



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



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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David Newland:

The Northwest Passage: Tracing One Warm Line

In October, we welcomed back David Newland to give us a talk on the Canadian North. A good turnout including a number of guests showed that this was a popular idea.

David represents Adventure Canada which specializes in outdoor travel, wildlife viewing and native culture trips across Canada. As well as an outline of an Adventure Canada tour group navigation of the Northwest Passage (NWP), David went beyond an excellent travelogue and presented interesting and challenging views on the North, the NWP, northern sovereignty, and the future of the North and its people.



David has taken tour groups through the NWP 4 times - mostly recently on the Ocean Endeavour with some 200 passengers, including many prominent Canadians such as Margaret Atwood, in the complement. The trip provided an opportunity to experience the unique beautiful environment and "crystal serenity" of the north. On the voyage some passengers made presentations, speeches and led discussions, so this was also an educational experience. One highlight was the opportunity to take a polar plunge in the icy water!

David noted that, although most Canadians live roughly equidistant between the North Pole and the Equator, curiously we have a much greater interest in the North. In particular, the NWP has held a powerful place in the Canadian imagination, as demonstrated by the interest in the Franklin expeditions, especially recent discoveries of Franklin's ships. This despite the fact that Canada was really just an obstacle Franklin and other British explorers were trying to get around.

With regard to sovereignty in the North David pointed out some important points. Canadian claims rest to some degree on British claims due to early exploration, but



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perhaps more so on treaty understanding and agreement with the Inuit who were present in the beginning. Canada has made attempts to assert sovereignty including the ill-fated relocation of Inuit families to Gris Fjord to support sovereignty through occupation and the establishment of an RCMP post on Devon Island, paradoxically to establish sovereignty against Greenland Inuit who had for years used the area for hunting. Sovereignty is still very much a critical and unresolved issue.

David highlighted the great and ongoing changes which the Inuit and the North are experiencing. The stress of adaptation is great for the Inuit. They have gone from "igloos to Ipods" in a generation. Their lives are much less nomadic and dependent on traditional activities now. But there is also now some revival of traditional ways i.e. finger tattoos, story-telling tradition and fishing. The environment, climate change and increasing human presence in the North are having an effect. In visiting the North, Adventure Canada aims to have a minimal impact on the environment and the people. Among the rules they follow are to leave nothing behind, minimize use of local resources and only go where invited by local communities.

The opening up of the Arctic through the shrinking of permanent shore ice has revived the idea of a Northwest Passage. However, it may be that a farther north transpolar route will be preferable and is projected to be possible by 2025. Problems in the use of a NWP through Canadian waters/islands include a relatively low draft meaning transit is possibly prohibitive to large vessels. Also as these are more risky waters, insurance might be a problem.

At the conclusion of the meeting Probus members were given an opportunity to enter an annual Adventure Canada draw for a passage on a future trip. This offer was enthusiastically taken up.

Derry Foreman

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**. Pike runs north from Hunt Club about 2.5 km east of Bank.

9:30 is time for coffee and chat, the meetings proper start at 10 with 5 (or less) minutes of announcements, followed by the guest speaker.

Guests and new members are welcome.

Mike Braham



Group Captain J.R.D. 'Bob' Braham DSO, DFC, AFC, CD

Mike talked, with obvious pride, about his father's life from schooldays in south-west England, through his wartime career to his time with the RCAF.

Born in Somerset, in 1920, John Randall Daniel (Bob) Braham took after his father, a WW I pilot in the Royal Flying Corps. At 17, Bob applied for a Short Service Commission in the RAF, was accepted and commenced flight training. Three months later he made his first solo flight after 13 hours instruction in a Tiger Moth. By the end of his first year he was awarded his wings as a fighter pilot. Nine months later England was at war.

By this time his squadron had been equipped with twin-engined Bristol Blenheims and trained as night-fighters. Five months before shooting down his first enemy aircraft - the first of 29 - he severely damaged his own aircraft - not the last. His squadron was soon upgraded to Beaufighters, a much more powerful machine. His first mission in a Beaufighter was led by Guy Gibson (Dam Busters). Bob became an 'Ace' (5 victories) in September 1941.

By the time he was involved in ground attack low level

missions in support of the D-Day landings, he had claimed 29 victories, several against enemy fliers with more victories than his He almost got his 30th but realized, at the last minute, that it was a friendly.

The end to his wartime exploits came with a crash landing on a Baltic beach, the result of an encounter with two faster and more agile enemy aircraft. The next 11 months were as a POW, first at a camp near the Polish border, but then on the move westwards as the retreating German army was hounded by the Red Army. He was eventually freed on May 2nd, 6 days before VE Day.

Bob remained in the RAF after the war which gave him the opportunity to fly jet aircraft including the Gloster Meteor, the Vampire, the F86 Sabre and the F-2H Banshee.

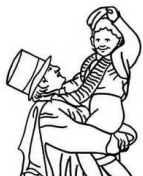
In 1952 he joined the RCAF, keeping his RAF rank of Wing Commander. After two-year postings in St Hubert, North Bay and Ottawa the family moved to Bagotville, commanding 432 Squadron flying CF-100s.

While flying in close formation with another CF-100, the two aircraft touched. Bob and his navigator ejected. The navigator landed safely and, after a night in the bush, was rescued and returned home none the worse. Bob was not as fortunate. His 'chute was damaged and his descent was fast. He sustained back injuries and cuts as he came down through the trees. He crawled, dragging his dingy, to a lake and was found by two hunters.

Wib Neal takes up the story.

