



*Merry Christmas!*  
*... and a Happy New Year*



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

# The Probe

Est. September 1999

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ottawa

December 2011, #65



## Management Committee 2012



At the AGM in November, the members elected **Michael Davis** as President and **Joan Evans** as Vice-president. **Bruce Dodd** and **Allan Porter** were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. **Lynne Bond** was elected to the Committee and will work on the Program.

Re-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)
- Bob Atchison** (Past-president)

## Thanks

We are always looking for people to introduce and thank speakers. If you are willing to help out on a general basis or if there is a particular speaker on the schedule you know or admire or if you have a particular interest in the topic, please let Michael or one of the Management Committee know.

## Speakers 2011

Thanks are due to our Program Committee for engaging a wide range of excellent speakers. We kept to our pattern having 5 'In-house' speakers and a picnic in July, a military or wartime theme in October, being close to Remembrance Day, and a party in December.

January - **Don Head** - Corrections Canada

February - **Joy Forbes** - One Room Schoolhouses

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

April - **Sylvain Berthiaume** - RCMP International

May - **Paul Henry** - City Archives

June - **Jeff Turner** - United Way

July - 10 Minute Travelogues by members. **Mike Charrier**, *Italy and War Graves*; **Joyce Wright**, *Malta*; **Allen Taylor**, *Ukrainian Waterways*; **Joan Evans**, *Baltic Cruise*; and **John Wright**, *Northern Europe on a Eurail Pass*.

August - **Charles Paradis & Cassandra Fast** - Bank of Canada Currency Museum

September - **H.E. Andrew Needs** - NZ - After the Earthquakes

October - **Cdr. Jason Armstrong** - Your Royal Navy

November - **John Howard** - The Royal Oak

We are already looking for our July 2012 speakers so if you have a story from your career, hobbies, interest or life in general, please share it with us. We can convert physical photographs, old black & whites or colour, and 35mm slides to slideshows.

Suggestions for speakers? Contact **Lynne Bond** or **John Wright**.



## ... and the Telephone Committee

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

Lorraine Balderson,  
Pat McClenahan,  
Helen McKenzie,  
Elizabeth Haggarty,  
Dorothy Hubbard,  
Peggy Kitching,  
Bob Haughton,  
Dorothy MacIntosh,  
Evelyn Clue,  
Elvira Matthews,  
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 23, 2011

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

### President's Report

Bob gave a short review of the year's activities, covering the meetings, the pizza lunches and the visit to Kingston for the *Spring Fling*. He thanked the Management Committee members and our telephone callers for their work on behalf of the Club and particularly for their support of him during the past year.

### Treasurer's Report

**Allan Porter** presented a snapshot of the financial situation of which the key item is that we have \$2109.89 in the bank. He assured us that, although being Treasurer of our Probus is a daunting task, he did behave himself (unlike head of IMF) and did not invest our vast wealth in questionable high yield bonds. The result is that our club is in sound shape financially and can meet its expenses in the coming year. His full report for 2011 will be published in the February *Probe*.

### Elections ...

... are covered on the front page.

Formal minutes will be available from the Secretary.

## President's Farewell Message

Funny how time seems to accelerate as we get older! As I reflect on the events of this past year --- the many interesting speakers, the summer picnic, the Christmas party, the Spring Fling in Kingston, and our pizza lunches at the Colonnade --- it was a pretty good year, and has passed by so quickly! But best of all was looking forward to seeing familiar faces each month and sharing stories with a whole new group of friends.

Rotary certainly had a great idea when they made formation of these stress-free Probus Clubs possible. While we don't have any fund-raising responsibilities to add to our glory, our association with past prestigious Rotarians such as Michel Debre, P.M. of France, Thomas Edison, Prince Frederik of Denmark, Prince Rainier III of Monaco, Neil Armstrong, Astronaut, Walt Disney, King Baudouin of Belgium, Prince Bernhard of The Netherlands, and John F. Kennedy, Pres. of USA, does impart a certain panache to our organization, and of course we have also enjoyed the active participation of our current Rotary liaisons Robin Rousham and Eva Hammond

I certainly encourage you all to come earlier to our meetings, to wear your name tags and to go out of your way to say hello and to be welcoming --- you never know who may be a relative newcomer or who may be just plain shy. And, invite others whom you think would enjoy our program to attend a meeting or two. We do have some attrition as you can imagine. Thank you all for your support and camaraderie.

