



# The Probe

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## Spring Fling 2010

Thirty-five members of the Probus Club of Ottawa – Alta Vista attended the annual Spring Fling held on May 18 this year at Cornwall. For many of us the extent of our visits to Cornwall has been to cross over the bridge en route to the United States. What a wonderful surprise to spend a delightful few hours there attending the 2010 Spring Fling. It was held at the Best Western (much nicer than the one I have stayed at in Dryden Ontario). The food was delicious, especially the crème brûlée. The Cornwall Probus Club did not overlook any detail. The Celtic entertainment, by the award-winning group Brigadoon, was superb and everything was well organized. The “loot bag” contained many interesting items and I am probably the only person at our local supermarket sporting a *Cornwall* shopping bag.

Prior to the lunch I attended the President’s Meeting. Among other things I learned that Probus now has more members than the Rotary Club. I believe that Probus is now negotiating with travel agencies to set up tours at favourable rates.

You will be happy to know that the Alta Vista members comported themselves well at this event. Your president had the highest heels and another member had the best fitting pants.

We look forward to next year’s Spring Fling, which will be hosted by the clubs of Kingston.

*Lenore Porter*

(Ed. Note. Regarding the penultimate paragraph - we are very pleased that our President has recovered so well from her surgery that she can wear high heels. As for the other comment, no photographs were made available.)

## Probus Centre Canada Inc. Officers 2010-2011

The newly elected President of Probus Canada is Gordon Springate of Kelowna, BC replacing Arthur Buck, who takes the title of Past-president. The VP is Keith Trail of Nanaimo, BC, and the Treasurer is Judith Saunders of Ancaster, ON. Our Ontario District #1 Representative, Peter Doyle, takes over as Secretary.

## Canada’s Monarchy

Our speaker at the May meeting, introduced by Ed Borza, was Allan Jones, representing the Monarchist League of Canada. Before retirement Mr. Jones served with the RCAF and CSIS. The Monarchist League of Canada was founded over 40 years ago to defend the Monarchy, largely in response to efforts by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to change the current arrangements.

Mr Jones’ topic was the Constitutional Monarchy in Canada: what it is, its historical background, its importance today and why it would be a good idea to keep it.

A number of important and interesting points were made. There is a distinction between the Monarch (the person) and the Crown (the person and the institutional structure). The Crown in Canada is comprised of the Governor General plus 10 Lieutenant Governors, so Canada could be said to have 11 Crowns. Each Lieutenant Governor has a direct relationship to the Queen not an indirect relationship through the Governor General. The Crown is non-political; the government rules, the Crown reigns. We share our Monarch with 15 other countries. The monarchy gives Constitutional protection above and apart from partisan politics providing continuity and stability to the nation.

Finally Mr. Jones stressed the intangibles of the monarchy. The Crown promotes a sense of civility and community. By adhering to the highest possible standard of conduct and decorum, it gives our country ‘a touch of class’.

The presentation ended with several questions including speculation on the possibility of domestication of the institution through an invitation to a member of the British royal family to become monarch in Canada or even a member of the Dutch royal family. The latter suggestion was enthusiastically supported in some quarters.

Alan Jones was thanked by John Kruithof and presented with a Probus pen to show our appreciation.

*Derry Foreman*

## A Capital Presentation

Dr David Gordon of the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Queen's University talked to us about *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities* which is also the title of a book he co-authored (published by Routledge 2006, 2010).



*Bob Atchison about to present Dr. Gordon with a Probus pen*

His talk was fully illustrated by photographs of several capitals. 'Capital' in this context includes a wider range than might be expected. As well as national capitals, the book considers provincial capitals, super-capitals (New York and Brussels for the UN and EEC respectively), global capitals (Tokyo and London are international financial centres), former capitals and, as a special designation for Rome, imperial capitals. Ottawa, like Canberra, New Delhi and Brasilia, is a political capital.

