



Merry Christmas!
... and a Happy New Year



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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Management Committee 2011



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

Elected Management Committee members are:

- Marie-Neige Atchison** ("Sunshine")
- Merle Brown** (Membership)
- Kawsar Kruithof** (Telephone)
- 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)
- Lenore Porter** (Past-president)

A big gap we need to fill is to replace **Ada McEwan** who has 'retired' from the Special Events position.

Derry Forman will take on report writing for *The Probe* (see pages 3 and 4). We would welcome additional members on the Management Committee - 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.

Speakers 2010

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

January - **Robert C Lee** - *The Canada Company*

February - **Kay Stanley** - *The Ottawa Hospital*

March - **John Wright** - *Long Distance, Please*

April - **Prof David Gordon** - *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*

May - **Allan E Jones** - *The Crown and Canada*

June - **Claudette Cain** - *The Life and Times of a JP*

July - 10 Minute Talks by members. **Bob Haughton**, *Where is God?*; **Robin Rousham**, *Adventures in Citizenship*; **Allen Taylor**, *Somali Pirates*; **Joan Evans**, *With Glowing Hearts (Vancouver Olympics)*; and **Lenore Porter** on *Aboriginal Schools*.

August - **Guy Thatcher** - *The Pilgrims' Way*

September - **James Bissett** - *Immigration*

October - **Col Sean Friday** - *The Canadian Air Force*

November - **Dave Brown** - *Freedom of the Press and Other Issues*

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 three July meetings have been popular so we will be looking for 5 speakers for July 2011. This gives you plenty of time to put your thoughts together and, maybe, pick out a few photographs to show. We can arrange pictures into a slide show for you. Please think about it.



... and the Telephone Committee

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

Lorraine Balderson
 Evelyn Clue
 Judy Foreman
 Elizabeth Haggerty
 Dorothy Hubbard
 Peggy Kitching
 Bob Haughton
 Elvira Matthews
 Pat McClenahan
 Helen McKenzie
 Joan Monette
 Allen Taylor



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, 2010

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

President's Report

Lenore gave a quick review of the year's activities. She went on to thank the members of the Management Committee for their efforts, particularly **Ed Borza** who has served as Vice-president and Treasurer, President & Spring Fling Organizer and Past-president, and **Ada McEwan** who was elected Secretary for 2004-2005 and has since been our Special Events Coordinator. Both Ed and Ada are stepping down.

Lenore welcomed **Michael Davis** and **Bruce Dodd** to the Committee as Vice-president and Secretary, respectively.

Membership stands at 154 making us the largest Club in Eastern Ontario.

Reporting for the Treasurer, **Allan Porter**, Lenore noted that we had a successful year financially with an estimated balance at the end of the year of about \$3,500. (The final report will be published in the February *Probe*.)

(The elections are covered on the front page. Formal minutes will be available from the Secretary.)

President's Farewell

As 2010 draws to a close it is time to ponder our time together.

My last year's New Year's resolution about wearing more interesting, but not costly, earrings was kept. It's funny that you never lose cheap jewellery only the good stuff. I hope you all kept your resolutions - not too difficult if yours were as superficial as mine.

As far as Probus goes we have had a good year. Our finances are in great shape and we have enjoyed a cordial relationship with the staff at Gloucester Presbyterian Church. Our space is clean, safe, and accessible and for this we are grateful.

Picasso said "Action is the foundational key to success" and we have some challenges ahead. Too many people are having difficulty hearing our speakers. We have purchased the appropriate equipment but it is the job of the Management Committee to ensure that it is properly used by the speakers. There are times when silence has the loudest voice but this is not one of them. If you cannot hear a speaker, raise your hand as soon as it is evident that many of those in the back half of the room cannot hear what is being said. Believe me everyone will thank you.

Another challenge we have is to get to know one another better and to facilitate the exchange of ideas. Do come early to meetings and also consider joining the post meeting lunches which will be held from time to time.

It's been great fun getting to know you. You have been very tolerant of my rants about the state of my rather narrow world.

Lenore

Microphone

We are trying out a (cheap) microphone which has a head-band and a long cord. This gives speakers more freedom of movement and, unless they are willing to risk a crick in the neck, they cannot turn away from it.

Please bear with us while we decide if it is what we want or if we should move to a (much more expensive) wireless system or if we should restrict ourselves to very loud speakers.

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.

Col. Sean Friday

As is the Probus Remembrance Day custom, the meeting on October 27 featured a speaker from the Canadian military. Our usual attentive audience listened as Col. Sean Friday updated us on the status of the upgrading of the Canadian military to meet the challenges of the modern age.



Col Friday in his 25 year career to date has participated in missions in the Gulf war, Bosnia and Afghanistan. He was Commanding Officer of the Theatre Support Element at Camp Mirage in Dubai, Canada's forward logistics base in the Gulf which has been closed recently; a victim of a political dispute between the United Arab Emirates and Canada over commercial airline routes.

Currently he is Operational Planning Officer with Canada Command involved in the large scale refurbishment of the equipment of Canada's air force. He was extremely knowledgeable on recent equipment issues such as the acquisition of helicopters to replace the famous and controversial Sea Kings, cargo planes for Transport Command to meet the varied requirements of support at home and abroad, and future F35 fighters to replace the 15 year old F18's. Clearly we are in the uncertain middle of major developments in the air force.

