colour photographs. The oldest print from the archives is dated 1860 and is remarkably sharp.

As he showed slides of the old prints and tied them in to Ottawa's history, it was sometimes quite difficult to visualize just where things were in relation to the modern scene. The 1860 scene was taken from Parliament Hill looking south and east. It was easy to see that the open ground on the other side of the locks is where the Château stands today, but the east arm of the turning basin is more difficult to place. Probably it is under the Congress Centre after being filled in to support the railroad tracks.



Another canal legend concerned a small locomotive which was driven across a swing bridge - or would have been if the bridge had not been in the open position. The bridge was where the Queensway crosses the canal. The locomotive bell hung for many years in a local church which is now the Portuguese Community Centre on Main at Hawthorn. The Driveway used to go through Lansdowne Park and the entrance to the park was an ornate wooden structure in the form of a two arched footbridge with turrets at the ends of the spans and in the centre. Supposedly it was made of 3,000 varieties of Canadian wood. Other glimpses of bygone Bytown included the causeway across Dow's Lake (1905 - 1927) and a heavily decorated pseudo-oriental summer house on the island in Patterson's Creek. This summer house was the work of the Ottawa Improvement Commission whose main task was to turn an industrial waterway into a thing of beauty after the railroad had taken away its peacetime raison d'être.

Hydro - Kathy Greiner

When a past chairman of Nepean Hydro and the member of the Ottawa Transition Board specifically charged with amalgamating the five local electric utilities says that she can't explain the hydro system, it's a fair indication that there are problems. At our April meeting, Kathy Greiner said she had hoped to answer two basic questions, "Do you know what's happening?" and "Who's in charge?" but the only answers she had were "No" and "I don't know".

There are several sources for the mess that exists today. Right or wrongly, there was a government perception that voters wanted competition. Added to that it was clear that Ontario Hydro was out of control, that its finances had been badly handled both in the costs incurred and in the way the accounting was done. The result was a \$30 billion debt to be repaid.



As far as competition for local service was concerned, the situation in Nepean, before amalgamation, was that 90% of the income went for power costs and 8% covered local costs - workforce and billing. This did not leave much room for multiple competitors.

A great deal of effort went into itemizing all the charges on the new bills so that the consumer could see just what he was being billed. The hope was that this appeal to logic would make the charges acceptable. It was a waste of time and effort - customers went straight to the bottom line and when it was high they screamed loud and long.

One of the worst decisions made in the whole process was to take away the right to cut off hydro for non-payment. Under the old system, the utilities worked with debtors and only cut power to a few as a last resort. Now, with no threat of losing power, about 20% of accounts are unpaid and the accumulated bills are so high that they are impossible to deal with.

Conservation does not work. Slogans in the past like "Live better electrically" and artificially low prices have created a mind-set, which is consumption-oriented not conservation-oriented.

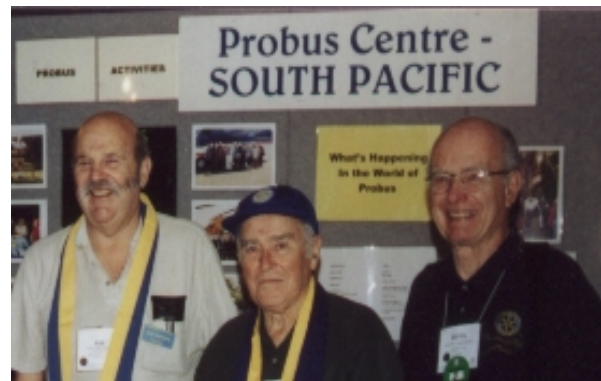
What happens in 2006 when the 4.3 cents per kW-hour freeze ends is anybody's guess.

Members were left with a clearer picture of what went wrong, but without a clear view of the future.



Rotary International

"Lend a Hand" is the theme of Rotary for the coming year under the leadership of the new President, Jonathan Majiyagbe of Nigeria. Eva and Russ Hammond were among the 17,000 delegates in Brisbane, Australia, for the 94th Annual Rotary International Convention. The convention concluded the year under President Bichai Rattakul of Thailand and the theme "Sow the Seeds of Love."



Russ is shown visiting the Probus Information Booth in the "House of Friendship" at the convention.



The original, un-retouched photo is shown at the right. A common problem with pictures taken "Down Under".

Guests and New Members

It's a special occasion when someone signs in as a guest and leaves as a member. **Verda Durston** is on our May lists of guests and is a new member as of the same date.

Other guests were:

Evelyn Clue Claire Gladdie
Nancy Bushell Gordon Taylor

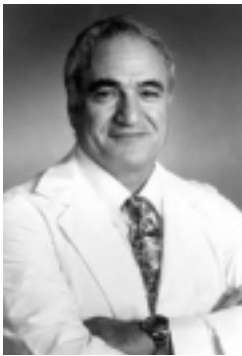
and Mary Marshall also joined in May

In April, our guests were:

Ted Thexton
Mary Larkin
Anna Shannette
Johanna Modderman
Jim Coke
Anne & Bob Bouchier

We welcome them all.!

23 July - Dr. Tofy Mussivand, FRSC



Dr. Mussivand could tell us about his remarkable journey from barefoot Kurdish shepherd boy in Iran to world renowned leader in the development of artificial heart technology and we would leave satisfied. However he will be talking about the end of that journey - his work with Dr. Keon at the Heart Institute and as Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer of World Heart. Dr. Mussivand is also founder of the

Medical Devices Evaluation Network. Established in 1992, this international network of 164 members was formed with the goal of increasing the understanding and methods for evaluating the usefulness of medical devices. The Network actively assists in the development and evaluation (*in vitro*, *in vivo* and clinical testing) of medical devices for industry, hospitals, governments, users and patients.