When it comes to the 'former capital' designation, Canada is well represented. York (Toronto), Montreal, Quebec and Kingston held the title and vied for the opportunity to carry the designation permanently until Queen Victoria decreed that the capital should be Ottawa.\*

Dr Gordon's photographs showed that many capitals have malls in their design which give a vista of an important building or monument. Paris, Canberra, Washington and London are good examples.

One of the primary things to consider in planning a capital city is that implementation takes decades. It follows that a plan needs political support from all the parties that could be in power during implementation and that the organization tasked with implementation must be strong enough to resist fads and fashions.

Dr. Gordon left us with some thoughts on the needs for political management, an implementation agency and a financial strategy which includes funds for symbolic content.

Allen Taylor introduced Dr, Gordon and Bob Atchison thanked him on our behalf.

\*Ed. note: Eric Nichol and Peter Whalley in (*An Unhibited*) *History of Canada* claim that the decision in favour of Ottawa was to combine the respectability of being in Ontario with the ability to get to Quebec before the pubs close.

## Capital City Elements

The major elements found in most capital cities are listed below. Ottawa seems to fare well.

Element	Ottawa
Seat of government	Yes
Key government depts. HQ	Yes
Official residence of head of state	Yes
Official residence of chief political leader	Yes
Embassies, legations, etc	Yes
Final court of appeal	Yes
Places of assembly for national celebrations	?
Repositories of national culture:	
- a national library	Yes
- archives	Yes
- state art museum	Yes
- national cultural museums	Yes
Political and cultural visitors facilities	2011
Memorials and Monuments	Yes
Government Dept. offices	Yes
National Bank	Yes
National performance venue	Yes
National place of worship	?
Research institutes	Yes
Major university	2 !
Major religions HQ	No
City Hall and Mayor's residence	Yes/No

### **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.**

### August 25 - Don Head

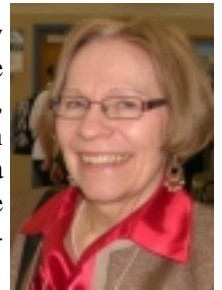
It is just a coincidence that Claudette Cain’s talk included sending some offenders to prison and that our August speaker will be Don Head who may have to look after them. Don is the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada. The CSC is the federal government agency responsible for administering sentences of a term of two years or more. It is responsible for managing institutions of various security levels and supervising offenders under conditional release in the community.

The CSC has been accused of running “Club Fed” and other practices which the media has viewed negatively. The man responsible for running over 50 federal institutions will be able to put everything in context.

(Ed. Note. From my limited experience - one afternoon in the Prince Albert penitentiary - *Club Fed* is a myth.)

### President’s Remarks

Isn’t it funny how, as I get older, my adult children want to know all the details of my life - what I am doing, when and why. One of them even threatened to buy and pay to maintain a cell phone for me so I could always be reached. Now that’s a scary thought - being monitored by your kids.



“Why do you go to that Probus Club?”, another one asked as if his dad, Allan, was staying out too late at a stripper bar. Nevertheless why do we belong to the Probus Club of Alta Vista? I think the primary reason is to learn. Learning isn’t just reinforcing your own biases. We may not always agree with what every speaker espouses any more than we believed a teacher at school. However, we ponder that lesson all the while learning even from the process of disagreeing.

There is nothing anyone can say that will change the way I feel about the Queen, her empty purse and her Corgi dogs or so I thought. It didn’t hurt me one bit to have my prejudices challenged by the speaker from the Monarchist League. Going through life with fixed ideas, be these ideas be based on fear of change or challenges to our egos, is not truly living. So I invite you to come to meetings even if the subject doesn’t appear to interest you. Try and keep an open and inquiring mind.

A second reason for belonging to Probus is to build relationships. No relationship is a waste of time. These days we are communicating more but saying less. Rapid communication isn’t always good communication. As long as human beings have blood in their veins and air in their lungs there will be no replacement for human contact. People are phoned about meetings. Don’t be shy about talking to your callers. That’s why they do the job. They enjoy talking to you. I was really pleased to finally meet my caller—Ann Pritchard. Also, come early, before 10 A.M. That way you can talk to lots of folks. Also please don’t cling to your spouse or friend like dryer lint. No one person can supply all your social needs. It seems there is an unwritten rule that you don’t talk about sex, religion or politics but these subjects can be mighty interesting except perhaps the second or the third. What is not mighty interesting to me are past career accomplishments or grandchildren’s school grades. I just get jealous.

