



# The Probe

Est. September 1999

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

April 2009, #49

## Spring Luncheon

Just a few days left to sign up for the Eastern Ontario Probus Spring Luncheon. We are the host club so we want as many of our members as possible to welcome all the visitors.

Date: Tuesday, 26th May

Time: 11:30 for Noon

Place: Hellenic Centre, 1365 Prince of Wales Drive

Cost: \$28 (cash bar)

Menu: Choice of Roasted Chicken or Fillet of Sole

**Last date for bookings: May 1st**

Lenore Porter is handling bookings for our Club. She may be contacted at 613-248-0271 or by email through [allan.porter@sympatico.ca](mailto:allan.porter@sympatico.ca)

## World Voices Choir

Post-prandial entertainment at the Spring Luncheon will be by the **World Voices Choir** from **Brookfield High School**. Choir members sing and speak in over a dozen languages and study music from traditional cultures the world over. Proceeds from their 2007 CD *UBUNTU: Humanity Towards Others* went to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund - specifically destined for the Sibikwa Community Theatre which offers classes for children and adults in a multilingual approach. They have a new CD which will be available at the Hellenic Centre.

The choir has sung throughout the Ottawa area, including performances for the Education Foundation of Ottawa, the Ottawa Police Service's *Diversity in Action* program and appearances on local TV channels.

Our thanks go to Anne Gillespie, Principal of Brookfield High for releasing the students, and to Jeannie Hunter, the Artistic Director of the choir.

## Probus Items

*graphic i d* will be on hand at the luncheon with a wide range of Probus paraphernalia for sale. Clothing includes golf jackets, caps and sweaters and as well there will be key rings, table ornaments, pens and many other high quality items.

Check out their table at the back of the hall.

## Calendar

May 26th Eastern Ontario Spring Luncheon

May 27th \*\* NO MEETING \*\*

June 24th Dr. David Shanahan

July 22nd In-house speakers and catered 'picnic'

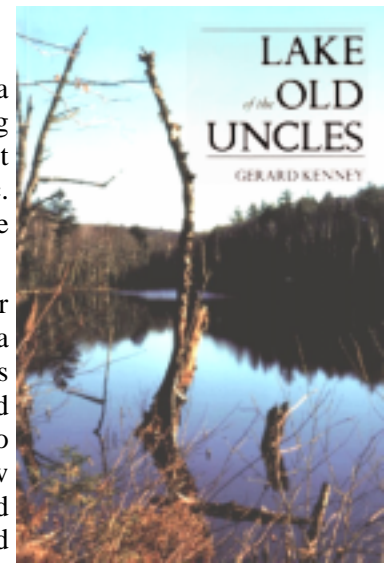
## Country Life

A story that starts like a western movie. Opening scene - the hotel in St Remi d'Amherst, Quebec. One day a stranger rode into town...

Our February speaker **Gerard Kenney** wrote a book, his third, for his daughters and grandchildren who otherwise would not know about the 'wild and wonderful things' that had happened to him. The

stranger rode in from New York by train to inspect and buy lumber. The three daughters of the hotelier decided to teach him French. He courted all three, married one and took her back to New York. She returned briefly to St Remi to give birth to Gerry. For his first 16 years, Gerry lived in New York, spending 2 months each summer in St Remi (French immersion!). While exploring the area he found several abandoned log cabins. Some were 'Jesuit Passage Cabins' built to provide shelter on the trail from Quebec City to Lac St Jean. All were small, typically about 40 square feet - the more wood that was used to build, the less was left for heating!

His summers imbued in him a love of the country and after getting a degree in Telecommunications Engineering and working for 20 years he gave it all up and decided to make maple syrup. With 100 acres of maples, some local help for the tapping and collecting, and his wife, Elaine, in charge of the boiling, he lived at about subsistence



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*Country Life - from page 1*

level on his maple syrup sales and by writing. Some of his articles appeared in *Harrowsmith*.

In 1977 he started cutting and hewing the trees to build his own log cabin. One of the problems was that the best trees were at the wrong side of the lake. At first he swam them across and later towed them with a canoe.

One problem he could not overcome was the poor education available to his daughters, so he moved back to the city, selling the farm but keeping the cabin. To Gerry, the cabin is an oasis of solitude. It is a 4.5 km trek on snowshoes to get there in winter and a 1 km walk in summer. Once there he takes a deep breath and lets nature unfold him.



Gerry illustrated his life with a mix of old black and white photos, sketches and colour pictures. He finished his talk with an excerpt from Robert Service' *Goodbye, Little Cabin*.

**Jack Harvey**, who knew Gerry when they worked in the same department in Bell and who had followed his articles in *Harrowsmith*, did the introduction, and **Tony Baron**, another lover of the backwoods who has himself helped to build cabins, thanked Gerry on our behalf.

