



The Probe

Volume 5 Issue 3

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

June 2005

Over 200

When we welcomed **Marsha Deyell** as a new member in March it took us to the 200 mark since the start of the Ottawa Alta Vista Club in September 1999. Marsha is especially welcome and we hope that she enjoys the club for many years.

We still have 12 active members who were at the first meeting, including the first speaker, Frank Fesco. Our 100th member joined in the spring of 2001 but we are not sure which of the several people who joined at that time is the actual 100th.

The first members were:

Anthony Fanok	Frank & Joyce Fesco
Russ & Eva Hammond	Dan Kelley
Jim & Phyllis Kingston	Robert McMichael
Jim Rader	Francis & Lucille Muldoon

Eva and **Dan** are our Rotary Liaison members - an essential part of starting a club. **Russ** was our first President, showing the way for **Jim Rader** and **Jim Kingston**.

Over 200

The "Spring Fling" organized by the Probus Club of North Grenville was a gathering of 215 Probeans from all 11 Eastern Ontario clubs, as well as our Regional Director, **Stone Avery** (Coburg).

There was plenty of time to socialize before being piped in to lunch. Master of Ceremonies, **Pat Maloney**, introduced Club President, **Doug Hughes**, and the Mayor of North Grenville, **Bill Gooch**, who both made us welcome. After lunch we heard from a local historian, **Ken Mews**, *North Grenville - Past & Present*; **Garth & Liz Wallace** gave an account of some of the mishaps of starting a home based business; and the **Kemptville Players Chorus** treated us to some wartime nostalgia in song.

A pleasant drive on a fine day and some good company made for an agreeable outing. An important statistic is that 3 out of 5 Probeans prefer salmon to chicken.

Congratulations to **George & Norma Fisher** and their organizing committee members.

The Probe enters 5th Year

The first issue of *The Probe* was dated Spring 2001. At that time we thought that it would be quarterly but we quickly found that the need to give notice of the next two speakers was an important element so we went to a bi-monthly approach with *Probus Flyer* in the other months.

The first headline was "Affairs of the Heart" describing the talk by **Susan Menzies** on the first 25 years of the Ottawa Heart Institute. Susan gave us the good news - the average age for a heart attack is rising - and the bad news - one in three Ottawans will have recourse to the Institute at some time.

At that time, **Jim Rader** was the President and in his

column he quoted a statement by the Canberra-Belconnen PROBUS Club, "There are no strangers here - only friends you have yet to meet!"

The issue carried "trailers" for the next two speakers. Counc. **Peter Hume**, in May, to talk about the new City of Ottawa, but, in what has been a rare situation for us, the June speaker had to withdraw due to illness.

Other items were a report that **George Blackburn M.C.**, our October 2000 speaker, had been invested with the Order of Canada, and a poem by **William Pittman Lett** on the transition to the new City of Ottawa - from By Town!

From now on, when there is an odd corner to fill, we can use the header "Four Years ago in *The Probe*".

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.

Racketeers!

We are indebted to **Claude Hannan** for the translation of *raquetteurs*. At the April meeting, Claude presented an 11½ foot sash and other family heirlooms to **David Anderson**, curator of the Thompson-Bethune Heritage House in Williamstown, Ontario. David, you will recall was our November 2004 speaker. The sash, while decorative, had an essential purpose. It provided abdominal support for carrying heavy loads which might be as much as 2 - 90 lb packs.



Claude also provided a picture of *Un raquetteur de Quebec* leaning on his *raquettes*. The caption translates as, ... *posing with pride in his costume inspired by that of the coureurs de bois of earlier days.*

Freedom of the Seas

“The use of sea and air is common to all; neither can a title to the ocean belong to any people or private persons, forasmuch as neither nature nor public use and custom permit any possession thereof.”

Today’s question is: who wrote this? Did Queen Elizabeth I write it to the Spanish Ambassador in 1580 or did the Spanish Ambassador write it to Brian Tobin 400 years later?

The Opeongo Line

Joan Finnigan delayed her nap to tell us about her new book and the Opeongo Line. (“I’ve been up since 5:30 worrying about this and now it’s my nap time!”). The line is more a path than any kind of line. It was a settlers’ road, surveyed by the Canadian Government, starting just below Renfrew, and running 90 km west to Bark Lake, near Barry’s Bay. Immigrants from Britain and Europe were enticed by the offer of land, but the authorities were not so generous that they made available prime land along the Ottawa River, so the line heads inland to a life of hardship.

