



# The Probe

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Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

June 2007 #38

## July 25th - Picnic and ...

Following the pattern of recent years, we will have a catered 'Indoor Picnic' after our July meeting.

### ... something new ...

... instead of one speaker we are going to have 5 - all from our Club. **Morley Craig** will talk about *Bee Keeping*; **Jim Kingston**'s topic will be *The Far East*; **Jim Mafree** will give us the history of *Kraft Foods* from its origins in Chicago in 1902, enlivening the later years with personal reminiscences; **John Wright** will give an illustrated travelogue on a trip he and Joyce took to *Moldova* earlier this month; and **Claude Hannan** will talk about his experiences with *House Exchanges*. The speakers will have just 10 minutes each, including questions, to give their stories.

### Something else new

We now have our own computer projector. There have been a few times in the last year or so when we have had to do without pictures or borrow a projector. **Chris Lackner**'s talk was the most recent case. We went to a rental company which graciously waived the charge but made it clear that it was a one time arrangement.

## August 22nd - Robert Martin

Robert Martin is a heritage architect whose current project is the Beechwood National Memorial Centre. The 14,000 square foot, nine sided Centre will house 400 people under its glass dome.

The Centre will also feature a large reception hall with a "Hall of Colours" to display the laid-up colours of Canada's military regiments. Canada's Military Chaplains are currently fundraising for a stained glass window to honour those military personnel who served their country.

### **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.**

## Spring Luncheon

The Probus Club of Kanata organized the 2007 Spring Luncheon at the Hellenic Community Centre on Prince of Wales Drive - and a fine job they did!

As well as a good meal, they provided entertainment before and afterwards, door prizes, tourist information for out-of-town visitors and a table of Probus clothing and gift items.

The entertainment before the meal was by the Canterbury High School String Ensemble which had the unenviable task of competing with 250 Probeans meeting and greeting old friends. Those lucky enough to be at the front tables thoroughly enjoyed the concert. After lunch, we heard the Bell High School Concert Jazz Choir backed by a 4-piece band. The choir gave us a medley of standards and show tunes.

A late substitute in the closing spot was Dominic D'Arcy, Ottawa's singing policeman. Dominic was well known to many members of the audience and those who did not know him soon fell under the spell of his engaging personality.

The lunches originally served all of Eastern Ontario but in recent years there have been two lunches - one for east of Kingston and one for west Kingston, with the Kingston members having a choice. This is why numbers are down from 2001 when we were joint hosts with Kanata.

### **Tim Haitsma**

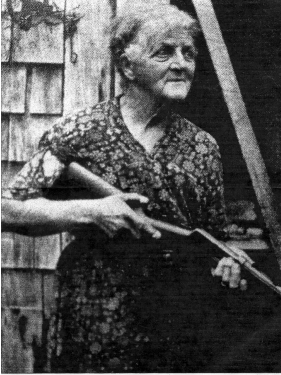
Our new representative on the Probus Canada board is **Tim Haitsma** who replaces **Stone Avery**. Tim and Stone both sat in on a meeting of club Presidents before the lunch and Tim spoke briefly to the whole gathering.

Stone commented on how much he had enjoyed his visit to our Club and how impressed he was with the display of arts and crafts we put on that day.

### **2009**

Our offer to host the 2009 Spring Luncheon was accepted. Meanwhile Tim's first major task is to find a host for 2008. An announcement is expected soon.

## Annie Get Your Gun



Annie Oakley, in the Irving Berlin version, complained that “You can’t get a man with a gun”. ‘Cougar Annie’, Ada Annie Rae-Arthur, proved her wrong - possibly in both senses of ‘get’. Our April speaker, **Lesley Sibthorpe**, told us about the life and times of Cougar Annie. A west coast pioneer, entrepreneur, gardener, hunter, mother of eleven and wife to

four. Annie and her first husband, a remittance man with an opium habit, settled at Hesquiat Harbour on Clayoquot Sound. Their first difficulty was that the steamer delivering them to their new ‘home’ had too deep a draft to get closer than 25 km. The rest of the trip was by canoe and included the family cow.

Hubby was a gentleman and gentlemen did not work - so Annie did everything. In 1920, after 5 years eeking a living from the earth, Annie opened a store selling produce from her garden and goods brought in by steamer which called by every 10 days. Her next step was to petition Ottawa to allow her to open a Post Office. She eventually succeeded by exaggerating the population (about 20) by 650%!

