



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 23rd, 2016 in the Church Hall of Gloucester Presbyterian Church after the regular club meeting.

The agenda will include:

- Minutes of the 2015 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 2017.
- Such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting.

Bonnie Barber - Secretary

The annual general meeting will elect the Officers and Management Committee members for 2017. The open positions include: Vice President, Editor, Hospitality, Audio/Visual and Committee Members at Large. Management meetings last about 1 hour on the 2nd Wednesday, not a major investment - but very valuable.

Please stay for the meeting.

(See page 6 for a post-meeting lunch)

Four August Speakers

Would you go into the Zambian savannah with a scruffy, combat suited, Kalashnikov carrying, unofficial guide who offered to show you a herd of white rhinos? That was the question **Colin Galigan** had to wrestle with when the offer was made to him, his wife, daughter, son-in-law and grandchild. The family vote was 4 to 1 in favour.



Zambia has 9 white rhinos and the Galigan family got to see 7 of them – up close and personal. The first sighting was at about 10 metres. To quell any worries about charging rhinos, the guides (4 more similarly clad and armed had joined the party) explained that rhinos don't like water and can't jump, so anything over 2 feet high is a barrier. A quick survey disclosed that the only objects over 2 feet high were the people and there was no water in sight. "You will shoot them if they charge, won't you?" "Oh, no. We can't shoot rhinos."

All's well that ends well and the family went on to visit other reserves and saw giraffes, elephants and a rather sad looking lion.



A trip to Victoria Falls completed the visit and a jar of African Bronze Honey made a sweet souvenir. Oddly the HQ of the firm selling the honey is in Ottawa.

Colin illustrated his talk with many pictures of the countryside and the animals.

The Galigans were visiting their daughter (and family) who lives and works in Zambia.

279 Warships

Robin Rousham told us what happened to the German High Seas Fleet at the end of WW I. In October 1918, the German Naval High Command knew that the end of the war was fast approaching but decided on one last throw of the dice. Their plan was a major naval battle off the Dutch coast but it was thwarted by their own sailors who thought that they would be slaughtered, so there were mutinies on several ships.



The Battleship Hindenburg sitting on the bottom. Just one of the two dozen capital ships scuttled in Scapa Flow



and outnumbered the German destroyers 160 to 60. At the armistice, the German fleet was surrendered and, with skeleton crews, so that they could not fight, escorted to Scapa Flow – a huge natural harbour in Orkney. The combined navies which sailed north was the largest fleet ever assembled. The British had 73 capital ships (dreadnaught battleships, battlecruisers, cruisers and an aircraft carrier) and 135 destroyers escorting 21 capital ships and 50 destroyers.

The High Seas Fleet was escorted to the north-west area of Scapa Flow between Hoy and Barrel of Butter*. But there was another chapter to be written in this history. The crews scuttled their ships. Some were in shallow water so that their upper works were still showing. The British were somewhat relieved because their allies, the French and the Italians, had their eyes on some of the ships to augment their own navies. Scuttling solved the problem of how to keep Britannia ruling the waves. Most of the ships were cut up for scrap but 7 remain for divers to explore.

This meant that the only major naval engagement of the war was the battle of Jutland in May 1916. The British fleet had kept the German Fleet confined to the North Sea and away from the Atlantic trade routes, which counted as the winning strategy for the British – except for submarines.

In 1918, the British had twice the number of capital ships

*Barrel of Butter is a rock about 80 m wide, with a section permanently above sea level. The name is the annual rent paid to hunt seals there in medieval times.

Caledonia Springs

“A combination of healing influences so singularly blended, an union which gathers the afflicted to one spot, where they have the advantages of four remedial agents, marks out the site of Caledonia Springs.”

Hugh Reekie took us through the rise and fall of Caledonia Springs as a spa. There are three main springs – white sulphur, salt and gas – the gas is carbon dioxide making it a soda water spring. The springs were discovered by Alexander Grant in 1808 and became known for their curative powers. Visitors from Montreal in the early 1800’s would take a boat through the Lake of Two

Mountains to L’Original or Pointe Fortune and on by stage coach or calèche to the springs. The coming of the railroad (Caledonia Springs was on the Canadian Pacific’s main line between Ottawa and Montreal), made the spa much more easily accessible and brought in many more visitors. In its heyday, it boasted a race course, two hotels, inns, rooming houses, stores, churches and, of course, a bathhouse. From 1847, spring water was bottled and widely distributed.



The Grand Hotel was built by William Parker, an American, who bought the springs in 1837. It burnt down within a year. Nothing daunted he re-built. The new Grand Hotel stood until 1915 when it was closed and demolished. After WW I, everything quietened down and eventually the spa became a footnote in history.

There was one more major event. In 1939 the Royal Train carrying King George VI and Queen Elizabeth



stopped overnight. CP built a special spur to accommodate the train and issued instructions to freight train drivers not to sound their horns within a mile of the Royals.

The railway line is now a trail, the village is at a bend in County Road 20 and Hugh regards the spa days as a little bit of history that has been overlooked. “I think it’s an old, old volcano”, was Hugh’s closing comment.

