



Merry Christmas! ... and a Happy New



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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December 2004



“Season's Greetings”



How fortunate we are, as Canadians, that we can enjoy the pleasures of this – or indeed any – holiday season with our families and our friends, certain that we need not fear for our very lives or our health, or wonder where clean water and our next meal can be found – if at all.

Our thoughts at this season are rather well expressed, I believe, in the words of my late father's favourite mealtime grace:

For **food** in a world where many suffer famine
For **faith** in a world where many live in fear
For **family** and **friends** in a world where many live alone,
We give thee thanks, O Lord.

On behalf of the Club's management committee, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, or simply Happy Holidays.

Allen Taylor

Calling All Members

Of the many people who work to make our club successful, none are more essential than our Telephone Committee members. Led by **Dorothy MacIntosh**, they are:

Roberta Clarke	Bob Haughton
Pat McClenahan	Joan Monette
Elizabeth Haggarty	Roy Dohoo
Dorothy Hubbard	Allen Taylor
Peggy Kitching	Doreen MacKay

Nothing beats our callers for contacting members about the Club's latest activities. Who is the next speaker? What is it all about? Where is it happening? Our callers

are there to inform you. That entry on the calendar takes on a more personal touch when callers remind you of upcoming events.

Dorothy says: “with the help of ten willing and pleasant callers, we roll along smoothly and are able to ascertain whether a member is going away, or is having an illness problem, or will be at the next meeting. Several members have indicated their willingness to become callers, so I think the Telephone Committee is secure.”

For a Club dedicated to keeping the personal touch alive and well, that is good news indeed and the Christmas issue is a good place to acknowledge their efforts.

John Kruithof



David Anderson - The Life and Times of David Thompson

David Anderson, Curator and Licensed Tenant of the Ontario Government Thompson-Bethune Heritage House, Williamstown, Ontario, was our speaker on November 24.

David, wearing an authentic Norwester's colourful woven sash, delighted us with a remarkable story of the fascinating life of Canada's greatest explorer, surveyor, and mapmaker – David Thompson.

Having lived in Thompson's historic house for over 14 years – and surrounded by many of his artifacts and journals – Anderson described to us a vivid narrative of the 28 years Thompson roamed the Canadian West – beginning with The Hudson's Bay Company. and then transferring to the Northwest Company based in Montreal. The intense rivalry between these two companies, combined with his encounters with the various tribes of aboriginals, and his discovery of both the Columbia and Thompson rivers, produced a life of heroic deeds amid untold hardships.

We are indebted to our speaker, for his powerful message, and a clear and direct portrait of this dynamic fur trader. In the face of unbelievable adversity and misfortune, or a social safety net, his memory lives on and serves as an inspiration to each of us.

The speaker was introduced by George Toller and thanked by Judge Frank Muldoon.

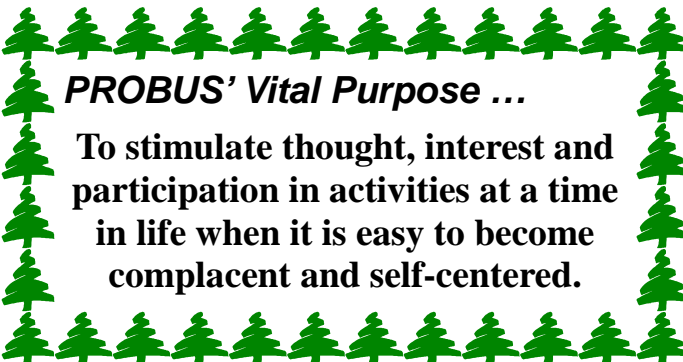
George Toller

Guests & New Members - October

We were pleased to welcome six guests in October - several of whom have already expressed an interest in joining **Betty and Don Dawson** as new members.

Harry Kerrison	L. Salvati
Morley Craig	Marjorie Scovill
Duncan Dufresne	Heather Wyman





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-centered.