**Bob**

## 2011 Attendance Stars ...

... go to **Lorraine Balderson, Bob Haughton** and the **Wrights** who signed in at every meeting. Honourable mentions to **Lynne Bond, the Borzas, Sheila Hammel, the Kruithofs** and **Wib Neal**.

Of some concern are the 22 members who paid for 2010 and/or 2011 and did not sign in at all this year.

## Spring Fling 2012

Next year the Annual Eastern Ontario Probus Luncheon will be hosted by the Probus Club of Perth on May 15th. Details later.

## 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**.

## Meet me at the Oak

**John Howard** thought that he and his partners were going into the business of selling good ale and hearty food but they found out that it was just a front for acting as tax collectors!



On a trip to the UK in 1977 John saw that although the economy was down, the pubs were full. In 1980, noting that there were no pubs in Ontario, he decided to fill the gap and opened the *Royal Oak* at 318 Bank Street.

The first obstacle was that the Liquor Control Board only licensed restaurants and taverns, not pubs - they chose to be a restaurant. They painted, "Serving Traditional English Pub Food" on the window and were made to scrape off 'Pub'. Next they were made to put curtains across the windows so that passers-by would not see people consuming alcohol.

The rule at that time was that customers had to buy more food than liquor. They successfully argued that this was not sustainable as liquor had gone up by 26% (taxes) in 2 years where food costs had only risen by 5%.

That was just the start. Then there was Health and Safety and the City Health Inspectors (who always arrived in the middle of Friday lunch service), then Workmen's Compensation regulations, Labour Relations, with constraints on hiring and firing, Fire Department (always at peak times), Music (keep records of everything played), Employment Equity and the Server Intervention Program - which is a \$50 course which all servers must take, paid for by the employer.

John went through all these government programs - some local, some provincial and some federal - with anecdotes and wry good humour. For example, when they hired a good oriental cook, the Employment Equity

people, who had not thought about it before, immediately wanted to know why there were not more.

John covered some of the challenges over the years. High interest rates in the late 80's meant tighter cost control. Recession, the hi-tech meltdown and GST in the early 90's were bad enough but worst of all was the smoking ban. Business dropped 15% and meant an 18 month struggle which they survived where many did not. The extension of the smoking ban to outdoor patios will cause more difficulties.

Over the past 30 years there has been a growing sophistication in Ottawa. There is no demand for Blue or Canadian but instead, Guinness and Stella Artois (Editor's note: and Smithwicks), and pub food has gone 'up-market'. Where John and his partners started with a \$75,000 bank loan it would take about \$1 million today. The chain has grown to 14 pubs and employs 400 people, many of whom have made it a 15 to 20 year career.

John offered one piece of advice to anyone thinking of opening a pub - don't do it!

There were many questions:

Why not in the Market? It is a problem area.

Use of the word *Pub*? Still not in the window.

How did you avoid the fate of the Ritz? Close personal attention.

Is everything standard across the chain? No. Each is individual. We do not take the 'cookie cutter' approach.

**Robin Rousham** introduced John, noting that he has a M.A. in History and had a 20 year Public Service career. His last job was Director of Small Airports. **Joyce** and **John Wright** thanked John Howard on our behalf. Joyce also told us about the oaks that John had planted at the Billings Playground for her community.

## The Royal Oak

Charles', son of the beheaded Charles I, attempt to regain his crown was crushed by the Roundheads at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. After escaping from the battlefield, the Pendrill family harboured him in their woods. When the searchers came near, he hid in an oak tree.

