



The Probe

Est. September 1999

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

February 2011, #60

“That’s Entertainment”

For a change we decided to provide our own entertainment for our Christmas Party. It started like a service of *Lessons and Carols* with our host at Gloucester Presbyterian, **Rev. Denise Allen-Macartney** giving readings on the shepherds and the wise men each followed by the appropriate carol. **Ed Borza** gave a rather different, but nonetheless salutary, lesson with a recitation of *Have some Madeira, m’Dear*.

The program continued with carols, sung by the Probus Alta Vista Chorale, ably led by **Bob Atchison** and accompanied by **Julia Mills**. Between the carols, **Joan Evans** read selections (made by **Audrey Reekie**) from Dylan Thomas’ *A Child’s Christmas in Wales* and **John Wright**, who also acted as MC, described a little known feature of Noah’s Ark.

As the men were doing Bing Crosby imitations while dreaming of a *White Christmas*, Santa’s little helpers (**Ada, Audrey, Marie-Neige**) were stacking the tables with Christmas goodies. Carol singing is a strenuous business and the group clearly felt the need for sustenance. They quickly made a large hole in the assembled fare.

Everyone left in a happy mood, replete physically and spiritually.

Dues 2011

Our By-laws state: “The Management Committee may terminate the membership of any member who fails to pay the annual membership fee by March 31 and shall terminate the membership as of June 30.”

No-one on the Committee wants any part of enforcing this, so please check the sign-in sheet and make sure it says “Pd 11” against your name.

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.

Meet the Prez

As is our custom, we sent our team of investigative reporters to find out more about our new President, Bob Atchison. We already knew he could sing, that he wears an Engineer’s ring and is married to Marie-Neige, so that’s where we started.



Probe: Family?

Bob: As you said, I’m married to Marie-Neige. The family, two boys, two girls, three grandchildren and two dogs, is in or close to Ottawa and so we have frequent family get-togethers - never a dull moment!

Probe: What was your branch of Engineering and where did you study?

Bob: I graduated in 1953 in Engineering Physics from the U of T and later went on to an MBA. After two short jobs, Canadian General Electric in Peterborough and the Defence Research Board in Valcartier, I joined Atomic Energy of Canada in 1955 as a reactor physicist at the NRX Reactor near Chalk River. Three years later I was designing containment systems for the Douglas Point and Pickering Nuclear Power Stations, and then preparing a safety report for Hydro-Quebec’s Gentilly Nuclear Power Station.

Probe: There is not much nuclear activity in Ottawa, when did you move here?

Bob: In 1974. I joined the Atomic Energy Control Board, now called the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission – which made the news three years ago when the Government fired the President - as director of Safety Evaluations, and I eventually retired in 1998.

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March 23rd - Gerry Lynch - RCMP

Capping a career which went from uniform to commercial crime operations and international policing, Assistant Commissioner Lynch's most recent appointment was as RCMP Senior Envoy to Mexico and The Americas. He will talk about this appointment and international law enforcement capacity building by the RCMP.

Meet the Prez - from page 1

Probe: Let's move on to the singing.

Bob: I have always enjoyed singing and have had some formal studies. Being a member of the Mendelssohn Choir in Toronto for four years was the highlight but I have also sung in operetta and in other choirs. We are regular attendees at the NAC for music series, opera and ballet. Leading the Alta Vista Chorale at the Christmas Party was fun.

Probe: You listed "Outings" under interests on your Probus application form. What sorts of outings interest you?

Bob: I started canoe-camping in Algonquin Park when I was living in Deep River and downhill skiing while I was in Quebec. We now have a place at Mont-Cascades Village where I have been on the Board for many years.

Probe: Other interests?

Bob: My main interest is my church – the First Church of Christ, Scientist. I am currently the property manager and I have served on the executive board many times. One afternoon a week I serve at the Christian Science Reading Room and I'm on the board of the Concord Lodge Association, a benevolent organization for Christian Scientists.