27 August - Hon. Mitchell Sharp “Life of a Senior Politician”

Mitchell Sharp was born in Winnipeg in 1911, graduated from U of M in 1934 and continued his studies while working as an economist and writer until 1942 when he was invited to join the Finance Department. He rose to be Deputy Minister before leaving in 1958. After 5 years with Brazilian Traction, Light & Power he was elected to Parliament from Toronto/Eglinton. In his 15 years in Parliament he was Minister for Trade and Commerce, Minister of Finance, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Government Leader in the House. From 1978 to 1988 he was Commissioner of the Northern Pipeline Agency. From 1988 to 1993 he was a Policy Associate with Strategicon and then became Personal Advisor to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Sharp's (very) long career in Public Service and Politics means that he knows "where the bodies are buried". In his reminiscences perhaps he will let us in on some of them.

Our Survey Says ...

We rise about 7 am, have our main meal about 6 pm, drive GM cars (not exclusively) and have a wildly varying bunch of pet peeves.

More in the August issue.

Our Conventional President

When I informed the astute editor of our newsletter that Kawsar and I had attended a political convention, he opined that some members might be interested in a first hand account of the event. He'd allow me to pen a few words for The Probe, as long as it was not political. I promised I'd be so conservative in detail that readers wouldn't have a clue as to which political party held its leadership convention in Toronto recently.

This was the first political convention of my life. Over the years, I'd attended some labour gatherings, but the buildup to this one was quite different. This one was going to be easy. Simply choose the next leader of the party from among five candidates. The task had even been made easier by the preceding delegate selection process at the riding level (organized by one of our members). Our riding was entitled to a contingent of ten elected delegates, its composition based on proportional support that candidates had received in the riding membership vote. Elected delegates were committed to their candidates for the first ballot. MP's, ex-MP's, Senators and other "Automatic" delegates did not have to reveal which candidate they were going to support on the first ballot. All I had to do was find my way to Toronto, have my committed vote tallied on registering, and vote according to my conscience on subsequent ballots, if there were going to be any. The front runner was rumoured to have a sufficient number of delegates in the bag for a first-ballot victory. Visions of being able to take in a performance of Mamma Mia! started entering my mind.

At that point, events began to unravel. Speeches were long on rhetoric and short on specifics. At the end of delivering a simply dreadful oration, one of the candidates redeemed himself by removing his name from the race, which was roundly applauded. He then dealt the kiss of death by supporting another candidate, whose lack of decisiveness in repudiating the overture lost him credibility with a number of delegates. The big surprise on the first ballot was that the front runner was hundreds of votes short of a majority. A battle was shaping up.

The scenario kicked in where the candidate with the lowest vote would have to drop out. This happened in an agonizingly close vote where the loser could clearly attribute his loss to the defection of a couple of prominent delegates who had "crossed the floor". The complexion of the entire convention would have changed had two delegates stuck with their candidate for just one more ballot.

(continued on page 4)

“Midsummer Madness-Morning”

With the success of our “**Indoor Picnic**” last year where we were able to ‘beat the heat’ and avoid the mozzies (even more important this year), we are going to go for it again!

Date: **July 23rd** - right after our regular meeting

Place: Pleasant Park Baptist Church meeting room

Please bring your favorite food:

Last name starts with:

A to G - Sandwiches

H to K - Dessert

L & M - Cheese and Crackers

O to Z - Salad

Note: All surplus food will be donated to the **Shepherds of Good Hope**.

Men’s Duties: Last name starts with:

A to Z - men help clean up



Special Note: Due to the flak taken by your editor over the issue of **egg sandwiches**, **NO** (repeat) **NO** guidelines are being offered.

(from page 3)

The conclusion of the third ballot resulted in a scene etched in the minds of delegates and perhaps the nation as well. Only two candidates were left standing. A deal was in the offing. Unwittingly, I’d played a supporting role in its execution. I’d been talking to someone about my findings that the candidate’s delegates who were about to lose on the third ballot would not walk out in a huff as rumoured, but would instead exercise in full force their privilege of voting on the fourth. That’s the way it turned out. Well after the convention had closed I learned that the someone I had talked to was one of just six people in the room when “the deal” was finalized, and that he had concluded the necessity of a deal on grounds that delegates would stick around. Back on the floor, a frenzied wooing ensued of delegates whose candidate had just been ousted. I was one of those targeted. The crush of bodies was unbelievable. A young woman leaned, or was shoved, against me. She was tall, standing perhaps on trampled bodies, or I’d had my feet knocked out from under me. Her face to my ear, she

earnestly begged me to vote for her candidate, promising what a vibrant party we’d wind up with if I did. Politics can be confusing at times like that, but I managed to stammer that I’d already made up my mind.

Sharing a convention for days with over 3,000 souls was quite an experience. From time to time the noise level from the exuberant display of enthusiasm was overpowering. However, there was also a tremendous amount of good will. I was particularly impressed with youth delegates who showed a great amount of savvy in dealing with people. In between voting, there was time for meaningful conversations with a cross section of Canadians.

In the end, not only did I participate in a historic event; the convention had entertainment value as well. Having missed Mamma Mia! was not so sad after all. One other thing I’m happy about. When I got home and weighed myself, I’d lost five pounds. Next time, I hope the convention lasts twice as long. I could use it.

John Kruithof

4th Wednesdays

If you are looking for us, we’re at Pleasant Park Baptist Church on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 10 am. Come a little earlier for coffee, timbits and chat.

The Church is at 414 Pleasant Park Road, a long block and a bit east of Alta Vista.

PROBUS’ 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.