After Cromwell's death, Charles was offered the crown and returned to London on his 30th birthday, 29 May 1660. The populace could again drink ale and eat rich food. As Charles II, he declared May 29th to be Royal Oak Day. On May 29th profits from Ottawa's Royal Oaks go to charity.

## Your Royal Navy

Illustrated with over 100 photographs plus charts, diagrams and maps, Cdr. Jason Armstrong gave us a thorough briefing on Canada's Royal Navy from its beginning in 1910, with 2 old cruisers and 704 men, to the present, and a glimpse into the future.

The first Director of the RCN was Sir Charles Kingsmill who stated his mission as, "The building of warships and the training of officers and sailors to put those ships confidently in harm's way when it mattered to Canadians to do so." - which is still the Navy's goal.

At the start of WW II, the RCN had 13 vessels and 2,000 men. This expanded to 373 fighting ships with over 90,000 men. Today there are 9,500 regulars, 4,100 reservists and 4,600 civilian personnel. The 31 vessels include 4 submarines, which Cdr. Armstrong described as Canada's most strategic military asset, surpassing even CF-18 jet fighters.

Since our last talk on the Navy, it has been busy. The supply ships have delivered aid to Haiti and supported our troops in Afghanistan. Frigates have shepherded food aid ships past the Somali pirates. Navy clearance divers specializing in explosive ordnance disposal have been at the sharp end in Afghanistan.

Looking at the RCN's role in the next few decades, Cdr. Armstrong quoted 4 areas of influence: Diplomacy, Constabulary, Military and Developmental. On the diplomatic front, RCN ships can visit the vast majority of countries in the world and can open up trade routes, initiate discussions and support GOC policy. An example of constabulary duty is the work against the Somali pirates; Military - the support work off Libya and Developmental - the work in Haiti.

A point of key interest to Canada is the Arctic. Canada is an arctic nation and holds a special sense of stewardship for the region. As the competition for resources intensifies, sovereignty is being challenged. This is why new ships will be built with the capability to operate in the north on a persistent basis.

Jason concluded with a view of world trade. There are 95,000 ships at sea at any one time, moving 90% of the world's commerce including 50% of its oil. Ships have become the warehouses of the world, delivering cargoes to meet real time demands.

*"Maritime security is our business. This is what we do."*

In response to questions Jason commented that submarine technology is only one level down from the space shuttle and spoke a little about the replacement ships planned.

## Heather Hughes

Heather coined the term '**Spring Fling**' when her Leeds-Grenville Probus club hosted the event in 2005. Her husband, Doug, was one of the people who helped our club to get started.

Heather succumbed to a heart condition in October. She will be missed.

Four Armstrongs In The Navy



CLARENCE      TED      ALEC      BILL

On family matters, one of Cdr. Armstrong's great-grandfathers was killed on the Somme and another served in WW I on a Q-ship. Four great-uncles (pictured) served on corvettes and frigates in WW II and his grandmother was in the Air Force.

## January 23 - Capt. Victor Suthren

As 2012 is the bicentennial of the war of 1812 and as Vic Suthren has written *The War of 1812* (McClelland & Stewart, 1999) and as Vic is known to us for his previous visit in 2001 (Captain Cook in Canada), asking him to start our 2012 program seemed serendipitous.

His book was developed from a TV mini-series on what was "by far the bloodiest, most dramatic, and longest-running war to take place on Canadian soil."

## February 22 - Sue O'Sullivan

Ex-Deputy Police Chief, Sue O'Sullivan, is now with the Federal Ombudsman's Office where her focus is on victims of crime.

The story of Sue's career path rising through the Ottawa Police Department is fascinating in its own right, but for us, Sue will talk more about her current assignment.

## March 28 - A Geordie Mikado!!!

Dr. John Forster will tell us about Gilbert & Sullivan, Richard D'Oyly Carte and the Savoy Operas with some words on the Ottawa Savoy Society and its upcoming production of *The Mikado*.