



Merry Christmas!
... and a Happy New Year



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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“Season's Greetings”

The Probe goes to all our members, copies find their way to the Boscombe & Southbourne Club and the Minehead Club in the UK, as well as to several Canadian Clubs, both local and distant. In addition to the direct distribution, a copy is placed on the Probus Canada website which is accessible to clubs around the world.

When we offer "Season's Greetings" they are not only to our members but from our members to any Probus Club members, anywhere, who see our newsletter.

Eva Hammond and Rotary's Polio Eradication Campaign



This may well have been the 'audience of the year' for 2003, (that is, in terms of numbers) as 83 members and guests listened attentively to our speaker at the November Probus meeting. The subject was the current polio eradication campaign and the speaker, Eva Hammond, was a very well informed participant. She spoke of her involvement with National Immunization Days (NID) in Cameroon, a Western African nation, bordering the Bight of Biafra, between Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria.

Ms Hammond recounted her experience as "like looking at a picture". The framework was put in place when the polio virus was prevalent worldwide. When Dr. Sabin perfected the Salk polio vaccine, he issued a challenge for someone to begin a program which would eradicate the disease. Rotary, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization took up the challenge and \$247 million was raised to buy vaccine and set up labs. The disease has been wiped out in North and South America, the Western Pacific and Europe but immunization is still taking place in other world areas.

Eva Hammond, who incidentally has been a Public Health Nurse and has a Nursing Degree from McGill, was inspired some years ago by a visit to the Royal Alexandria Hospital, a facility for communicable diseases. She said the visit made a big impression on her and, when the opportunity arose through Rotary, she "signed up" for the Immunization program. She joined an international group of forty whose aim was 80% coverage in two weeks. Her visit to Cameroon was in January and she described the climate as very hot. She

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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.

War Without End

Col. Richard Williams, our October "Remembrance" speaker, introduced us to the phrase "War Without End" to describe the post 9/11 situation. He is in a good position to know the realities of the situation as his recent assignments include Director of Strategic Planning and Director of Western Hemisphere Policy.

In the period after the crashes into the World Trade Center towers, the National Defence Command centre - a room about the size of our meeting room - was quickly able to cut through the "fog of war" and use its communications links around the world and in particular to NORAD in Colorado, to establish a course of action.

The first thing was to take emergency control of civil airspace. At the time there were 224 aircraft with about 33,000 passengers in Canadian airspace. These had to be made to land as quickly as possible so that only rogue aircraft would be in the air and could be pinpointed. Murphy's law came into play as one Korean jumbo jet did not understand or did not accept the request to land. Fighters were mobilized and that immediately raised the key question - what were we prepared to do? Was the use of deadly force an option? Fortunately the captain got the message and agreed to land before the decision was needed.

In Col. Williams' estimation, if the response throughout North America had not been so good, there could have been further attacks.

Post 9/11, the perception of security changed forever. Even the military was shocked by the devastation caused by 19 young men in two hours. DND have been working closely with their US counterparts and with the US Department of Homeland Security. Col. Williams has attended planning sessions in Colorado Springs.

On the basis of "it's an ill wind...", the recent natural disasters in BC and Ontario have helped to train different organizations to work together. There were 2,500 military personnel in BC working with fire-fighters, police and local authorities - finding ways to work together more efficiently. The military were not involved in the SARS epidemic in Ontario, but they, and the civil authorities learned many lessons, some bitter, on how to minimize the effects of a contagious disease.

As this meeting was just after landmines blew-up a Canadian jeep in Afghanistan, there were several questions around this subject. Col. Williams said that there was no doubt that the mine was laid to ambush that specific patrol. He also mentioned that we have over 1600 military people in Kabul and that Afghanistan is a

rugged and dangerous country.

Asked about the domestic situation he said that there are already tremendous changes in security. For example, new passports have 13 security measures. There is a need for mandatory ID with biometric screening, and more security at airports. He pointed out that in an open society there are fears about intrusions into privacy and about the balance between security and civil liberties.