Executive 2003-2004

President	Allen Taylor	827-3067
Vice-President	Jean Lupton	521-1705
Pres-Emeritus	Russ Hammond	826-2743
Past President	Joyce Wright	731-8521
Secretary	Ada McEwen	731-9545
Treasurer	Graham Gibb	828-1923
Program:		
Coordinators	Tony Goldsmith	733-5455
	George Toller	731-0112
Communications (Newsletter)		
Editor	John C Wright	731-8521
Special Events:		
Coordinator	Ada McEwen	731-9545
Membership	Paul Stumes	731-0941
Hospitality	John Kruithof	739-1335
Sunshine Coordinators:		
	Bayne Pearen	236-5653
Rotary Liaison: (Rotary Club of Ottawa)		
	Dan Kelley	247-0868
	Eva Hammond	826-2743
Telephone Committee		
Coordinator	Dorothy MacIntosh	731-9590

Free Monthly Photo Evenings

Several PROBUS members already know about these free monthly slide shows presented at the Bethany Baptist Church, Centrepointe Drive West at Baseline Road, on the last Saturday of each month, starting at 7:30 p.m. Travelers show slides and talk about their experiences.

The Winter 2005 Program is:

January 29 – Hiking as a Spiritual Experience – Magic and mystery in the red rocks of Sedona, Arizona, by James Gregory.

February 26 – South Africa Revisited – A land of beauty and contrasts, by Sholto Cole.

March 26 – On the Inca Trails – Treks in the Peruvian Andes, by Bonnie Frederick, Colin McGregor and Tom Frisch.

All are welcome at these presentations. For more information call Colin McGregor, 820-0598

John Kruithof

With the UN in Afghanistan

"Drink all the tea you are offered, from a selection of grubby and greasy glasses, live with the consequences and, after 2 weeks, you will be ready for anything." Such was the advice of Major David Ross for newcomers to Afghanistan.

David was there for 13 months with UNAMA - United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan. Although there are many Canadian Forces troops in Afghanistan, David was the only one wearing the UN 'Blue Beret'. His illustrated talk covered the beauty of the country, the daily life of Afghans, the role of the Warlords, the drug economy and the prospects for Afghanistan. One thing his slides did not show was the women of Afghanistan - a forbidden subject for photography.

While some of his slides showed ruined buildings and a dusty or sandy environment, some showed how green the country is in places. Parts are really emerald green reminiscent of Ireland but in the background are majestic, snow capped mountains. One illustration of Afghani life was in slides taken in the markets. There was a profusion of fresh fruit and vegetables but David said that when the harvesting period is over the items are just not available. Meat is killed and sold the same day. Yoghurt is sold by the handful.

"Warlord" is a North American term. Locally they are called commanders. The troops they command are gathered together for a specific purpose and then go back to their regular jobs.

David's first job was disarmament. He showed pictures of dozens of tanks and artillery pieces left to rust. All the engines and any other useful parts had been removed but they were still lethal. Another job was disposing of ammunition that had just been left in piles with no regard for safety.

The one person who gets little profit from the drug trade is the poppy farmer. The work is very labour intensive and requires skill to do the harvesting. Each Warlord charges a fee when the product passes through his territory. By the time it hits the street, its price is about 30,000 times the original rate paid to the farmer. David's approach to solving the drug problem would be to ignore the growers but find the processing laboratories.

David was very positive on the long-term prospects for Afghanistan. The failure of the Taliban to disrupt the recent presidential elections was a crushing blow to them and a major step towards democracy.

He concluded with some pictures of signs with slightly

mangled English. "Weeding Cake Centar", "Minstry of Planing", "Both sides of the rode is mine" This last one is the only funny side to the mine problem - Afghanistan is the most heavily mined country in the world.

Tony Goldsmith introduced Major Ross and Jim Kingston thanked him - commenting particularly on David's remarks on teaching Scouting while in Afghanistan.

Up-coming Speakers

Jan 26, 2005 - **George Toller** - Early Canadian History of Ottawa Valley.