I was trained as a Ground Search Rescue Leader and the afternoon of the midair collision I was detailed to locate W/C Braham. Unknown to us was the fact that a woodsman had witnessed the W/C come down and as he later stated he watched as the W/C inflated his life raft and proceeded to put it in a small lake and try to signal with his whistle. At this point the woodsman said he realized he needed help. So he took the injured W/C to a small village across Lac Kenogamy. By this time it was dark and when I got the word that he was in this village I hired a small boat to take my team across the lake. After we crashed into some rocks near the village we finally found the W/C in a home and resting on a day bed.

In 1960 the family moved to SHAPE HQ just outside →



"God bless us, every one"

Phyllis Kingston, 1921-2016

Phyllis was a long-time member and married (60 years) to Jim Kingston, a founding member and a Past-president.

As Past-president of the Revelstoke Drive Garden Club, Assistant to the Editor of the Carleton University Press, and longtime member of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club; Phyllis was an advocate for her community and an active member of the CFUw's Diplomatic Hospitality Group. May 30th, 2008 was commemorated Jim and Phyllis Kingston Day in the City of Ottawa, by Mayor Larry O'Brien, largely for their joint commitment and contribution to our community over the years. Phyllis will be fondly remembered by many for her tremendous gift for networking and hospitality.

Ellen Henry, 1940-2016

Ellen thrived on the outdoors, with paddle, ski pole, golf club or hiking stick in hand she was the model for an active life. Around the neighbourhood, if you were out and about and did not see Ellen and Eric striding along, something was missing.

As a Girl Guide, Ellen was one of 20 from Canada to attend Lady Baden-Powell's 50th Anniversary in Guiding, a celebration held in Switzerland.

An avid traveller, it is our loss the we were unable to persuade her to share some of her travel stories with us.

→ Paris. Bob continued to fly at every opportunity and during this period he flew the supersonic F-100 Starfighter and the English Electric Lightning.

The end of his military career came with the unification of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1964, but that was not the end of things military. He moved to Halifax and joined the Department of Indian Affairs where his work included supervision of the Citadel. This lasted 5 years until his health deteriorated rapidly until his death of a brain tumour in 1974 at the age of 53.

He received the Distinguished Service Order (with 2 bars), the Distinguished Flying Cross (2 bars), the Air Force Cross, the Canadian Forces Decoration, the Belgian Order of the Crown and the Croix de Guerre with Palm. The Medals are on display at RAF Hendon.

In a rough tally, from Mike's talk, Bob Barham had 9 crashes (6 aircraft, 3 cars), 6 emergency landings, shot down 29 aircraft and strafed a locomotive (which blew up), 3 motor torpedo boats, a U-boat, a Staff Car and at



Probus Calling!



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

Lorraine Balderson **Judy Foreman**
Cathy Borza **Gerri Doherty**
Margery Larsen **Ada McEwan**
Jean Saldanha **Allen Taylor**
Joyce Walker **Moly Downey (float)**

- 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.

Calling All Members!!

Do you have a story to tell? You must have! Career, travel, history, geometry, family stories, hobbies, sports, music, how to ... , events (did you go to Toronto for the Grey Cup?). The possibilities are (almost) endless.

This year our Program Diviner had to find his speakers from amongst the Management Committee members. Now he wants to look to the general membership. Don't wait to be asked, let's get our July program in place as soon as possible.

We don't think his threat to draw names out of a hat is real but desperate times call for desperate measures.

Barrista(s) Wanted

An excellent opportunity to learn the basics of how to be a successful Barrista. Starbucks, Second Cup and Timothy's will come knocking at your door. All it takes is a few minutes before and after meetings. Guidance from an expert is available. Don't miss this opportunity to start on a new career path.

Please!

www.probusaltavista.ca

Our web site has had 9,633 visits since the end of April. We feature the upcoming speakers as well as Management Committee members, bus times, past issues of *The Probe* and, tucked away at the bottom of the "15 Years" page is an up-to-the-minute snapshot of the Parliament Buildings.



Speakers 2016

Just a reminder of our 2016 speakers:

as well as **David Newland** and **Mike Barham**, featured in this issue, **Peter Callinan** talked about pacemakers; **Kerri-Leigh Burchill** took us on a virtual tour of the Central Experimental Farm; **Dr. Antoine Hakim** spoke on The Healthy Heart; **Margaret Dailey-Plouffe** took us on another virtual garden tour to some of Canada's Beautiful gardens; **The Hon. Marjory LeBreton** detailed some of the inner workings of the Senate; **Marie-Soleil Bergeron** prepared us for Ottawa 2017; **Prof. Ian Lee** told us why we never had it so good - economically; **Gen. (Retd.) Paul Manson** confirmed our forebodings of the changing face of war.

In addition we had four august speakers from the Club; **Hugh Reekie** on Caladonia Springs, **Colin Galigan** on the White Rhinos of Zambia, **Robin Rousham** on what happened to the German Fleet after WW II and **John Wright** who rode the Bullet in Japan.

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

Limerick

"Prisoner at the bar, you have been found 'Not guilty' by a Limerick jury and you leave this court with no other stain on your character."

Our Limerickists are at work! Here is an early entry:

Good comedians are a very small class
 We've just lost a prime one, alas

Dave Broadfoot, by name

His claim to fame

Was as the Member from Kicking Horse Pass

Our competition closes April 1st.

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

Jan. 28 - Kenya / Uganda - *From Spitzbergen to Masai* by Bob Young

Feb. 25 - *Highlights of Scandinavia* by Sholto Cole

Mar. 25 - *Discovering Nature at Mud Lake* by Joel Silverman

Apr. 29 - *Mountains of the World* by Charles Frost

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