Probe: Is that all???

Bob: Well, I am the church's representative on the Capital Region Interfaith Council and Interfaith Ottawa, and, by the way, I'm a member of Probus.

Probe: You've been a member since 2005, how did you get started.

Bob: We were invited to come to hear John Lupton talking about the Perley-Rideau Veterans Centre. We liked the way things were done and the people we met so we decided to join and get involved.

Probe: We are very glad you did. Now the big question, what have you got against cats?

Bob: I am not going to go into that. Suffice to say that there are no more cats in our family.

Probe: Thanks, Bob. Have a good year.

Head of Corrections

Don Head, Commissioner of Corrections Canada listed his six major priorities in his January talk.

Safe, secure environment. The focus is on drug inhibition. Some of the ingenious attempts to smuggle in drugs range from throwing eviscerated dead birds over the wall to packing babies diapers. Drug sniffing dogs make a big difference and even putting an untrained dog near the entrance has caused some visitors to return to their cars for a few minutes.

Transition – penitentiary to community supervision. Through staff training, supplemented by some private sector resources, the recidivism rate has dropped significantly. While 1.5% of violent and 3% of non-violent criminals reoffend while under supervision, and others later, 80% of released prisoners do not return to the federal system.



Alex Meldrum making a point in conversation with Commissioner Head after the meeting.

Special needs - particularly aboriginal inmates. Aboriginal culture is a very important consideration and aboriginal inmates who make a commitment to culture are on the right path. Tribal elders are brought in to reinforce those cultural values.

Mental health. Don stated that this was one of the more troubling aspects of dealing with inmates. Diagnosis, and hence treatment, has become much more sophisticated over the 30 years he has worked in corrections but it still sometimes comes down to noticing "something odd". 13% of the federal population and 27% of women in federal jails have mental health problems and the reduction in provincial health services has put more people behind bars.

... continued opposite

April 27th - Brian Hull

Brian will take us back to Bytown, 160 years ago, and the role of one of the major figures of those days, Nicholas Sparks, his great-great-great-grandfather.

Don Head - from page 2

Management practices. These are much the same as in any large organization, financial planning, human resource planning and constant training and re-training to ensure that staff keep up to the job.

Developing relationships/partnerships with other organizations. Trying to make sure that support, jobs and housing are available so that the risk of re-offending is reduced.

Some of the background information provided included that there are 18,000 staff to look after 13,700 incarcerated inmates and 8,700 under supervision which requires a budget of \$2.5 billion. Inmates are kept busy from getting up to going to bed – no idle hands. Opportunities are made available to learn job skills and to improve education – the majority of offenders do not have high school diplomas. Those with longer sentences may go on to university degrees. There are 57 penitentiaries in Canada, the oldest being Kingston Pen, built in 1835.

There is an opportunity for anyone to get involved and on any given day there are 9,000 volunteers in AA, church groups, self-help groups. Anyone wanting to contribute can contact the Citizens Advisory Committee through the web site:

www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/cac/mission-eng.shtml

There were many questions.

Inhibiting use of cell-phones? Jamming is one way. Sniffer dogs have been trained to find lithium batteries.

Farm program closure? Not economical (revenue \$M4, cost \$M7). Job skills taught to the 300 inmates were not being used on the outside.

International aspects? Canada is a signatory to international conventions and is regarded internationally as a leader. There are, currently, 20 officers in Haiti.

Solitary? Called segregation, usually maximum is 30 to 40 days,. Some request it for their own safety.

New penitentiaries? Plans include a new building for older inmates 25% are serving life which means that many will grow old in prison. With an aging population comes a need to provide palliative care.

John Wright introduced Commissioner Head and **Bob Atchison** presented a Probus pen and thanked him to warm and appreciative applause.