Riding the Bullet

John Wright rode the Bullet from Tokyo to Nagasaki, with several stops along the way. *Shinkansen* translates as New Trunk Line but as far back as the 1930’s someone coined the much more sexy name: *Bullet Train*. The network extends throughout Japan but the most heavily travelled section is between Tokyo and Kyoto. In the morning rush hour 16-car trains leave Kyoto for Tokyo every three-and-a-half minutes. Shinkansen tracks are inaccessible from other tracks and there are no grade crossings. This has allowed an admirable safety record with only two derailments (due to earthquakes) neither of which resulted in passenger injuries.

The journey starts in Tokyo – an enormous, bustling, busy city with its share of modern concrete and glass structures, where space is at a premium (potted plants suffice for gardens) yet there are many open spaces, including the palace and the old palace grounds.

First stop Kyoto, a city of palaces and shrines, the two most notable being the Shimogamo Shrine known colloquially as the Red Shrine (for obvious reasons), and the Kinkaku-Ji or Golden Temple.

Osaka, Japan’s second city, is dominated by its castle, built in traditional tiered style with white walls, green

slate roofs and golden ornamentation. The original castle dates back to 1583. Burnt out in 1868, it was restored in 1928.

A brief stop in Okayama with street statues of *Alice in Wonderland* characters then on to Himeji and the best castle of the trip. The castle is a huge museum with arms and armour, dioramas, tapestries, movies and displays.



The Imposing Himeji Castle

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the final destinations. Both have extensive atom bomb memorial gardens and museums. A burial mound at Hiroshima contains "... the ashes of tens of thousands of its victims". The cities have made different choices with regard to "ground zero" Hiroshima has built over it but Nagasaki has chosen to erect a black marble column. Parties of school-children visit continually to hear the story, say a prayer and sing a hymn.

Nagasaki was the first city allowed to trade with Europeans. To avoid contamination by *gaijin*, the factory (trading post) was surrounded by a moat.



Of course, no visit to Nagasaki is complete without a visit to the (supposed) villa of **Madam Butterfly**. The villa is on the hillside overlooking the harbour where her statue still watches for the return of her 'husband'. Too bad **Puccini** never visited Japan.

Gordon Hardy 1929 - 2016

Gordon Hardy, 87, died Sunday August 28th following a brief illness. He leaves his wife Margaret of 62 years. Loving father of Douglas (Marianne), Joanne (Rodney) and Elizabeth (Michael) and much loved grandfather (Pop) to six grandchildren

Gordon will be remembered for his significant contributions at Pratt and Whitney Canada as one of the pioneers of the legendary Turbo-prop PT6 engine. Over 50,000 of the engines were built and used by many airframe manufacturers including de Havilland (Twin Otter), Beechcraft, Cessna, Embraer and Sikorsky (helicopter version).

November 23rd - Mike Braham

Mike will talk about his father's wartime career. **Group Captain J.R.D. 'Bob' Braham** was an RAF Night Fighter Pilot. His decorations include: DSO, DFC, AFC, CD, Belgian Order Of the Crown with Palm, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm.

By the time he resigned from the RCAF, he had flown a total of 5,370 hours in the RAF and RCAF and had flown 66 types of aircraft starting with the biplanes of the late 1930's with a top speed of 180 mph and finished flying such aircraft as the English Electric Lightning with a speed of Mach 2.1, 1,390 mph.

Other Clubs

We are in Ontario District #1, as defined by Probus Centre-Canada. This covers 11 clubs from this side of Peterborough to the Quebec Border. Our closest clubs are:

- Western Ottawa (Kanata), 3rd Tuesday, 10 am
- Ottawa Rideau Valley (Manotick), 1st Wednesday, 9:30
- North Grenville (Kemptville), 3rd Wednesday, 9:30
- Cornwall, 4th Thursday, 10 am
- Leeds & Grenville (Brockville), 4th Monday, 10 am
- Brockville (Men), 3rd Monday, 10 am

Most clubs welcome visitors. If you want to make a visit, details are on the PCC web site (www.probus.org/canada.htm), but give the club a call to make sure that they are not at capacity.

"Travel & More" Insurance

Probus Canada has made arrangements for individual insurance with Johnson, an insurance broker. Coverage is available for travel, medical, dental, vision insurance

Check out: www.johnson.ca/probus

General (Ret'd) Paul Manson *The Changing Face of War*

General Manson, introduced by **Austin Timmins**, served in the Canadian Forces for 38 years rising to the position of *Chief of Defence Staff*. He was responsible for the introduction of the CF18 *Hornet* and, in retirement, headed the *Passing the Torch* committee which raised \$50 million for the Canadian War Museum.

Paul started his talk with a review of the pace of change of weaponry. Sticks and stones prevailed until about 70,000 BC when bows and arrows first appeared. About 3,000 BC metal weapons were invented, bronze, at first, until about 1,500 BC when iron and steel took over. The sail to steam conversion took place in the mid-1800s and from the start of the 20th century the pace picked up. In WW I there were radio, airplanes, tanks and submarines. WW II saw the introduction of radar, aircraft carriers, mass bombing and, finally, nuclear weapons. Since WW II, digital technology has allowed production of new weaponry at shorter and shorter intervals.

