



The Probe

Volume 4 Issue 2

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

April 2004

His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

I did not know what to expect. Could he really be “just a simple Buddhist monk”? The newspapers have been full of the threats from China should Paul Martin meet with him. Is he a potential danger to them? Can he be as unsophisticated as he has been described and still carry such respect throughout the world?

His Holiness addressed the Canadian Club on April 22nd. Normally there are between 200 and 300 people at the lunches but this time there were over 500. Normally the head table guests follow the piper directly to their places but this time there were delays en route as the Dalai Lama greeted several members individually. Normally there is polite applause but this time there was an ovation.

Physically he is not imposing. He is slight, not tall, and wears a red robe leaving his right arm bare. He laughs easily and it is very easy to warm to him.

Among the head table guests was an interpreter, but his services were quickly dispensed with. The opening remarks, the formal ‘thank you’ to the Club and so on were translated and then he spoke in colloquial English. His first statement was that he is a simple Buddhist monk who has trouble with formality. Throughout his talk, the translator stood by and would nod or say a quiet word if the Dalai Lama looked at him for confirmation that he had used the right word or phrase.

What did he say? Perhaps the central themes would be brotherhood and the need for inner strength to ensure a happy life. Some phrases were, “really help each other”, “respect brothers and sisters”, “belief in the Creator is central to faith”, “nothing stands alone - everything is interconnected”. Whatever it was that he said, it held his audience spellbound. No shuffling, no coughing, just rapt attention.

He answered several questions. On China, “The Chinese people want more freedom (including religious freedom) and prosperity. Sooner or later China must change to accommodate their needs and this will help Tibet.” On people who are suffering: “They must try to build their inner strength and then try to prevent the causes of suffering.

One question was asked by a guest of Paul Celluci who looked vaguely familiar and who, after the departure of the Dalai Lama, was introduced as John McDermot, one of the original Three Irish Tenors. His rendition of “Danny Boy” completed a memorable occasion.

Our table had six of our Probus Club’s members; Joan & John Hill, Pat McClenahan (with her son and daughter), Rosalie Gelston, and John & Joyce Wright..

Last Chance!!

We have an agreement with the Cornwall Club to extend their deadline for ordering tickets to the Spring Luncheon, by a week, i.e. today. We know of several members who will be going and it is a case of, “the more the merrier”.

Cheques to Mrs. Kay McConkey, 603 Fifth Street East, Cornwall ON K6H 2M6. \$28 per person.

Make your booking **today** - or tomorrow at the latest.

Lebreton Flats

Imagine the splash as a huge slab of limestone, possibly shaken free by an earthquake along the fault line just to the west of the Juliana apartments on Bronson Ave, fell into the sea that covered Ottawa in pre-historic time. Whales probably frolicked in these waters until the earth finally emerged above the waters to form the Canadian Shield and the topography of the Ottawa area.

This was the first of four phases of the evolution of Lebreton Flats that Phil Jenkins, historian, author and trained environmental scientist shared with an attentive and appreciative audience. The presentation was spiced with humorous asides and frank discussion that made Mr. Jenkin's feelings concerning history and development of the "Flats" very clear.

When the Algonquin people came to the area some 5000 years ago, the second stage of Lebreton's history began. Natives, possibly as many as 4000, lived and traded in

the area and used the Ottawa River as their major trade route. They used but did not 'own' the land, an important aspect of the way they viewed their relationship with 'Mother Earth'. Even though the Algonquins were later displaced by the Iroquois, this view of the native relationship with the land continued.

The third, or property stage, began when Samuel Champlain came to the area in 1613. The King of France considered the land his even though no settlement was



Phil Jenkins and Frank Fesco in animated discussion

established. The French were here to harvest furs, fish and forest and this phase continued until Wolfe's victory on Quebec's Plains of Abraham in 1759.

The last phase, continuing to our present time, has been characterized by Real Estate ownership and development. The War of 1812 prompted the building of the Rideau Canal and eventual settlement in this area. In 1850, Robert Randall received the first land grant and, soon after, huge sawmills were built on the Flats to convert logs into timbers for shipment abroad. 1900 saw the Great Fire destroy these mills, businesses and houses that occupied the Flats. Rebuilt, the Flats were levelled once again starting in the late 50's. This time, it was the NCC and not fire, which forced the removal of 4000 working people from their homes and businesses.

