



Merry Christmas!
... and a Happy New Year



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

December 2009, #53



Management Committee 2010



At the AGM in November, the members elected **Lenore Porter** as President and **Bob Atchison** as Vice-president and Secretary. **Allan Porter** was re-elected as Treasurer.

Members elected to the Management Committee were:

- Marie-Neige Atchison** ("Sunshine")
- Merle Brown** (Membership)
- Kawsar Kruithof** (Telephone)
- Ada McEwan** (Hospitality & Special Events)
- Wib Neal** (Membership)
- Audrey Reekie** (Hospitality & Special Events)
- John Wright** (Program & Editor)

In addition there are three ex-officio committee members:

- Eva Hammond** (Rotary Liaison)
- Robin Rousham** (Rotary Liaison)
- Ed Borza** (Past-president)

We would welcome additional members on the Management Committee, particularly a Secretary and a second person on Program, plus 1 or 2 members 'at large' to help out anywhere that needs a little more attention - inter-club relations, Spring Fling liaison, etc. etc.

Also, we are always on the lookout for people to introduce and thank speakers and to do the write-ups for *The Probe*.

Speakers 2009

Thanks are due to our Program Committee for engaging a wide range of excellent speakers.

January - **John Young** - Robbie Burns at 250

February - **Gerry Kenney** - Lake of the Old Uncles

March - **Jeff Stellick** - Art for Everyone

April - **Gerry Maffre** - Canada's Infrastructure

May - No speaker - Spring Fling

June - **Dr. David Shanahan** - Darcy McGee and the Fenians

July - 10 Minute Talks by members. **Mike Charrier**, *Canadian Heroes in the Spanish-American War*; **Ed Borza**, *Habitat for Humanity*, **Ken Dye**, *The Office of the Auditor General*; **Paul Stumes**, *What's in a (Country's) Name*; and **Ute Davis** on the Ottawa Opera Scene.

August - **Andrea Miller** - Ottawa Museum Network

September - **Mike Chambers** - Canada and the Olympics

October - **Capt (Navy) Serge Bertrand** - Canada's Navy at Home and Abroad

November - **H.E. Declan Kelly** - Ireland & Canada

December - Christmas Party

The Program Committee relies on suggestions by members as well as looking for speakers on 'hot issues'. If you have a suggestion, please let us know.

The '10 Minute Talks' at our past two July meetings have been popular so we will be looking for 4 or 5 speakers for July 2010. Everyone has a story to tell - why not tell yours?



... and the Telephone Committee

An essential part of our Club's operations is our team of telephone callers.

Marguerite Burns
Pat McClenahan
Elizabeth Haggerty
Dorothy Hubbard
Peggy Kitching
Bob Haughton
Joan Monette
Anne Prichard
Norah Joyce
Allen Taylor
Judy Foreman



are the friendly voices who call every month to make sure everyone knows about our upcoming meetings. We owe them all a big vote of thanks.

By the way, if you do not get called it may be that we have incorrectly copied your telephone number from your membership form. Give **Kawsar Kruithof** a call (613-739-1335) and it will get corrected quickly.

Annual General Meeting November 25, 2009

The AGM was convened following our Club Meeting, with sufficient members to form a quorum, **Ed Borza** (President) in the chair.

President's Report

Ed gave a quick review of the year's activities starting with the move to Gloucester Presbyterian and the warm welcome we received. The successful 'Spring Fling' attracted 242 Probeans from across Eastern Ontario. By our 10th Anniversary we had 147 active members. He went on to thank the members of the Management Committee for their efforts, particularly **Dorothy MacIntosh** and **Bayne Pearen** who are stepping down.

Ed welcomed **Kawsar Kruithof** and **Marie-Neige Atchison** to the Committee. Kawsar has already taken on the rôle of Telephone Coordinator and Marie-Neige will take over Bayne's "Sunshine" rôle.

Financial Business

Allan Porter noted that we had a successful year financially and estimated that our balance at the end of the year will be a healthy \$2,000. (The final report will be published in the February *Probe*.)

Elections

The elections are covered on the front page.

Did you know Bob?

Bob Gayner, whose passing we noted in the August issue, was a member for less than a year, and much of that time he spent travelling. This meant that we did not have much chance to get to know him. We learned much more from the *Ottawa Citizen*, November 12th, below the headline, *Musical tribute to a 'totally remarkable man'*.