Probus Finances in 2010

Our club’s revenues in 2010 were lower than in 2009 mainly due to not hosting the Spring Fling. However, our opening balance for 2010 was 3 times that for 2009, mainly because we made a profit. Note that membership receipts are about the same for both years.

Most expenditures in 2010 were very similar if not a bit lower than those of 2009. The number of paid members in both years was the same. Since we ended 2010 with more money it appears that our membership fees are sufficient to carry us through 2011 .

	2009	2010
Opening Balance	904	2,715
Receipts		
Memberships		
-Current Year	840	*820
-Following Year	*1,740	1,690
Loonie Bin	589	671
Spring Fling '09	5,930	--
SF '10 (Cornwall)	--	812
Total Receipts	10,003	3,993
+ Opening Balance		
Expenditures		
Probus Centre Fees	368	368
Pins and Name Badges	113	--
G'ster Presbyterian	1,130	846
Church + Facilities		
Communications	226	113
Office Supplies	203	--
Refreshments	286	168
Bank Charges	48	48
Speaker Gifts	137	151
Sunshine Committee	--	--
Membership Committee	--	--
Indoor Picnic	273	279
Christmas Entertainment	213	--
Christmas Donation	60	100
Other	--	--
Hosting SF 2009	5,136	--
Spring Fling 2010	--	812
Total Expenditures	8,192	2,884
Closing Balance	2,715	3,824

Allan Porter

Treasurer

* The majority of dues for a given year are received by the end of the previous year. The total dues received for 2010 are \$1,740 (received in 2009) and \$820 (received in 2010) for a total of \$2,560.



club no. 101 chartered with probus centre canada

Probus Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

sponsored by the rotary club of ottawa

Take a look at our new web site

www.probusaltavista.ca

We now have a web site. The front page tells you the next two speakers and other pages show the Management Committee, past speakers and their topics, a membership form, all the past issues of *The Probe* (some with the photos in colour), our constitution and by-laws, bus times, links to other useful sites and a page which we are not sure what to do with. At the moment, it shows the Parliament Buildings as they look at the time you open the page.

Spring Fling

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!



Spring Fling 2011 will be hosted by the Probus Club of Gananoque at the Italo-Canadian Club in Kingston on Tuesday, May 17th. The Club is easy to get to being just off the 410. The lunch (\$30) will be a choice of chicken, fish or vegetarian.

Apart from Kingston Town Crier, Chris Whyman, we can look forward to hearing the seven member Cranberry Dixie and Swing Band.

World Views

Free Monthly Photo Evenings - Winter 2011 Program

Bethany Baptist Church

CentrepoinTE Drive West at Baseline Road

Programs begin at 7:30 p.m. - All welcome

Rendezvous 2011

Vancouver, September 13th to 15th, 2011

The planning group for **Rendezvous 2011** are providing regular updates on the program and other activities surrounding the event. To make a trip to Vancouver even more memorable, they have made arrangements for pre- and post-conference tours.

The Tours available include:

- Pre-conference Alaska Cruise - Hubbard Glacier from September 4th to 11th
- Post-conference 7 day Alaska Cruise – Inside Passage from September 18th to the 25th
- Granville Island and Harbour Dinner Cruise
- Grouse Mountain
- Vancouver Island
- Vancouver City and Museum of Anthropology
- Vancouver Art Gallery
- Two Day Rail/Coach to Whistler
- Two Day Motor Coach to Whistler

All the details are available on their website at

<http://www.probusrendezvous.com>

where you can also find the latest information on the conference.

For more information call Sholto Cole at 613-721-3367.

Saturday, Feb. 26 – Memories of Old Mexico and Pacific North West. By Dan Jones

Saturday, Mar. 26 – Lava, Salt, Sand: Journey to Danakil, northern Ethiopia. By Tom Frisch

Saturday, Apr. 30 – Namibia: People, Wildlife & Spectacular Scenery SW Africa. By Bill Young

Information courtesy of **John Kruithof**