Finally, after sitting idle for 35 years, the 154 acres of the Flats will be once more be developed. Construction of the War Museum is now under way and after the land is decontaminated, shops, housing for 4000 people and a park will once again occupy this area.

Welcomed to Probus by Rod MacLeod and thanked by Ruth Toller, Phil Jenkins gave us a new and different view of Lebreton Flats.

Ed Borza

June 23rd - Francis Itani

Frances Itani, well-known Ottawa author of fiction, poetry and essays will be our June speaker. Creative writing and the work involved in researching, writing and publishing her highly-acclaimed World War I novel *Deafening* will be the twin themes of her presentation.

Ms Itani's output over the years as a writer, editor, advisor, teacher and public speaker has been prodigious. She has been the recipient of many awards including the prestigious 2004 Commonwealth Award for *Deafening*, a novel which has already been published in 16 countries.

Copies of *Deafening*, signed by the author, will be available at the meeting.

Guests - January

Jack Miller
Al Saldanha
Barbara Miles



... and February

Barbara Miles
Goldie Smith
Carol Shuttleworth
Betty Johnston

We must be doing a good job of making our guests feel welcome, several also appear on our "New Members" list

New Members

We (that is to say your editor) have been lax in welcoming our new members.

Jane Pearce and Wib & Edeltraut Neal joined in October.

Rae Finley and Jen & Norman Stanley joined in November.

Even though we are a bit slow in recognizing them, we are nonetheless pleased to have them join our numbers.

Sheila Hammell and Grant & Barbara Miles joined in February.

Goldie Smith and Carol Shuttleworth joined in March.

This is the first opportunity we have had to introduce them and welcome them to the Club.

Annual dues

Are you up-to-date? Check with Paul Stumes.

Pictures at an Exhibition

In March our speaker was Christine Sadler, the Senior Project Manager for Exhibitions at the National Gallery. Christine is a graduate of Carleton University and did graduate studies in England. Her work experience includes time in England and then at the Jewish Museum in New York before returning to Canada. Christine's talk was about some of the interesting and challenging issues in mounting exhibitions here and elsewhere.



Christine Sadler gives Rod MacLeod pause for thought.

In Victorian times exhibitions were merely for entertainment. Today they must be educational. The first question, when mounting an exhibition from the Gallery's own works, is whether or not it is to be transported to other venues. This shapes the exhibit by making allowances for costly moves to the other locations where it will be mounted. When institutions are borrowing or lending whole exhibitions or just some items from their collections, they must deal with packaging, transportation and security. Apparently sharing aircraft with horses is to be avoided. Also the environment of the building in which the articles are to be displayed, is crucial. Objects and paintings have a finite life. Some are very delicate, particularly Greek and Roman art.

In mounting special exhibitions there is wonderful art available in other countries. One example is Russia, not only the Hermitage in St. Petersburg but in many other galleries and museums. Bringing exhibits from other countries is a way of allowing Canadians to access great works without the expense of travel.

The National Gallery is typical of many galleries in that it can only display 10% to 20% of its holdings at any one time. This means that the Gallery can mount exhibitions from its stock which will give the patrons something new to look at on each visit. It also means that it can

loan major works without depriving its own patrons and receive works on an exchange basis rather than renting.

There are many mundane physical obstacles to transporting art. The size of doorways and elevators is an obvious one. Structural strength of floors is a factor when considering an exhibition of large sculptures. Packing is an art in itself and may significantly increase the size and weight of the object being transported.

Designing and exhibition starts with the theme and the selection of works to fit the theme. Then come the negotiations for borrowing works and scheduling transportation. The designers have to choose the Gallery space to use and the layout of the objects within that space. The patrons must be made aware of the exhibition which requires advertising. When they go to the Gallery they will want good labelling, background notes on the object and artists, souvenir programs, etc. etc. It's a little more complicated than driving a nail into a wall and hanging a picture!

By the end of Christine's talk we had a much better idea of what goes on behind the scenes before we get to see the final result. We will better appreciate our visits to the exhibitions we enjoy so much.