Here are four paragraphs from the article.

"He was a retired diplomat, a music lover and a longtime supporter of organizations for young people, so no one was surprised that Robert Gayner became a founding board member of an Ottawa organization dedicated to bringing music to the lives of inner-city children.

On Sunday afternoon* at Ashbury College, several Ottawa musicians will present a fundraising concert to create a scholarship in Gayner's memory that will continue to bring music to those children.

One former colleague recalled that when Gayner worked for the Canadian Consulate General in Chicago and heard that several local children could not take part in activities because their family could not afford sports shoes, Gayner took the children to a store and paid for the shoes himself.

He believed strongly in offering children positive alternatives to street life after being posted in many countries where these opportunities did not exist."

*That was Sunday, November 14th.

It is our loss that we will never have the opportunity to hear Bob as one of our July speakers.

Numb3rs

According to the masthead, this is Issue #53, It follows Issue #50 in October which was the second Issue #50, the first one being in July. For some reason August was numbered 48 and the Special Issue in September was numbered 49.

This is called an extended senior moment. The worrying thing is that **no-one noticed**.

Are we failing in our 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.???**

While we are talking numbers, November set a new record with **121 members and guests**. Two more than the previous high.

Your Navy - At Home and Abroad

As our annual military speaker, we were fortunate to have **Capt. (Navy) Serge Bertrand** who gave us a multi-media view of the Navy with pictures, sound and video. He noted that *Master and Commander* was a great navy movie and certainly gave the impression that he would be the equal of Russell Crowe if it came to hailing the masthead on a dark and stormy night!

Maritime Command has 9,400 military and 4,700 civilian members plus 3,900 reservists. It operates out of Victoria with 1 destroyer, 7 frigates, 1 supply vessel, 1 submarine and 6 coastal defence vessels. Halifax is similar but has 1 more destroyer and 2 more submarines. The total replacement value is \$50 billion. The Navy is half the size of the Army and three-quarters the size of the Air Force.

Capt. Bertrand's talk answered the question posed (of the U.S. Navy) by Samuel P. Huntington, "What function do you perform which obligates society to assume responsibility for your maintenance?" His comprehensive answer opened many eyes to the reach of the Navy. There are 95,000 ships at sea at any given moment and we are tracking all of them, all the time. While we are used to statistics of the freight crossing the Canada-U.S. border, it is dwarfed by maritime commerce which carries 80 to 90 percent of the world's trade, including 50% of global oil production. As an example of the leverage exerted by the Navy, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait the price of oil doubled overnight but three ships deployed in the Persian Gulf paid for our frigate program by the drop in the price of oil.

The importance of the Arctic was one of the topics covered. Up to 25% of the world's undeveloped oil reserves are estimated to be in the Arctic. Article 76 of the UN Law of the Sea allows claim to any part of the Arctic which is an extension of the continental shelf.

Canada with its three ocean coastline is one the largest coastal states in the world. If our own protection was the sum total of the Navy's responsibility, that would be enough to justify its current establishment. But in addition there are anti-piracy patrols off Somalia, supply missions to our ground forces in Afghanistan, humanitarian relief at home and abroad (an aid agency in Haiti commented that the Canadians provided the



most efficient stevedoring operation they had ever seen - and this was an ad hoc effort.)

Capt. Bertrand's closing statement was, "We exist to fight - but if it comes to that we may have failed."

Questions returned to the Arctic "How can we hope to do the job?" "We are designing ice-breaking patrol ships and 6 to 8 of them will be commissioned. They will work closely with our submarines."

"Why are there no assault vessels?" "Amphibious assault is very expensive and in the projected range of possible futures we do not think it is the best use

of our current budget. No defence budget is truly affordable but the current government is receptive to ideas which relate to 'Nation Building'."

To provide a balance between the services, Mike Charrier (Armour) made the introduction and Wib Neal (Air) thanked Captain Bertrand.

Spring Fling 2010

The Best Western Parkway Inn, Cornwall, will be the venue for Spring Fling 2010 on May 18th. Cornwall Probus say that they are planning some pleasant surprises for us!

More details as they arrive.

World Views - Winter 2010

This monthly series of free photo-evenings continues at Bethany Baptist Church, Centrepointe Drive at Baseline. Programs begin at 7:30 pm.

