



The Probe

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Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Probus Club of Ottawa/Alta Vista will be held on Wednesday, November 28th, 2012 in the Church Hall of Gloucester Presbyterian Church after the regular club meeting.

The agenda will include:

- Minutes of the 2011 AGM and matters arising from the minutes.
- Treasurer's Report and Financial Business.
- President's Report and Review.
- Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers and Management Committee members for 2013.
- Such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting.

Bruce Dodd - Secretary

Please stay for the meeting - we need 20% of the membership to constitute a quorum.



... to join the Management Committee.

We need a vice-president (President-elect for 2014); a newsletter editor, a techie to look after sound and screen and a second person on membership.

Or share the load of one of the other positions and take over next year.

Ottawa Canada ...

... by Willie McElligott



"In his photos we see water rushing over Rideau Falls in a greenish torrent that looks like shaved ice, which it almost is. A sunset lingers over the locks on the Rideau Canal, and a late snow in May lines the trail that leads almost from his back door. The trail winds out of view, and soon splits into tendrils of exploration that reach deep into Gatineau Park." - *Peter Simpson, Ottawa Citizen, October 10th.*

Simpson was pre-viewing an exhibition of Willie's photographs at the **Michael Gennis Gallery** (416 Richmond Road) from now until November 10th. We were fortunate in that we saw many of the pictures on the big screen, but in the exhibition some are enlarged to as much as 90 inches and should be even more spectacular.

Willie talked to us about the production of the book as

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much as about the photographs themselves although we were treated to his comments on a good selection of them. The book is Canadian. From front to back, from concept to production. The photos are Willie's but he was quick to acknowledge the contribution of **Norma Lu Brown**, who wrote the introductions to the seasons, and **Roy MacGregor**, who wrote the foreword ("This is a book you can walk into, drive through, stop in to visit, decide to stay. Just like the city itself.")

The book was launched last year, two days before the opening of the new Convention Centre. This is significant because PCL, the company that built the centre, became his first customer. They bought enough copies to put one in every room of the Westin as part of their 'Project Complete' celebration. For the order he provided a special jacket - an idea he got from Jackie Holzman. Jackie was one of the many people he consulted for their knowledge of Ottawa..

Mayor Jim Watson was an early customer but complained that there was no picture of City Hall. This was resolved by providing another custom cover on condition that the order was for 100 copies. This has been exceeded, and Jim took one of the copies to the Mayor of Beijing on an official visit.

The book is 'self-published' - "I didn't want anybody telling me what should be in it, and I wanted it published in Canada". As the publisher, he had to make the decision, "How many?" The choice was 5,000 or 10,000 copies but 5,000 would not pay off so he took a chance on 10,000. So far he has sold about 7,000 and is just about breaking even. It took just six months to reach 5,000 copies - the number to be considered a 'best seller' in Canada.

Willie only uses film and told us that the only modifications he does to the original is cropping. However, the size of the book is scaled to the dimensions of a film frame, so most of the pictures are not even cropped.

Willie screened many of the pictures in the book and told us a little about each.

For some years Willie was the official photographer of the Ottawa Senators which is how he came to know Roy McGregor. He was a little nervous about approaching Roy to write the foreword, but the response was immediate - "Are you kidding, I would love to!".

Just to show how interconnected the world is, one page in the book is of **Grete Hale's** living room and Willie used to live (as do Ute and Michael Davis today) in the condo development built on the site of the old Morrison-

Some Grete Stories!



Photograph by **Mark Cooper Photography** at Earnslcliffe during a Fashion Show in aid of *Cornerstone*.

Grete Hale told us that she had many stories and started by telling us that she had had a call from Julie Pocock, wife of the British High Commissioner, who asked Grete to be a model in a Fashion Show. When she found that she was to model a *Fascinator*, she had some doubts but found it so attractive and surprisingly comfortable that she bought it! At that point Grete produced the *Fascinator* and wore it throughout her talk..

Grete has a ritual. On January 1st every year she decides what she wants to accomplish in the year. Two years ago she felt a compelling urge to write a story each day. These were stories about her family, the family business (Morrison-Lamothe Bakery) and life and times of Ottawa, stories her family had been trying to get her to put on paper so that they would be preserved.

On April 30th, 120 days/stories later, Grete happened to be chatting with the publisher of the Ottawa Citizen. Two days after he called and said he would like to publish her book. This was surprising as she knew that the Citizen did not publish books but he meant what he said and assigned **Janice Kennedy** to work with Grete. The book is *The Baker's Daughter* and had a first printing of 2500 copies which sold out so another 1000 were printed (our members bought most of the last remaining copies). All profits go to CANHAVE Children's Centre. Grete chose

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to have it sold through independent booksellers - there are only 4 left in Ottawa.

Great-great-grandfather

Grete's gt-gt-grandfather was one of **Philemon Wright's** nephews. He lost his first wife to malaria (which had been brought in from India). He moved to Low with his second wife to avoid the epidemic (500 died) and farmed on a virgin plot of land.

\$25 for Flour and Bricks

Arthur Morrison (Grete and her sisters, **Jean Piggott** and **Gay Cook**, were called **'The Morrison Girls'**) opened his first bakery with \$25 to buy the essential ingredients - bricks for the ovens and flour for the bread. He was successful and opened a chain of bakeries but he speculated on the wheat market and the bottom dropped out so he was broke. For two years the family could not afford meat until the bakery grew again and it grew to the point where they had 135 men delivering bread door to door over a 100 mile radius - the maximum distance that would still ensure freshness.