Then followed her mail order business, again selling her garden produce. By this time she had an orchard with 30 different types of apple tree, a root vegetable garden, goats and chickens. Later she offered dahlias and had over 200 types from which her customers could choose. Still later, when her eyesight was failing, she had to offer ‘mixed’.

When her first husband died, she decided that she needed a man about the property and advertised in a newspaper. The result was not a complete success - although she attracted husbands, #2 turned out to be abusive and died of a gunshot wound. Husbands 3 and 4 were attracted in the same way. #3 died of gangrene and #4 was another abuser.

While she was toiling in the garden her children were put in a playpen or high chairs and locked in the house. Bears often went after the goats and would probably have been happy with a different kind of kid if the children had been allowed to run around loose. Children’s Aid took exception to her child rearing methods and removed three of them to Vancouver. Annie did not see them again for six years. None of her children appreciated the hard life and left as soon as they

were old enough.

Over the years she shot about 60 cougars. Her method was to tie a goat to a stake and go about her work until she heard panic bleating. Then she shot the cougar. She also set bear traps; and bird traps when owls started taking her chickens. Some of the traps are still on the property.

Annie died in 1985 at the age of 97. Her property is now owned by **Peter Butler** who allowed the Sibthorpes access to the garden but not to the house, which, looking through the windows, can be seen to be much as Annie left it. Peter built himself a log house nearby which is now a research foundation for study of the rain forest.

Lesley showed pictures of the house and garden, Peter’s log house and the surrounding countryside. She described it as a “photographer’s paradise”.

Joyce Wright introduced Lesley and Dan Kelley thanked her on our behalf.

### But when she was needed ...

Wildlife officials say a cougar was definitely seen in Gatineau Park last month. The adult-sized mountain lion was spotted crossing a road by a park employee. “There is no error possible”, said a senior conservation officer, “without a doubt what we saw there was a cougar, like what you see on TV.”

*(from the Ottawa Citizen, June 20th)*

If anyone would like to try to emulate Annie, we can put you in touch with park officials. You must bring your own goat.



If you are thinking of going to Rendezvous 2008, please let the organizers know as early as possible so they have firm numbers with which to plan the events.

However, we understand that the hotel will not accept reservations until September 2007.

## Walter Prystawski - Concertmaster

How does the orchestra manage to come in together on the four, full-blooded, opening chords ('Fate Knocking') of Beethoven's 5th Symphony? It turns out that even an experienced concertmaster like Walter Prystawski cannot give the answer. "It just happens." This is, perhaps, the only musical situation of which he is not the master.

The role of the concertmaster has changed with the growth of the orchestra. Initially, going back to Johann Sebastian Bach, he was the general manager and artistic director, responsible for training the orchestra and hiring and firing the musicians. Mozart played and waved his hands at the orchestra from time to time acting as CM and conductor. By 1805 when the nearly deaf Beethoven composed *Fidelio*, the orchestra had grown to 60 - 65 members and soon after, one of the CM's jobs was given to a new position, the conductor. Initially the conductor deferred to the CM - if he lost his place, he would lay down his baton, blow his nose and wait for the CM to gather the orchestra back together. The modern version of this can be seen by a careful observer by watching the body language of the CM. If all is going well then there is no more movement than any of the other violinists but if there is a problem, the CM can be seen to be moving around in his chair trying to help the conductor get things together again. Some CMs do this regardless of the need and a few, particularly on TV, become quite balletic.

Walter talked about some of the conductors at the NAC. He obviously has warm memories of Mario Bernardi and their time together, and of Trevor Pinnock, although Pinnock's approach was from a very different tradition. Franco Manino could not read a score and in one piece conducted a third closing chord when the score showed two. The orchestra responded as though it was there on the page in front of them.

One of the tasks of the CM is to be an intermediary between the conductor and the orchestra, particularly if a conductor seems to be unable to communicate with one of the members. Another task is to talk like a Dutch uncle to an orchestra member when he/she is having problems.

Walter was asked what makes a good conductor. He replied that a strong conductor can convey to the orchestra just what he wants and expects. He may use words, sounds, gestures or other body language, but he gets his message across clearly. A weaker conductor needs more effort by the orchestra to translate what he is saying into what he wants. Usually a conductor who



relies on words to describe what he wants is less effective.