I’ve only been a member of Probus for a couple of years but I’ve learned a lot and met some great people and I hope you will too.

*Lenore Porter*



### May Flyer

Don’t worry if you missed the May Flyer. The most important thing was our annual reminder not to be a mosquito victim. Cover up, use repellent, clear out puddles, avoid gardening at dawn and dusk.

So far, these warnings have been 100% effective in avoiding the West Nile virus.

## New Clubs

One of the inherent responsibilities of Probus Clubs and members is to 'spread the word'. With the successful organization of the 2009 Spring Fling well behind us, perhaps this is not the time to rest on our laurels but to go forth and multiply.

Ottawa has two Probus Clubs, Alta Vista and Kanata. This leaves great areas untouched.

If you have any thoughts of where a new club would fit geographically, where it could meet and anybody who might be willing to lead it (from our Club or outside), please talk to any of the Management Committee.

Geographically New Edinburgh/Rockcliffe/Manor Park and Blackburn Hamlet/Orleans are two possibilities but the meeting places and finding willing workers needs some thought.

If you really want to be a Probus Hero start a club in Quebec. It would be a first for the province.

## Poetry Corner

Continuing last month's Monarchist theme, here is a poem listing the Monarchs since 1066. Each pair of lines rhymes but it is really stretching things quite a bit to call it poetry. It could serve as a useful reminder to children for their history lessons. The last line suggests that it is fairly modern, however, if the last line was originally, 'Edward Eight and George Alive', it may have been older.

Willy, Willy, Harry, Stee,  
 Harry, Dick, John, Harry Three.  
 Edward One, Two, Three, and Richard Two,  
 Henry Four, Five, Six, then who?  
 Edward Four, Five, Dick the Bad,  
 Harrys twain, and Ned the lad.  
 Mary, Lizzie, James the vain,  
 Charlie, Charlie, James again.  
 William and Mary, Anna Gloria,  
 Four Georges, William and Victoria.  
 Edward Seven, Georgie Five  
 Edward, George and Liz ALIVE.

## Probus Pins

Probus Centre Canada has a range of Probus pins for sale. The 5, 10, 15 and 20 year pins are \$5.50 each and may be ordered through our membership desk.

They may look askance at orders for a 20-year pin in a 10-year old club.



## Next Meeting - July 28th

July is a special month in our calendar. We have two events for the price of one. The first is 'In House' day when we will have five members each giving a 10-minute talk and the second is our Annual Indoor Picnic.

The speakers this year are:

**Bob Houghton**, who will pose and attempt to answer the question, *Where is God?* Bob was our main speaker in April, 2001, when he took as his topic, *Science and Spirituality in 3rd Millennium*.

A Somali pirate interviewed by the New York Times said: "We don't consider ourselves sea bandits. We consider sea bandits those who illegally fish in our seas and dump waste in our seas and carry weapons in our seas. We are simply patrolling our seas. Think of us like a coast guard." **Allen Taylor** will draw on his naval experiences to give us an expert view on the Somali pirate problem.

Sometimes TV can just not grasp the atmosphere of a big event like the Vancouver Olympics. **Joan Evans** was a volunteer and found herself in the middle of all the excitement, so we will get a first hand view.

Since retiring as a nurse and Professional Practice Coordinator at the Royal Ottawa Hospital, **Lenore Porter** has done research work for a consulting company on aboriginal health issues. She will tell us about the issues.

**Robin Rousham**, our Rotary Liaison will tell us about *Adventures in Citizenship* - a Rotary program which brings over 200 young people to Ottawa each year. While the program is focussed on governmental processes and institutions at the federal level, it is founded on the premise that the most important attributes of citizenship are determined by Canadians individually and collectively.

## And then there is the picnic -

it will be catered so don't worry about bringing anything.

## How to find us

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

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