



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



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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Robin Rousham - The Great War Social, Economic and Political Impacts

Filling in for a speaker unable to fulfill his engagement as our October speaker, club president Robin Rousham gave a presentation focussed on the social, political and economic aspects of how the Great War affected Canada.

Basing his research on a book of 15 essays related to these and other topics, Robin showed that, over the years, more particularly shortly after the Great War, many myths led to a less than accurate representation. For instance, while English Canada glorifies in the success of the attack on Vimy Ridge in 1917, it carries no specific resonance in Québec. Indeed, when one adds conscription to the list, the Great War was so divisive between English and French Canada, it is hard to consider this traumatic event in the youth of our country as being any kind of a nation builder. Indeed, to the contrary.

Robin dwelt at some length how the story of women's contribution to the war effort had been distorted. The reality is that women made little social advance and that the equality of women that society seeks remains a work in progress. Economic growth both industrial and agricultural was little more than a progression or advancement that was already under way. An exception was that the Great War showed that academic scientific research was, to all intents and purposes, non-existent, but its need was recognized and belatedly led to the birth of the National Research Council.

Robin concluded his presentation by judging that Canada's presence on the international stage, particularly

at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 was the start-point leading up to the Statute of Westminster in 1931 when Canada became fully independent. (Note that Prime Minister St Laurent showed this when Canada refused to support Great Britain in the Suez crisis of 1956.)



Canada's Wild East - The Lure and Lore of Newfoundland & Labrador

David Newland, our November speaker, took us on a journey to N & L, with time to meet some of the residents, including polar bears, seals, puffins and a silver fox - oh, and there were some people as well.

David's presentation was backed by nearly 100 photographs. He works with Adventure Canada, an organization which combines cruising with a scientific, archeological and cultural experiences. The ships, *Academic Sergei Vavelov* (named for a Soviet physicist) and *Ocean Endeavour* are under 400' long which enables them to get close to the shore. From ship to shore is by

(from page 1)

inflatable Zodiacs - one of David's jobs is Zodiac driver.

One stop was at L'Anse aux Meadows, originally a Viking settlement with some reconstruction to show how they lived 1000 years ago. The Vikings made their way in stages via the Faroes, Iceland, Greenland and down the Labrador Coast to Newfoundland.

Another stop was at St Pierre. Despite their proximity to Canada and the US, St Pierre and Miquelon remain French. "Their TV is from France, they look French, they act French - they are French", to quote David.

Red Bay, on the southern coast of Labrador, was the former site of several Basque whaling stations. These date back to the mid-1500's and make it the first industrial town established in North America. The discovery of several galleons and chaloupes, which sank in the area, has made it one of the most precious underwater archeological sites and it has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Fogo Island, the largest island off the N & L coast, has a distinction shared with only three other places in the world. The *Flat Earth Society* regards it as one of the four corners of the world.



Those are ice-bergs in the background! If the further swimmer did not straighten out in the next 2 seconds the sound of the belly-flop will be echoing still. Vodka was served afterwards.

David took us to Miawpukek, a Micmac community and one of the most successful First Nations in Canada. One of the cultural parts of the journey, this group of photographs showed a pow-wow with dancers, singers and musicians in traditional dress. Two young women were face-to-face, 'throat singing'. They were competing with each other to see which one could make the other laugh first.

*Gross Morne is another World Heritage site. David included several pictures and challenged us to learn more, particularly about the geology, by ourselves.**



Gros Morne National Park with the Sea Adventurer dwarfed by the mountains. The colours are the autumn leaves changing on the tundra (but you will have to go to the web site to see the colours).

Newfoundland is very much a series of coastal communities or outposts. Living, even survival, depended on the sea. For many, the only communication was by sea. In recent times, more people have gravitated to St John's but in many places life goes on as it has for generations. There is one characteristic shared by coastal communities - the front doors face the sea.

Questions for David showed that there was interest in following his footsteps. When do the cruises start? June, from Quebec City. How long do they last? 11 to 18 days.

Patt Macpherson introduced David and Robin Rousham thanked him on our behalf - a particularly warm thanks as getting to our meeting meant that David had to leave Coburg at 5:30 am!

*The park's rock formations include oceanic crust and mantle rock exposed by the obduction process of plate tectonics, as well as sedimentary rock formed during the Ordovician period, Precambrian granite and Paleozoic igneous rocks. So now you know! Thanks to *Wikipedia*.

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**.

You can find us on the web at:

www.probusaltavista.ca

The site has a map, a list of past speakers and copies of *The Probe* going back to April, 2001.

President's Notes

I write on behalf of the entire Management Committee in saying that we think the Alta Vista Probus Club is a thoroughly worthwhile community endeavour. We are doubly fortunate in belonging in Ottawa with access to worthwhile and interesting speakers and in the character of our membership, many having had very interesting and diverse careers and associated living experiences. Indeed, each July, when we offer our members an opportunity to speak on their chosen topics, it is always fascinating to learn of some unique personal experience or well explained extraordinary knowledge. However, the Committee senses that continuing membership patronage depends very largely on the quality of our guest speakers. Whilst we do our best to attend to the stewardship of the club and keep the membership up-to-date, we devote considerable effort to attract interesting speakers. To know if we're satisfying you we're always grateful for constructive comments. More importantly, we hope that, as long as we're succeeding in our mandate, you, the members, will tell your friends and neighbours of how worthwhile is our club. We depend almost entirely on our active members to help in sustaining the club and recruiting new members.