It's My House

In the late 20's the Bayne House - now the oldest stone house in Ottawa - had been abandoned for 4 or 5 years. Grete's mother decided that it was not too late to save but insisted that it be in her name. When the Bailiffs tried to seize it as one of Arthur Morrison's assets, she told them, "I'm sorry, sir. It's mine." Today the house, as well as being a home, opens its doors to many charitable causes. Since mid-May 10,000 people have attended various events there. (For a peek inside, see page 28 of **Willie McElligott's** book.)

Row Housing

When the business flourished the family looked to philanthropy. When they saw that there were 5000 houses in Ottawa unfit for human habitation, they went to CMHC and asked what was the best way to build low cost housing. The answer was 'row housing' and they built 750 units. A condition on the occupants was that they keep their houses up to scratch or their lease would be cancelled. There were no problems.

CANHAVE

CanHave is a fund for orphans in Uganda. Parents pay school fees in Uganda - no parents, no fees, no school. The fund started by paying for 5 kids, now they support 58.

These are just a few of the stories Grete told us. We could have filled this whole issue with the rest.

The last words from her father were, 'All I want from my family is that they be contributors.' Grete has played her part - and then some!

November 28th, Allen Macartney - Ready for a wilderness adventure?

It was just a casual comment - "(Pastor) Denise' husband is on a 1500 km canoe trip, perhaps he would tell us about it when he gets back."

What we did not know at the time was that Allen has edited two outdoors magazines and has written many articles on a wide array of outdoor subjects, including camping, canoeing, hiking, backpacking, skiing, snowshoeing, photography, and wilderness survival skills.

Partly to celebrate his 60th birthday this summer, he took a solo 1,500-km canoe trip down the Yukon River following the Klondike gold rush trail. Rapids, whirlpools, extreme wilderness and solitude awaited him.

You can find his blog on the Canadian Geographic web site. At www.canadiangeographic.ca/blog/author.asp?author=Allen%20Macartney



December 12th Christmas Party



Boxing Day is the 4th Wednesday in December so we brought our Annual Christmas Party forward by two weeks.

The details are not yet settled but we do know that the massed voices of the Alta Vista Probus Club Choir will be heard across the land.

We ask that you provide the Christmas fare. If your last name starts with:

- **A to G**, please bring Christmas goodies, cake and squares (i.e. finger food - no pies).
- **H to M**, please bring appetizers, cheese, crackers, dips, veggie bites.
- **N to Z**, please bring sandwiches.



More details in the November Flyer.



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.

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

Why Grete?

Her younger sister, Gay, could not say Marguerite.

Dues 2013

At our October meeting, we open the books for the payment of membership fees for 2013 which are due by January 1st. Just as a reminder, the fees are \$20 (single) and \$30 (family).

Any new members joining after October 1st 2012, will have their membership extended to December 31, 2013.

Travel Insurance

At least one of our members has taken advantage of the Probus Travel Insurance arrangement, so we decided to repeat the information.

Probus Club Members across Canada are now eligible for a number of coverage options available through the new Probus **“Travel + More”** voluntary benefits program. **Probus Canada** has worked with **Johnson Inc.**, a national insurance provider, to provide a number of options to best meet the diverse travel and health & wellness needs of our members, at an affordable cost. We encourage you to review the benefits available through our partnership with Johnson Inc.

The Probus **“Travel + More”** program includes a number of voluntary benefit options available to you, including MEDOC Emergency Out-of-Country Travel Insurance, Trip Cancellation/Interruption Insurance, and a Benefit Plan including Extended Health Care, Dental Care, and Life Insurance. Each of the benefit plan options is available separately to meet the needs of you and your spouse.

The above paragraphs are taken from the **Probus Centre Canada** web site (www.probus.org/instrvl2.pdf). For more information, please check the web site.

Churchill on English

"And what a noble medium the English language is. It is not possible to write a page without experiencing positive pleasure at the richness and variety, the flexibility and profoundness of our mother tongue. If an English writer cannot say what he has to say in English, and in simple English, depend upon it, it is probably not worth saying. What a pity it is that English is not more generally studied."

From a speech by Sir Winston Churchill to the Authors' Club, London, 1908

Today there are more people in China learning English than there are in the rest of the world who speak it as their first language.

Poetry Corner

In days of yore people were not satisfied by writing letters to the editor - they wrote poems. Here is an example from pre-war days printed in the Montreal Herald, January 4th, 1812.

Conscience

“Tis not the gilded palace, nor the dome,
 In fretted work magnificently gay,
 Which gives morality the peaceful home,
 The cheerful moment, and the tranquil day;
 Tis something more than palaces can give,
 Or fretted dome, or pageantry supply;
 Tis what instructs the wisest how to live,
 And shews the proudest how they ought to die,
 Tis confidence, trembling at the voice of God,
 That inly whispers to the high and low;
 Which points religion to the blest abode,
 And bids her triumph in the midst of woe.
 For all is woe beneath yon splendid orb;
 An aching void replenish'd ill by mirth;
 A thousand sorrows all our joys absorb,
 And half our raptures perish at their birth,
 Then who can trust the visionary ray,
 And live regardless of a world to come?
 Or who prefer ambition's short liv'd day,
 To that which gives an everlasting home?

They were not all as thoughtful. The Quebec Mercury, on July 7th, 1806, printed:

The Happy Christening

Thomas weds—and four months barely pass o'er his head,
 When his spouse (god be thanked) of a boy's bro't to bed.
 'Now what shall we call him, my dear?' said his wife,
 'Let me think,' answered Tom- 'Call him Courier, my life,
 For he's travelled a journey of nine months or more,
 To my joy and delight, in the short space of four!

From The Times of London

A young girl who was blown out to sea on a set of inflatable teeth was rescued by a man on an inflatable lobster. A coast guard spokesman commented, "This sort of thing is all too common".

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-centered.