Other questions covered recruitment (up - but we need more doctors, pilots and engineers); hindsight precautions (keep tabs on flying schools); closing down the Air Force and Navy (sovereignty issue - case of US sending ships through the NW Passage); looking after hydro, water, etc. (training centre in Alberta, mobile unit in Toronto, JTF for counter-terrorism).

He finished on a lighter note warning us not to carry pencils, protractors, set squares and compasses on aircraft as these could be considered weapons of *math* destruction, and cautioned that we should beware of *Al-Gebra*.

President's Notes



As we come to the end of another year we can look back to a year of meeting with friends while enjoying a variety of speakers who stimulated thought and entertained us with their experiences. Program topics this year included politics, travel, health, heritage, the law, entertainment and the military. Many thanks to all who offered suggestions for topics and to Rochi Anderson who co-ordinated the program.

Our special events included the President's Dinner and a 'Mid-summer Morning' indoor picnic held at the church, with good company and good food.

At this time of year we especially remember family and friends. Our Christmas event will bring us together in a celebration of the season of 'peace and goodwill' within the Probus family.

May you all experience the blessings and hope of Christmas with your loved ones.



Joyce Wright

Guests

Our November numbers were swelled by several guests: **Gloria Brown, Nancy Brady** and **Mary Lefebvre**. We hope to see them again.



Jen Stanley came as a guest and left as a member.

Ken Kitching

It is with sorrow that I report the death of an old friend and Probus member, Ken Kitching. Ken has been our Club Secretary for the past year but both John and I have known him for over 40 years. When I worked with Ken in Bell Canada I learned to appreciate his wry wit and droll humour. After a career in Bell he left to take contract work in developing countries and later joined CESO. His work took him to the Far East, Kyrgystan and several African countries. He used his telephone engineering skills to help others and became a promoter of better understanding between nations. His comments on his trips showed a keen perception of the people he encountered.

We will all miss his humour, his concern for others and his dedication to those higher ideals he held dear. *JPW*

(Eva Hammond - continued from page 1)

showed slides of the areas covered and handed round a photo album of Cameroonian pictures for everyone in the audience to view.

The whole country had to be mobilized; political will made this happen and it was necessary to liaise with government officials, listen to speeches and attend festivals in celebration of the occasion. The people were very responsive and the children were lovely, Ms Hammond said. They came to the clinics because their parents told them and obediently took the two drops of vaccine which Ms Hammond and others administered to each child from infant to 5 years. As the volunteers passed through villages the people shouted, "go polio" and "bye polio". Once, when visiting coastal fishing villages, the group improvised by rafting their boat together with a boatload of children and then administered the vaccine.

Eva Hammond has had many interesting careers but said she had great satisfaction in administering the polio vaccine. She is obviously a woman with a conscience and the compassion and energy to follow her dictates in her capacity as a NID volunteer in Cameroon. The whole story serves to reaffirm our knowledge of how fortunate we are to be living in a country where polio is no longer a great threat.

If you would like to view Eva Hammond's Cameroon trip in detail, it is available online at <http://www.rotaryottawa.com>

Mabel Goldsmith

Mabel is a guest columnist - opportunities abound for anyone who would like to see their own by-line!

Executive 2003-2004

President	Joyce Wright	731-8521
Vice-President	Allen Taylor	827-3067
Pres-Emeritus	Russ Hammond	826-2743
Past President	John Kruithof	739-1335
Secretary	Ken Kitching	230-5591
Treasurer	Graham Gibb	828-1923
Program:		
Coordinators	Rod Macleod	733-5853
	Tony Goldsmith	733-5455
Communications (Newsletter)		
Editor	John C Wright	731-8521
Research	Allen Taylor*	827-3067
	* also Historian/Photographer	

Special Events:

Coordinator	Jean Lupton	521-1705
	Kawsar Kruithof	739-1335
	Jim Rader	

Membership Paul Stumes 731-0941

Greeters John Kruithof 739-1335
Rosalie Gelston 234-5673
Ardra Fradinger 565-8105