## Probus History

The first Probus club in the world was formed in England in 1965 when a recent retiree named **Fred Carhill** started meeting for coffee with several other ex-commuters and decided to form a luncheon club.

In February 1966, **Caterham Rotary Club**, at the urging of **Howard Blanchard**, organized a meeting for retired professional and businessmen aged 60 and over. They coined the name Probus from PROfessional and BUSiness. Howard is regarded as the 'father' of Probus.

## Art for Everyone ...

... was the message of **Jeff Stellick**'s talk in March on the Ottawa School of Art. Jeff is the Executive Director of the School and was joined by another staff member, **Julie Trewartha**, to complete the story.



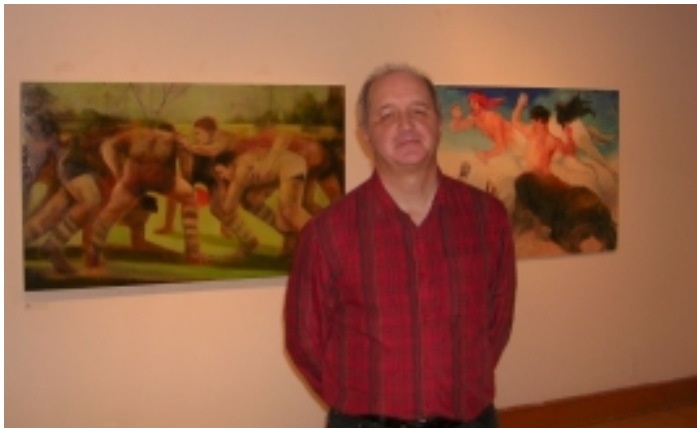
*Ottawa School of Art, 36 George Street in the By-ward Market (next to the Bay Parkade)*

The story starts in 1879 when the Vice-regal couple, the Marquess of Lorne and Princess Louise, were persuaded to found the school. One of the early supporters was Sir John A. Macdonald (\$5.00!). The school has been through several incarnations and after WW II it was the Ottawa Municipal Arts Centre, but since 1976 it has been the Ottawa School of Art. The School continues to grow and opened a campus in Orleans this year.

OSA offers courses from recreational to fine arts diplomas in all aspects; painting in all its forms, sculpture, ceramics, photography, print making, new media and a wide variety of specialized short courses. Students in the recreational classes come from all walks of life and are of all ages - currently from the very young up to 88. A group well represented is families of the diplomatic corps. Summer and March break camps for children are very popular and at the end of summer, apart from dozens of left over lunch bags, there is a selection of clothing which could form an exhibition in its own right.

Exhibitions are held in three Galleries. The main gallery and the Lee Matasi gallery are at the School (36 George Street). The newest gallery, 3 times the size of the main gallery, is at the Bob MacQuarrie Centre in Orleans.

*continued opposite*



*Jeff Stellick in the Main Gallery at the OSA  
The current exhibition (to May 10th) is 'Trojan Horse', paintings and  
sculptures by Erin Robertson and Pamela Cockcroft-Lassere*

When Jeff answered his own question, *Why is art education important?* his passion for art was immediately apparent. He gave many reasons: art is an expression of the human spirit; it gives the joy of a job well done; art is a visual language - you learn to read, you should learn to read art; art is about values; great art, past and present deals with human concerns in a very real way.

Julie provided some facts and figures. The school is open 7 days a week, 48 weeks a year. In the 2007/8 school year it provided \$34,000 in bursaries. Over the past 5 years workshops were set up in community centres to attract the underprivileged and poor - they now have 700 children involved.

**Joyce Wright**, a past student at the school, introduced Jeff. **Lenore Porter**, in thanking Jeff and Julie commented that the OSA has been part of turning 'grey' Ottawa into one of the coolest cities.

[www.artottawa.ca](http://www.artottawa.ca)

## Guests and New Member

Our guests in February were Jay Chodolak, Gerry & Jeanne Ruygrok, Bruce Dodd, Ruth McVeigh, Rev. Bill Brown and Jim Findlay. We hope they enjoyed their visit and that we will see them again, soon.

When is a new member not a new member? Connie McCann-Wilkes rejoined after an absence due to the stairs at PPBC. Our move is paying off!

## More History

Probus Clubs were introduced to New Zealand in 1974, Australia in 1976 and Canada in 1987.

**John Reynolds Morris** introduced Probus into Canada after seeing it in action in Australia and New Zealand. The first club was the **Probus Club of Cambridge**.

## June 24th - Dr. David Shanahan

D'Arcy McGee is the only Canadian politician to be assassinated and Patrick James Whelan was hanged for his murder. On March 12th (CBC Radio), Dr. Shanahan said, "You look at the trial and you look at the evidence. It's just a farce."

Dr. Shanahan will talk to us on *D'Arcy McGee and the Fenians*.