Change was most evident in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and, now, North Africa. The format has changed from pitched battles to small groups - in Syria there are about 150 different groups with their own agendas, fighting common enemy today and each other tomorrow. A new form of enemy has emerged. Instead of armies there are now terrorists, insurgents and guerrillas.

Factors affecting the changing face of war are: Technology, Ideology and Changing Public Attitudes.

Technology has had a profound impact with advantages accruing to the West where most developments occur. GPS, as well as providing directions around a city can guide a missile through a specific window. Information gathering, from satellites, eavesdropping, and monitoring messages, and the analysis that makes it useful, is a major factor. Drones can be controlled from half a world away. Cyber warfare provides the ability to attack critical infrastructure. The counterpoint, to some extent, is simplicity. IEDs and AK-47s (a 70-year-old design).

Ideology: Islamicism in its extreme form, has no ethical constraints whatever. Suicide bombers, child soldiers, beheadings, enslaving young girls are grist to its mill.

Changes in public attitudes: This can be seen in sensitivity to casualties. There were 65,000 Canadians killed in WW I, 25,000 in WW II, 450 in Korea and 158 in Afghanistan Those in Afghanistan were much more personal to Canadians.

Warfare will continue to change, but we will prevail because we hold the moral and ethical high ground.



General Manson in a lighter moment as a member of the *Polished Brass Quintet*

General Manson concluded with a quotation by Albert Einstein: “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.”

Full circle.

Questions came thick and fast.

Q. Peacekeeping?.

A. Peacekeeping means keeping warring factions apart. What is sometimes needed is **Peacemaking** - a more difficult task.

Q. Micro-management in the military?

A. A problem for a hierarchy when instant action requires instant decisions.

Q. Disobedience or defiance of orders?

An illegal order may be disobeyed (but the legality is established after the fact).

Q. People want peace, why is this not heard?

Minorities have so much power, especially the media.

Q. Politicians vs Military?

A. Always a problem. The military knows what it wants (been there, done that). Politicians have different agendas. F35s, for example, the military know they need it. An election promise was that the new government would not buy it. But what if it is the only sensible choice after an open competition?



Christmas Party December 14th



Continuing our recent custom, we have brought our Annual Christmas Party forward by two weeks.

We have arranged a return visit by *The Madrigals* and, of course, the massed voices of the Alta Vista Probus Club Choir will join in.

We ask that you provide the Christmas fare. Trying to divide our membership list into three equal halves, we came up with:

... if your last name starts with:

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



See the November *Flyer* for details



Lunch - November 23rd

After the AGM, make your way to the Colonnade Restaurant, 1520 Bank Street, to toast the newly elected Management Committee members.

Take Hunt Club to Bank, head south on Bank past Heron and when the big, brick, Bell building looms up on the right, turn left into the Blue Heron Mall. (If you find yourself at Billings Bridge, go back and start over.)

Dues 2017

At our October meeting, we normally open the books for the payment of membership fees for the following year (due by January 1st.)

Just as a reminder, the fees are \$25 (single) and \$40 (family).

Any new members joining after October 1st 2016 will have their membership extended to December 31, 2017.

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.

Meetings are at 10, but members start to arrive from 9:30 for a half-hour of coffee, cookies and chat (or tea, Tim-bits and talk).

Come as a guest - join if you like what you see.

Poetry (?) Corner

In 1956, for homework, **Hugh Reekie's** class had to write a Limerick. His offering was:

There once was a dormouse from Sale
Who drank, in one hour, lots of ale.

At the end of the day

He just faded away

That's a warning to dormice from Sale!

Hugh's Uncle Bill had the Presbyterian Church in Sale, Cheshire, which was why he chose that particular town.

A Limerick is a form of poetry (Ha!) in five-lines with a strict rhyme scheme (AABBA), which is sometimes obscene with humorous intent. The third and fourth lines are usually shorter than the other three. The form appeared in England in the early years of the 18th century. **Gershon Legman**, who compiled the largest and most scholarly anthology, held that the true limerick as a folk form is always obscene, and cites similar opinions by **Arnold Bennett** and **George Bernard Shaw**, describing the clean limerick as a "periodic fad and object of magazine contests, rarely rising above mediocrity". From a folkloric point of view, the form is essentially transgressive; violation of taboo is part of its function.

The question is, "Can we transcend the 'rarely rising above mediocrity'?"

To celebrate Canada's 150th Birthday, we will hold **two** Limerick competitions. For both, the first line must end with a Canadian location or the name of a (in)famous Canadian..

Pronunciations can be stretched, eg *Cornwall* to rhyme with shawl, haul or call and *Collingwood* to rhyme with could, mud or good. Le Pas can rhyme with far, star and car but we draw the line at "Was grey has long ears and ate grass"

Entries must be in by April Fools Day. The winner of the first competition will be announced on Canada's Birthday and the poem published on the web site and in Probe. The winner of the second, or plain brown envelope, competition will be identified by the PIN written on the envelope before it is submitted and the prize is that the winning entry will not be further identified or published.

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.