Jim Kingston

President's Notes



It seems to have gone in a flash but I have already completed half my term as President. It's almost time to start thinking about recruiting new Executive members but we still have many interesting events and speakers to come.

I am looking forward to the Cornwall luncheon next month and hope that as many members as possible will make the trip to meet fellow members from our area. Perhaps we will be able to pick up some good tips for speakers. Certainly we have a long list of names which we can heartily recommend to other clubs.

There is a note elsewhere on our Art Show which John E. is arranging for July and which, I am sure, will include some of his own work.

I have had a call from our newly elected Ontario District #1 representative, **Stone Avery** of the Coburg & District Club. Stone will be our voice at Probus Canada for the next three years. He has asked me to arrange a time when he can visit our club, so we will all have an opportunity to meet him.

My thanks to everyone for making my job so easy.

Joyce Wright

Starting Year 4

The first issue of The Probe came out at our April meeting in 2001. It was dated 'Spring 2001' and numbered 'Volume 1 Issue 1' (volume applies to the calendar year). The headline was *Affairs of the Heart* and the article below it reported Susan Menzies' talk on the first 25 years of the Heart Institute.

The first 18 issues have covered 33 speakers and at least as many 'coming events'. Our first interview was with Jim Coombs (then Secretary of Probus Canada), followed by Jim Kingston, Allan Mac Lellan, Russ Hammond, three Executives from the Boscombe & Southbourne Club (UK), John Kruihof and Joyce Wright. We have had invitations to Regional events, picnics and Christmas parties, a survey, the occasional poem and, very occasionally, some news! The pages have welcomed most new members and most of our guests (sometimes the slip of paper with the names hides until after the publication deadline).

Constants are the statement of Probus' vital purpose, our address, meeting dates and an invitation for anyone to join us as a guest or member.

Then there is the filler - small items to fill what would otherwise be blank space. These are from a myriad of sources - books, newspaper clippings, the internet, email messages and scruffy bits of paper with jottings made years ago that have somehow managed to avoid becoming landfill.

Our editorial policy is simple - To inform, to entertain and to engage our members.

You can't get away from it

One of our members returned from a sea-shore holiday and reported that, during his morning constitutional one day, he found an unusually large sea shell.

Putting it to his ear he heard, "For the ocean's roar, press 1; for crashing surf, press 2, for waves gently lapping the shore ..."

It's meet

We meet on the **4th Wednesday** of each month in the Hall of Pleasant Park Baptist Church, **414 Pleasant Park Road**, a long block and a bit east of Alta Vista. Meetings start at 10 am, but we start arriving about **9:30** to enjoy coffee, cookies, Tim-bits and talk.

Guests are always welcome. Why not join us? Bring a friend!

May 26th - James Bissett "Is Canada's Immigration Policy Working?"

Former Executive Director, Citizenship & Immigration, James Bissett has been outspoken on Citizenship & Immigration policy for a decade. In a paper for the Centre for Immigration Studies in 2002, he started by saying, "Canada has the most generous asylum system of any country in the world", and ended, "Unfortunately, while the system remains in effect, it undermines all other security measures taken to construct an effective North American defense against terrorist threats."


Mr. Bissett's 37-year career in the Public Service was mostly in Immigration at the Foreign Service (later External Affairs). From 1982 to 1985 he was High Commissioner to Trinidad & Tobago, and from 1990 to 1992, Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania. After retiring in 1992, he served 5 years in Moscow as the Chef de Mission for the International Organization for Immigration.

July 28th - Picnic & Art Show

As in the past couple of years, we will have an Indoor Summer Picnic in conjunction with our July meeting. Inspired by Christine Sadler's talk the Special Events Committee decided to try its hand at mounting an art exhibition. So, as well as bringing assorted comestibles, please let us see what **YOU** can do with paintbrush, palette knife, hammer and chisel, carving or turning tools, potter's wheels or stained glass. Bear in mind the size of the doors at PPBC and the need not to overload the floors.

More details later. Don't forget to identify your work

Service

The Complaints Department Supervisor at the  Company has an interesting business card. On the back it says, "Suppose we refund your money, send you another one without charge, close the store and have the manager shot at sunrise tomorrow. Would that be satisfactory?"

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.