## Arthur Buck - Probus President

We were not able to carry Arthur Buck's year end message in our January edition, so we are including extracts from it today.

It's hard to believe that we're at the end of another year--and boy what a year it has been. Our efforts across this Country have brought us to 200 Clubs, .... the "long sought after" number and now we can set our sights on a new target ... perhaps 250. My thanks to all who helped to make this growth happen and may it continue !

And "Rendezvous 2008---Catch the Wave"---held in Saint John N.B. in late September, which turned out to be a "super" success. The---food---fellowship---entertainment---tours---and not to forget the discussions & the comments from the workshops---left us with much pride about the benefits of belonging to such a great group called "PROBUS". Our Board will be discussing many of the recommendations brought up during the workshops, particularly those dealing with improved communications, and sharing more information between Clubs.

A very sincere "Congratulations" to the Saint John Clubs, their non Club volunteers---and to all our members who were there to enjoy their efforts.

There still remains with "yours truly" my wish to see our Clubs increasing our efforts to obtain more "media" coverage of our meetings and the messages from our speakers. I still find that in many of our communities, the name Probus, and "what is it" or "who are they", is still a commonly asked question.

The Probus Club of Saskatoon has had their Charter (# 10) re-instated after a number of years of inactivity and we welcome them back to a relationship with all of the Clubs across Canada.

Remember, a good "resolution" for 2009 is to offer a smile... a warm greeting... and an open mind to everyone we meet.

**Arthur Buck**

President

## Nature Nook

This is not likely to be a regular feature but two recent issues are of interest in Alta Vista.

### Feed Them and They will Come

Alta Vista is plagued by a very large murder of crows. They can be seen at dusk crossing Smyth Road to nests on the hospital grounds. **Counc. Peter Hume** said that they will stay in the area as long as there is food available.



Make sure that anything they like to eat is not left at the curbside in garbage bags but put in containers - either garbage cans or (preferably) composting bins.

**Barry Turner** told us that crows are not protected as migratory birds but because shotguns are frowned upon in the city the only way to reduce their numbers is to attack their nests. We haven't checked with **Allen Taylor** but there must be a reason the little platform at the top of a ship's mast is called a crow's nest.

For many residents putting 'murder' and 'crows' in the same sentence sounds like a good idea.

### Watch your Ash

The emerald ash borer can destroy a mature ash tree in two years. It has been working its way across North America from the west and there is an infestation in the St Laurent - 417 area so the many ash trees in Alta Vista are under threat.



The beetle can fly but it has been spread more when dying trees are cut down for lumber and firewood! This has led the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to declare quarantine areas.

What this means for property owners with ash trees we have yet to find out.

The beetle makes serpentine channels under the bark which inhibit the flow of moisture up the tree. The first signs of the effect is a dying crown.

## Poetry Corner

**Gerry Kenney** ended his talk with a recitation of *Good-Bye, Little Cabin* by **Robert W. Service** (1874 - 1958).

O dear little cabin, I've loved you so long,  
And now I must bid you good-bye!  
I've filled you with laughter, I've thrilled you with song,  
And sometimes I've wished I could cry.  
Your walls they have witnessed a weariful fight,  
And rung to a won Waterloo:  
But oh, in my triumph I'm dreary to-night --  
Good-bye, little cabin, to you!

Your roof is bewhiskered, your floor is a-slant,  
Your walls seem to sag and to swing;  
I'm trying to find just your faults, but I can't --  
You poor, tired, heart-broken old thing!  
I've seen when you've been the best friend that I had,  
Your light like a gem on the snow;  
You're sort of a part of me -- Gee! but I'm sad;  
I hate, little cabin, to go.

Below your cracked window red raspberries climb;  
A hornet's nest hangs from a beam;  
Your rafters are scribbled with adage and rhyme,  
And dimmed with tobacco and dream.  
"Each day has its laugh", and "Don't worry, just work".  
Such mottoes reproachfully shine.  
Old calendars dangle -- what memories lurk  
About you, dear cabin of mine!

I hear the world-call and the clang of the fight;  
I hear the hoarse cry of my kind;  
Yet well do I know, as I quit you to-night,  
It's Youth that I'm leaving behind.  
And often I'll think of you, empty and black,  
Moose antlers nailed over your door:  
Oh, if I should perish my ghost will come back  
To dwell in you, cabin, once more!

How cold, still and lonely, how weary you seem!  
A last wistful look and I'll go.  
Oh, will you remember the lad with his dream!  
The lad that you comforted so.  
The shadows enfold you, it's drawing to-night;  
The evening star needles the sky:  
And huh! but it's stinging and stabbing my sight --  
God bless you, old cabin, good-bye!

## How to find us

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month except May 2009 and every December (2nd Wednesday) in the Hall of Gloucester Presbyterian Church, 91 Pike Street (corner of Lorry Greenberg Drive).