Saturday, **January 30**: The light of Italy. Tuscany, Venice and Rome. By Catherine Kelly

Saturday, **February 27**: Western Delights. Grasslands National Park, Coquihallas, and Yellowstone. By Al Robinson

Saturday, **March 27**: Paddling the Sea of Whales. Quebec's Lower North Shore; end of the road & beyond. By Max Finkelstein

Saturday, **April 24**: A down-to-earth Spiritual Journey. Exploring nature through photos and music. By Barbara Eade, Isobel McGregor and Colin McGregor

For more information: Colin McGregor, 613-820-0598

ALL ARE WELCOME

(Program information courtesy of **John Kruithof**)

Ireland - Canada Relations

It has been said of a Wagner opera that it starts at 8, you sit for 4 hours, look at your watch and it is 8:30. The opposite is true of our November speaker, **H.E. Declan Kelly**, the Irish Ambassador to Canada, Jamaica and The Bahamas. His talk went by so quickly that anyone thinking it only lasted about 5 minutes would not be alone.

His talk was anecdotal touching briefly on many aspects of Ireland-Canada relations in history and to present day. His first point was to dismiss the *Blarney Stone* and *Irish Eyes* as Hollywood inventions and then moved on to how necessary it is for non-resident Ambassadors to Jamaica to attend their specially arranged briefing week - which just happens to be in January.

He recalled his first trip as a junior aide at a conference in India. Their party arrived at 4 am and his job was to get the baggage to the Taj Mahal Hotel only to find that they were not expected. The Indian government had moved everyone to another hotel for security reasons. What made the trip memorable was to find himself rubbing shoulders with the likes of Secretary of State George Schultz and Mother Theresa.

He lifted the corner of curtain on the Irish position in WW II. The Irish being neutral, their legations became hotbeds of espionage to the advantage of the Americans and British.

Ireland is a strong supporter of the U.N. They keep a battalion of 800 men and women available to the U.N. and they have been deployed in Chad and Darfur. They had a battalion in South Lebanon for 25 years.

Four million Canadians including 29% of PEI residents, have Irish ancestors. Toronto, then with a population of 21,000 added 58,000 immigrants. As Ambassador Kelly put it, "The British very kindly gave a lot of my ancestors the opportunity ..." and the Irish have had a presence at every major event in Canada. There was a Kelly at "The Last Spike" - Nelly Kelly ran the local bawdy house! From 1780 to 1830 there were 80 ships sailing back and forth between Waterford and Newfoundland with goods heading west and cod going back. The name in Irish for Newfoundland translates to "Land of the Fish".

In Question Time, the Ambassador spoke about the situation in Northern Ireland and the events which have



led to the virtual disappearance of the border. His praise for "my good friend" John de Chastelain was unstinting. De Chastelain gained the trust of both the IRA and the paramilitary protestants. His culminating achievement

was over weaponry and was the foundation of the power-sharing government and the stability which has replaced the turmoil. John de Chastelain had to negotiate between the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, between Northern Ireland and Ireland and between London and Dublin. The Ambassador also had praise for Tony Blair and particularly for Bill Clinton who was called on to intervene when there was a serious impasse.

Continuing the friendship between the two Irelands, Bill Brown, thanked Mr. Kelly in an accent the Ambassador immediately pegged as Belfast. Joyce Wright, in her introduction, had noted that this was his second posting to Canada and that in his first posting, 1985, he had explored the country, from Vancouver to PEI, in a camper van with his young family.

Christmas Spirit

A family invited friends over for Christmas Dinner. The mother asked her young daughter to say Grace.



"But, I don't know what to say."

"Just say what Mummy says."

The youngster bowed her head and said, "Dear Lord, why did I invite all these people for dinner?"

January Speaker

There will be a speaker in January. The first person invited said, "Yes, could you make it June?" The second - "Yes, but not January". The third, "How about April?". The fourth, "I am moving out of Ottawa but I will pass the invitation to my colleague who is out of the country for 2 or 3 weeks." The 5th, 6th and 7th have yet to reply. But, **there will be a speaker!**

How to find us

We meet at 9:30 for 10 on the 4th Wednesday of each month except December (2nd Wednesday), at Gloucester Presbyterian Church, **91 Pike Street** at the corner of Lorry Greenberg Drive.