The book *Life along the Opeongo Line* was 25 years in preparation and includes interviews, anecdotes and diaries. One set of diaries was those of a Mrs. Mollie Armstrong one of whose descendants called Joan and said, “We have inherited this house and found some old diaries in the attic.” This was a treasure trove of information, as you can see for yourself, because the diaries are reproduced in their entirety in the book.

As well as everything else, there is a Hollywood connection. **Robert Redford** became interested in this small piece of history and spearheaded the efforts to find out more about the settlers and their lives.

One of the anecdotes was the tale of Johnny and his new motorcycle. Johnny saved up enough money to buy a motorcycle and went off to town to collect it. The dealer gave him a quick lesson and Johnny was soon on his way home. The whole village turned out to see this new-fangled machine. Johnny arrived in triumph and continued in ignominy - his lesson had not included how to stop. Another tale was of Jacques Laplante the deserter. Two RCMP officers came looking for him but ran into a language barrier so they hired a local man as interpreter. The man they hired was Jacques. “Have you seen Jacques?” “Oh, he’s on the trap line in Maniwaki.” In Maniwaki, “Have you seen Jacques?” “He went south last week.” And so it continued all summer. The RCMP thanked Jacques for his efforts, said they would recommend him, paid him off and left with nothing to show for their long trek.

There were many questions - Where does Opeongo come from? There is no etymology. How did the settlers survive their first winters? With the help of the Indians who taught them survival techniques. What defines the Ottawa Valley? If you take both shores and include the island of Montreal, the Valley accounts for 12% of the Canadian population. And several more.

Jean Lupton made the introduction and **George Taylor** thanked Joan on our behalf.

A Bit of Information

Anyone trying to come to terms with the advantages and disadvantages of Information Technology (IT) was well served by our May 25th speaker. **Major David Goldsmith** delivered a comprehensive overview of the impact IT is having on organizations and society. His initial comment that technology is something that doesn't quite work brought an appreciative chuckle from those of us who've struggled mightily to master it. Major Goldsmith made clear, however, that electronic technology is already embedded in practically all devices and services we use on a daily basis. He then explained the scientific advances about to be introduced in various fields, making our dependence on technology even more pronounced than it is today. For example, we will be able to check from the grocery store how supplies in the fridge at home are holding out. Another application would be of inserting sensor chips into structures of bridges to provide an alert on corrosion.

When questioned on how we should react to all these goings on, Major Goldsmith's short answer was: Participate, but protect yourself. The benefits of IT should be enjoyed, but careful attention must be paid to dangers such as invasion of privacy, identity theft, e-mail scams, etc. A practical precaution: He would never leave a transaction slip at an ATM. As for the Internet, it is like a community without formal rules, with unscrupulous elements exploiting it, akin to having barbarians at the gate. He therefore urged us to protect ourselves by using good, common sense when using modern technology.

One quite stunning statistic he quoted was that 1 Gb (gigabyte or 1,000 million bytes) is enough to store 1,000 books. A library may have 100,000 books. An off the shelf computer today may have a disk that will store 120 to 160 Gb - enough for a library with room to spare.

It was no coincidence that our speaker was introduced by someone with the same family name. **Tony Goldsmith** took justifiable pride in introducing his son. **Jim Kingston** took the opportunity to thank an alumnus of his old high school in Saint John.

John Kruthof

May I introduce ... ?

Would you like to introduce a speaker - either someone you recommend (see over) or any of the speakers at our meetings? If you have any concerns about speaking in front of an audience, all you have to do is remember that you are among friends and you will be surprised how easy it is. Just write your name and phone number on this slip and hand it in to the Membership Desk next time.

Name _____ Phone _____

Thank You provides more opportunities to help out.

Rotary Centennial

Rotary was founded in Chicago in the evening of February 23, 1905. There are now 1.2 million members in 31,000 clubs world-wide - a testimony to the need and success of Rotary's programs and the words on its banner "Service above self".

The Probus Club of Ottawa/Alta Vista offers its congratulations to Rotary International.