Feb 23, 2005 - **Tom Barber** - Black Month in Ottawa - Early Memories

PROBUS CLUB OF OTTAWA - ALTA VISTA STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2003-04	2002-03
OPENING BALANCE	1,289.55	649.21
RECEIPTS		
Membership Fees	2,210.00	1,935.00
Looney Bin	594.75	516.61
Total Receipts	2,804.75	2,451.61
EXPENDITURES		
Fees to Probus Central	375.00	312.50
Pleasant Park Baptist	700.00	600.00
Gifts for Speakers	104.50	144.90
Refreshments (Meetings)	622.59	339.45
Communications	195.53	138.00
Sunshine Committee	21.74	
Historian	19.09	
Membership Committee	96.17	144.92
Lapel Pins		122.50
Special Projects	126.82	
Bank Charges	10.50	9.00
Sound System	575.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2,846.94	1,811.27
CLOSING BALANCE		
(Club Members' Equity)	1,247.36	1,289.55
COMPRISED OF:		
Cash on Hand	128.40	1,954.55
Cash in Bank	1,693.96	
Mem. Fees for Next Year		-275.00
Account Payable	-575.00	-390.00
CLOSING BALANCE		
(Club Members' Equity)	1,247.36	1,289.55

Graham Gibb - Treasurer

Muskoka Rendezvous 2005

Thinking of a New Year resolution that will be fun to keep? Resolve to attend the PROBUS Muskoka Rendezvous in Huntsville Ontario, September 27-29, 2005. It's Canada's first national rendezvous. PROBUS members from across the country are getting together in an atmosphere of good fellowship in one of Ontario's most colourful regions. The hope is that every PROBUS club in Canada will be represented. Members from Australia and New Zealand are expected to attend, and who knows what other countries will join in. Organizers are happy this Rendezvous promises to have an international flavour.

A variety of activities can be booked for the event: banquets, tours, cruises and golf. The registration package contains all the options available. Costs for each event are clearly indicated. One event, at no charge, is an invitation to a dinner at a Member's home.

The primary source for information on Muskoka Rendezvous 2005 is website www.probus.org/canada.htm. John Kruithof is our Club's contact person for this event and may be reached at any of our meetings, by telephone at 739-1335, or by e-mail at john.kruithof@sympatico.ca.

Probus in New Zealand

As of November 9th there were 449 Probus Clubs in New Zealand, with a total membership of 48,910. With a population of 4 Million this means that 1 person in 80 is a Probus member. Some towns have the Probus emblem displayed with the service clubs on highway signboards.

We spent an afternoon with the Landsdowne Terrace Probus Club in Christchurch where we were welcomed most warmly. With the exception of tea being served instead of coffee, anyone from Alta Vista would feel quite at home with the Landsdowne Terrace Club and, I am sure, any of their members would be just as comfortable visiting us.

They start with announcements - Joyce was asked to say a few words about Alta Vista Probus - then they have a "mini-speaker" - a club member - for a few minutes, followed by a tea break and then the main speaker. David Nyberg talked about his 8 years in the NZ Air Force ('49 to '58) which included 15 months in Singapore during the Malayan conflict plus spells in Hong Kong and Macao. The main speaker was Nicki Barlow, a New Zealand nurse who decided to go to Africa and on the way saw an advertisement for the Royal Australian Flying Doctor Service. She applied and was successful but had no real idea of what she was letting herself in for. She was stationed at Wilcannia, about 1200 km from Sydney. The township had its heyday in the 1880's but with improved roads its importance declined and it is now a shell. When describing the people and conditions she could have been talking about somewhere like Davis Inlet - right down to the kids sniffing petrol/gasoline. To go to a party would be a 12 hour drive - with a significant probability that her rooms would be trashed while she was away. Alcoholism and violence were endemic.

Nicki started as a registered nurse/midwife but by the end of her 4-year stint she was Director of Nursing. She was expected to do surgery, such as amputations of crushed fingers, as well as drive an ambulance to accidents up to 100 km away. When there was anything she could not handle then a doctor would fly in.

The 'Flying' part of the RAFDS started in 1928 and there are now 20 locations operating 24/7 complementing 'bush' hospitals like the one at Wilcannia. The service is not just for the 'outback' but covers anything over an hour from a major city. Tourists make up a significant part of their clientele!

As we were leaving, we noticed a sign outside one of the other rooms saying "Aotea Probus Club - Committee Meeting", so we decided to say hello to them. They too gave us a warm welcome and seemed very disappointed that we would not be able to come to their regular meeting the following week.

By the way, anything good you have heard about the people and the scenery in New Zealand is true.

John & Joyce Wright

Guest Editor



While your regular editor was gallivanting around New Zealand, the main work of putting together this edition of *The Probe* fell onto the shoulders of **John Kruithof**.

Thank you, John.

Meetings

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