Since joining the club, and more especially since joining the Management Committee I have been most impressed by their conscientious attention to each individual responsibility. The committee's responsibilities are not particularly arduous, but each one is essential. At this time, we find ourselves struggling to attract new committee members. For instance, we have a pressing need for a volunteer to join the committee to serve as president during calendar year 2016. Quite apart from that immediate requirement, a healthy turnover of committee members helps to keep the club alive and avoid complacency or stagnation. The president's job is made easy by the contributions of the committee members. To each of them I extend my sincere thanks: Marie-Neige de Cabanoux-Atchison, Bob Atchison, Bonnie Barber, Lynne Bond, Joan Evans, Kawsar Kruithof, Patt Macpherson, Wib Neal, Alan Porter, and John Wright. I extend best wishes to Lynne for a successful Probus presidency in 2015.

Robin Rousham



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Annual General Meeting November 26, 2014

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

The key issues covered included the declining membership which, coupled with rising expenses, caused a drop in our reserves with a further drop forecast for next year. As a result the membership was asked to approve a change in the By-laws to increase the fees to \$25 (individual) and \$40 (couple). This was accepted.

Revisions to the Constitution, mandated by Probus Centre Canada and consequent, further (minor) revisions to the By-laws were also accepted. These changes were mainly concerned with the relationship between Probus Centre Canada and the individual Probus Clubs. They will not affect our Club meetings. The revised Constitution and By-laws will be posted on the web site in the New Year.

In his report, Robin thanked everyone for their support during his year as President, noted that our efforts to improve the sound system were continuing, with one eye on the budget, and thanked Patt Macpherson for continuing with a program of quality speakers.

Elections ... are covered on page 4.

Wib Neal presented **Robin Rousham** with a Past-president's pin and **Lynne Bond** with a President's pin.

Formal minutes are available from the Secretary.

Speakers 2013

Just a reminder of our 2013 speakers:

as well as **Robin Rousham** and **David Newland**, featured in this issue, **Helen Forsey** talked about her father, Eugene Forsey then there were, '**Jeep**' **Jefferies** (*Opera Lyra*); **George Laidlaw** (*Joys of Canadian History*); **Guy Thatcher** (*Further along the Pilgrims' Way*- a follow-up to his 2010 talk on his first trek to Santiago di Compostela); **Craig Greenwood** (*The Great White Bears of the North*); **Irene Richardson** (*Nordic Pole Walking*); **Jim Bruce** (*The Climate is Changing*); **Edgar Schmidt** (*New Laws and Charter Compatibility*); and, of course, our five "In-house" speakers - **Judy Foreman** (*Collingwood Elvis Festival*), **Morley Craig** (*The Buzz - Bees and some of their nastier relatives*), **Allen Taylor** (*Alfred Nobel and his Prizes*), **Keith Walker** (*Aircraft Design*) and **Lenore Porter** (*New Tricks*).

If you would like a reminder of these talks, check out the past issues of **The Probe** on our web site.



Management Committee 2015



At the AGM in November, the Club elected **Lynne Bond** as President. **Barbara Wilson** was elected to the Management Committee to take over from **Kawsar Kruithof** as the Telephone Coordinator. **Bonnie Barber** and **Allan Porter** were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Re-elected Management Committee members are:

Marie-Neige Atchison ("Sunshine")
Bob Atchison (Membership)
Wib Neal (Membership)
Patt Macpherson (Program)
John Wright (Editor)

In addition there are two ex-officio committee members:

Eva Hammond (Rotary Liaison)
Robin Rousham (Past-president)

Bob and Robin will handle Audio/Visual needs. Bonnie will coordinate Hospitality (but we really would like someone to take it on on a regular basis).

Probus Calling!

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

Lorraine Balderson **Judy & Derry Foreman**
Elizabeth de Bretigny **Elvira Matthews**
Peggy Kitching **Kawsar Kruithof**
Allen Taylor **Dorothy MacIntosh**

- 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 **Barbara Wilson** a call (613-837-2377) and it will get corrected quickly.

Barbara is looking for a few more 'friendly voices' to help out. Some of our callers are doing double duty as others have retired.

Let's Hear from You

It's your turn to give a talk at our July meeting - travel, hobby, vocation, interests - the field is wide open.

www.probusaltavista.ca

Check our website for future and past talks.



January 28th, Dr. Michael Rudniki - Stem Cell Research

How soon might stem cells be used to treat or even cure a specific disease? In some cases they are already helping but in others the road seems unpredictably long. However, stem cell research has already given birth to a whole new field - regenerative medicine - and there is an air of excitement and hope that benefits will flow increasingly from the work.

Dr. Rudniki is a leading researcher in this field. He is a senior scientist and the Director of the Regenerative Medicine Program and the Sprott Centre for Stem Cell Research at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. He is Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Ottawa and the Scientific Director of the Canadian Stem Cell Network.

The Survey Says ...

The questionnaire returns indicated a broad membership interest in Canadian history; Canadian wilderness and wild life; global climate change and the constitutionality of new Canadian laws. Other proposals and foreign subjects had their enthusiasts but had narrower appeal, as one might expect.

The questionnaires invited members to recommend subjects and/or speakers for future meetings. Although less than half of the respondents took the opportunity, the Management Committee is grateful to those who did. For example, the inspiration to invite Dr. Rudniki as a Guest Speaker came directly from a recommendation on a questionnaire. We will keep working on the list.

World Views - Winter 2015 Program

Free Monthly Photo Evenings

St Paul's Presbyterian Church

971 Woodroffe (just north of the Queensway)

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

Saturday, Jan. 17 - *Birding in Cuba* by Bruce Dilabio

Saturday, Feb. 21 - *Canoeing with Bill Mason* by Ken Buck

Saturday, Mar. 21 - *Exploring Bulgaria* by Simon Gardiner **and** *Meandering through Coastal New England* by Dan Jones

Saturday, Apr. 18 - *Iceland* by Jamie Johnson

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

www.worldviewsphotography.ca

(Information courtesy of **John Kruithof**)