August 24th - John Flood

John Flood is the President of *Penumbra Press* which celebrated its 25th Anniversary last year. In May of 1979, McLean's said, "John Flood lives in Moonbeam, 200 miles south of James Bay, and the wolves sometimes howl at his door. He owns and runs Penumbra Press ... A few years ago Penumbra would have seemed incongruous: who ever heard of a publishing house not far from Kapuskasing? But with the rise of regional publishing, Flood's venture seems anything but bizarre."

One of Penumbra's recent publications is very familiar - **Joan Finnigan's** *Life Along the Opeongo Line*.

Photo Op

Members of Probus scheduling their Autumn outings may wish to keep these events in mind:

World Views – Free Monthly Photo Evenings, Fall 2005 Program held at Bethany Baptist Church, Centrepointe Drive West, at Baseline Road. Programs begin at 7:30 p.m. All welcome.

For more information call Colin McGregor at 820-0598.

Saturday, September 24: Travels in Ethiopia. The historic north and the tribal south. Alex Bissett

Saturday, October 29: Yukon, Alaska and coastal British Columbia. Beautiful, friendly and accessible. Pavel and Antonia Dvorak.

Saturday, November 26: From Hiker to Pilgrim on the Camino de Santiago. Inspiration and transformation in northern Spain. Brooke Broadbent.

Poetry Corner - Svmer is Icumen In Anon., 1310

Svmer is icumen in
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed and bloweth med
and springth the wde nu.
Sing cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,
lhouth after calue cu,
Bulluc sterteth, bucke uerteth.
Murie sing cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu,
Wel singes thu cuccu.
ne swik thu nauer nu!
Sing cuccu nu, Sing cuccu!

A search for *Summer is Icumen In* turned up the above version with the note that: "This song is remarkable for being ahead of its time. It is a canon in four parts sung over a two part "foot" or bass line, itself a canon in two parts. This makes the whole song a polyphonic composition in six parts at a time when the most 'advanced' music was in two or three part polyphony. The music, with performance instructions, was in a manuscript originally in Reading Abbey."

The modernized version is:

Summer is a-coming in
Loudly sing cuckoo
Groweth seed and bloweth mead
and springs the wood anew
Sing cuckoo!

Ewe bleateth after lamb,
Calf loweth after cow,
Bullock starteth, buck farteth,
Merry sing cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo!
Well singest thou cuckoo,
Nor cease thou never now!
Sing cuckoo now, Sing cuckoo!

The 'original' version is slightly edited here. 'þ' has been replaced by 'th' (e.g. Groweþ).

Sorry about the buck. It stops here.

July 27th - Heidi Tucker

There was a cartoon recently about an advertisement for 'hard-to-find tools' with the comment, 'All mine are hard to find.'. This struck a responsive chord, so a talk on *Controlling Clutter* by **Heidi Tucker**, who runs *Forever Organized*, is something to look forward to.

One of her basic rules is, 'If you take it out, put it back'. We haven't got to Rule 2 and I'm a failure already!

Annual Picnic

Following our July meeting it will be *Picnic Time*.

Continuing last year's approach we will arrange to have the refreshments brought in. This will give us the opportunity to socialize either in the meeting room or, if the weather is not too hot, not too cold but just right, out on the lawn.



This is a good meeting to bring along potential new members. If we ply them with good food and good fellowship, how can they resist joining?

Taking Steps

One or two of our members are having difficulty with the steps at the entrance and down to the basement. We have made enquiries at several locations in the neighbourhood but we have not found anywhere at a reasonable price which is better than what we have.

... talking about fees

We still have 15 to 20 members who have not paid for their 2004/2005 membership. As the membership year started in September it may be that they are assuming that they paid a long time ago.

If you have the slightest smidgen of a doubt about whether your membership is current, please check with **Paul Stumes** at the Membership Desk.

S.O.S. - Suggest Our Speakers

Who would you like to hear? What would you like to hear about? Please take a few minutes to jot down the name(s) and/or field(s) of expertise/knowledge/skills, with possible topics, for our pool of potential speakers. We can't guarantee to meet every suggestion but if the same names or topics keep cropping up, we will do our best.

Name _____

Topic _____

Please tear off this slip (or use another piece of paper) and hand it in to the Membership Desk next time.