Col Friday also gave a general overview of organization and mandate of the Canadian Forces. The priority of the military remains the defence of Canada, though paradoxically, this has the least day-to-day practical application. Next would follow domestic security and safety issues such as Search and Rescue activities on

land and at sea. Lastly, would be participation with our allies and the UN in international missions, although this is the area which receives most of the popular attention in the press and with the public.

In the question period at the end of the presentation we learned that any search and rescue activities undertaken by the military in the coastal waters of Canada, are paid for by Canada. No financial reimbursement is sought from other countries when the individuals found and/or saved are not residents of Canada. By international agreements each country looks after their own waters and the assumption is that the costs balance out in the long run.

Also, in the course of delicately and peripherally touching on the issue of Russell Williams, we learned that most military personnel, particularly senior personnel, do not live on their bases in Canada but rather in the surrounding community.

January 26 - Commissioner Don Head, Corrections Canada

In June, Claudette Cain talked about Provincial offences and bail hearings for more the serious crimes. Don Head will take it a step further and tell us what happens after a judge passes sentence for a federal offence.

Mr. Head has seen all aspects of the corrections system. He started as a Corrections Officer and rose to Deputy Warden and Warden, while serving in several institutions. In 2002 he was appointed Senior Deputy Commissioner and in 2008 he was promoted to his current position as Commissioner of Corrections.

Two dates for your Calendar

Spring Fling 2011

The Probus Club of Gananoque will host next year's Spring Fling on **Tuesday, May 17th.**

Rendezvous 2011

All Probus Members are invited to Probus Rendezvous 2011 in Vancouver from **September 13th to 15th.** The Conference hotel is the Sheraton Wall Centre in downtown Vancouver.

Over-qualified?

Trevor Manuel, the South African finance minister from 1996 to 2009, got his job when the aging Nelson Mandela asked, at a cabinet meeting, who was a good economist. Mr. Manuel raised his hand thinking Mr. Mandela had asked who was "a good communist."

November Speaker - Dave Brown

Dave Brown has been a newspaper man since he was 16. He is a self-made man who didn't go to university but went straight to work from school. He maintains that this made him a harder worker. People who have gone to university feel they don't have to work as hard, he suggests. He started in Manitoulin Island and worked in North Bay and Sudbury before arriving in Ottawa to join the old Ottawa Journal and then the Citizen. Although he retired from the daily grind in August of 2003 he still contributes his thoughts in the Citizen once a week.



As agreed, Brown spoke to us on what was on the top of his mind on the day. He was in a serious frame of mind. He gave us some of his thoughts on some issues mostly involving freedom of the press and human rights as he has watched events over his life time as a columnist.

The firing of Citizen editor Russell Mills. Mills had printed editorials critical of Prime Minister Chretien. He was subsequently fired by the newspaper owners who may have been concerned that the editorials might affect the licenses required for other non-print media. For Brown the matter concerned the possible negative effects of cross-ownership of media and the importance of owners of newspapers not attempting to control the people who write the news, especially columnists.

Electronic news media. Brown sees the increasing volume of new media as cutting out the middle man in the delivery of news from the writer to the consumer. The possibilities for centralization of news production, say nationally rather than locally, cut out many of the intermediary and mediating staff at a newspaper. This is bad for employment prospects for some but may or may not improve the product. There is more direct access for the consumer but a tidal wave of more raw information for the consumer to try to comprehend. The net effect of these changes in news delivery is not clear, he suggests.

Family Courts. Brown sees a major problem with their operation, in fact, he described them as an abomination. Informal application of common sense in these difficult personal matters has been replaced by the constraints of law and experts. Expert witnesses (psychologists) acting out of preconceived notions and dubious science dominate the proceedings and the decisions made. Child protection workers must be careful and err on the side of self-protection when considering whether to take children into custody. When mistakes are made by the system they cannot be corrected within the bounds of the legal system.

Marc Lepine. Brown feels that reporting on the Marc Lepine tragedy was not complete as it neglected to a large extent, some aspects of Lepine's background. Born Gamil Gharbi, the son of an Algerian father, Lepine may have selected attractive females for killing because he was influenced by Islamic Wahabi beliefs that this would ensure their servitude to him in the next life. These possibilities were generally ignored and the issue was presented solely with a feminist perspective in the press.

Women's shelters. Brown investigated and had problems over a column on this issue. The numbers don't add up. There appeared to him to be a logical disconnect between the amount of available shelter and the apparent need. There were a significant number of shelters and beds provided in the city and these were always filled, but there was a scarcity of records with the police of assaults on women and hospitals of injuries treated. Again, Brown seems to suggest we are not being provided with the complete picture on this issue.

Brown left us with lots of food for thought. We are perhaps not being well enough served by our news media on some issues.

Ed Borza introduced Dave and Lynne Bond thanked him and presented him with a Probus pen, though I am sure he normally uses a computer for his columns these days.

Parting shot

Found along the wayside on the information highway: "The combination 'o-u-g-h' can be pronounced nine different ways. The following sentence contains them all.

"A rough-coated, dough-faced, thoughtful ploughman strode through the streets of Scarborough, and after falling into a slough, he coughed and hiccoughed."

(My filing system [Ha!] disgorged this without being asked, as a yellowed clipping from one of Dave Brown's columns in a long-ago Ottawa Citizen. JW)