In response to another question, Walter noted that the trend in North America is to treat the conductor as a diva, and as an aside he said that when Artur Rubenstein was with the NY Philharmonic he was so afraid of the effect of his fame that he carried a gun.

## New Members

We have several new members to welcome:

**Dianne & Walter Fergusson** (December 2006)

**Tony Baron** (April 2007)

**Phyllis Reading** (April 2007)

**Veronica & Fred Perkins** (April 2007)

**Elizabeth & Robert Whitelaw** (May 2007)

**Margaret Turnbull** (May 2007)

## It's the Law

**Law of Biomechanics:** The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

**Oliver's Law:** A closed mouth gathers no feet.

**Wilson's Law:** As soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it.

**Mechanic's Law:** After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch.



## Jamestown 1607

This year the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown is being celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic, including the Queen's visit to the site. In December 1606, the Virginia Company of London sent an expedition to found a settlement in the Virginia Colony which became Jamestown, after James I. Three small ships, the Susan Constant, the Godspeed and the Discovery set off from England to cross the Atlantic. After a long and hazardous voyage, they arrived on May 14th, 1607. On board were 104 male settlers, 40 less than started the journey, of whom only 38 were still alive a year later. That the colony survived at all depended on luck, the robust leadership of Captain John Smith and the extraordinary good fortune that Pocahontas, the favourite daughter of the Indian Chief Powhatan, took pity on them. Pocohontas later traveled to England where she was received as royalty.

Jamestown was the first permanent English settlement in North America following several other failed attempts including the ongoing mystery of the lost colony of Roanoke Island. It came very close to not being permanent as the surviving settlers decided that they had had enough and were about to leave when more colonists arrived.

The cargo carried by the three ships consisted mainly of grain, gunpowder and rats. The rats, along with mosquitoes, thrived in the colony's swampy location - chosen so that they were well inland and safe from marauding pirates. But the settlers brought across cargos of much greater potential - language, literature and law. They brought with them an English language transformed by Tyndale's translation of the New Testament and Thomas Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer. They brought the plays of William Shakespeare. Finally, they brought - albeit in rough form - the basics of English law, with its eventual implications for constitutional development. The first representative assembly in the colony was up and running by 1619, although its "democracy" excluded everyone but the first burghers.

The colony survived and eventually prospered - its prosperity was based on the tobacco crop - and disseminated these formidable ideas in the New World. Eventually they would inspire and empower the United States. The English language would - as John Quincy Adams foresaw - express the ideals of the young country and facilitate its rise first as a continental and later as a world power.

Not bad going for only 38 men.

## President's Notes

The Summer Solstice marks the mid point of my tenure as President. Looking back, I can safely say that we have continued to have a wide range of good speakers, thanks to George Toller and his Program Committee, and that the club has continued to run fairly smoothly. I have just heard that Paul Stumes is getting stronger and will soon be able to return so that 'fairly smoothly' can be upgraded to our more usual 'smoothly'.

Looking forward, we are trying something a little different in July with five 'in house' short talks, partly so that an 'outside' speaker is not distracted by picnic preparations; we have our slate of speakers almost complete for the rest of the year and Ada MacEwan has already started to look into a Christmas party.

November will bring our Annual Meeting and elections to the Management Committee. Our by-laws restrict terms of office, so no matter how good a job the Board is doing individually or collectively, we must have new members every year. The flip side is that if you are a little unsure about joining the Board, the short term by-law lets you limit your commitment. Try it!

*John Wright*

## Other Activities

Chatting with members of other clubs at the Spring Luncheon I found that several have activities beyond the monthly meetings. Examples are: book clubs, after-meeting lunches, theatre and museum outings.

For our first 8 years we have kept to a simple format, but if there is any interest in extending our activities in a new direction it would be in keeping with our vital purpose (To stimulate thought, interest and participation in activities ...).

Please talk to me or any of the Management Committee members if you would like to help us 'branch out'.

*John Wright*

## How to find us

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month, except in December when we meet on the 2nd Wednesday, in the Hall of Pleasant Park Baptist Church, 414 Pleasant Park Road in Alta Vista.

Our meetings start at 10 but members start arriving soon after 9:30 for coffee and chat. Try it - you'll like it!

You can also find us on the Probus Canada web site:  
[www.probus.org/canada.htm](http://www.probus.org/canada.htm)

Or call the Wrights at 613-731-8521.