Sunshine Coordinators:

Bayne and Jeanne Pearen 236-5653

Rotary Liaison: (Rotary Club of Ottawa)

Dan Kelley 247-0868
Eva Hammond 826-2743

Advisory: John E Wright 731-3186
Peter Souter 860-6460
Russ Hammond 826-2743

Telephoning Committee

Coordinator Dorothy MacIntosh 731-9590

Telephone Committee Members

Roberta Clarke	731-1524
Ruth Decosse	736-1270
Roy Dohoo	731-1886
Elizabeth Haggerty	733-8757
Bob Haughton	521-2286
Dorothy Hubbard	733-6103
Peggy Kitching	230-5591
Doreen Mackay	523-0554
Joan Monette	749-9587
Allen Taylor	827-3067

Don't feel left out! Even if you are not on the list, there is always room for another helper - or try your hand at writing up one of the talks.

January 28th - The Future of the Congress Centre

Our contact at the Congress Centre has promised to send us a one of their top people to give their view of the future of the Centre in light of all the funding discussions in the press, and the change of Provincial Government. Even with the ability to accommodate 5,000 people in its 84,114 square feet of convention space, it is not big enough to handle many events which could have brought substantial revenues to the city. There is general agreement that expansion is essential, but will it happen? Who will put up the money?

February 25th - Phil Jenkins "Lebreton Flats - For Better or Worse?"

Phil Jenkins, an Ottawa researcher and author, has a deep interest in Canadian history and the way in which the Canadian landscape has influenced our history and development. This will be the overall theme of his presentation with a particular focus on the history of Lebreton Flats.

He has published a variety of local/regional histories including his best known book "An Acre of Time" which chronicles the developments of an acre of Ottawa from pre-history to modern days.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome **Jane Pearce** and **Wib & Edeltraut Neal** who joined in October, as well as **Rae Finley** and **Jen & Norman Stanley** who joined in November.

Please look out for them and make sure that they feel welcome in our Club.

100 Years of Manned Flight

The Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, launched a revolution in travel with their 12-second flight, powered by a four-cylinder engine, on December 17th, 1903. It was an inauspicious beginning; only five people showed up to see the demonstration at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The total distance was such that if they had started at the wing-tip of a 747 they would not have crashed into the fuselage.

Some years later, Orville was asked to give a speech. His response was: "Well the only animal that can fly and speak is the parrot. It is a very poor flyer and an even worse speaker, so I will not parrot the parrot!"



Allen Taylor

Constitutional Issues

Probus Canada has now grown to over 150 clubs and it has become too much to expect of any member to handle the administrative workload as a volunteer activity. As a result, Probus Canada has proposed changes to the Constitution and By-laws to establish a part-time, paid, staff position. We have written to support this initiative. It seems likely that Reg Whycott, a Past-president and the Managing Director for several years will be offered the position. If he accepts, we will continue to be well served by his efforts.

At the same time, Probus Canada made several other proposals for change on unrelated matters. This has led to a re-examination of the Constitution and By-laws and the suggestion from several sources that the current documents need change but not necessarily exactly as proposed. The Executive have the documents and will establish the Alta Vista Club's positions at their January meeting.

Listen Carefully

There may be as many as **FIVE** versions of what a speaker 'said' at a meeting.

1. What he meant to say.
2. What he did say.
3. What he thought, afterwards, he had said.
4. What he wished he had said.
5. What the media said he said.



Couldn't happen in Ottawa

Russ Hammond passed on a copy of the Newsletter of the Greater Moncton Probus Club. It had some stories to which they felt it was necessary to add a disclaimer that none involved Probus members.

Rural Life. "I live in a semi-rural area. We recently had a new neighbour call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the *Deer Crossing* sign on our road. The reason: too many deer were being hit by cars and she didn't want them to cross there anymore."

Fast food, slow thinking. "My daughter went to a local Taco Bell and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for "minimal lettuce". He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg."

Meetings

We meet in the Pleasant Park Baptist Church hall on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Come just before 10 for coffee and Tim-bits.