



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



Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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Management Committee 2018

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Barbara Duggan

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Allan Higdon

ROTARY LIAISON

Eva Hammond

New Faces at the Management Committee

It felt like a Cabinet Shuffle at the AGM. Some new names, some names in new positions and some asked not to be considered for the 2019 Committee.

Wib Neal was one who decided not to continue. Wib was first elected to the Committee at the 2005 AGM. A year later he became Vice-president and followed the sequence of President, Past-president and then took over Membership. He has been a welcoming face behind the desk for the past 8 years. **Thank you Wib!**

Marie-Neige de Cabanoux Atchison moves from Vice-president to President, replacing **Hugh Reekie** and leaving an unfilled chair. Hugh, in turn, moves **Ute Davis** out of the Past-president's chair and Ute joins **Bob Mady** in the Program job. Bob moved from Treasurer creating a space for newcomer **Bob Edgerton**. **Colin Galigan** moves from Program to Member without Portfolio (aka Member at Large), joining **Allan Higdon**.

Three more new members are **Jane Wickham**, who will join **Bob Atchison** on Membership, and **Geraldine Dixon** and **Shannon Pichette** who will share a joint role in the new position 'Publicity'.

Coffee Brewing Crisis - Coffee Crisis Brewing

Barbara Duggan was elected to "Hospitality" the essential role of being ready with an eye-opener when Members arrive.

Unfortunately for us, she has seized an opportunity which will not allow her to continue. Blandishments, such as upgrading her title to 'Barrista' failed to move her. Oh dear!

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Allies Return to Europe – Sicily Campaign of 1943

Jeff Noakes of the Canadian War Museum, recognizing the 75th anniversary of the event, spoke about this WWII event. “Operation Husky” as the Canadian role was called was the first large scale army deployment of the war for Canada. Jeff illustrated many elements of his talk through the use of war art images, including those of Will Olgivie who was the first official WWII war artist.

After the effective defeat of the Axis powers in North Africa, it was the control of the Med Sea sea lines of communication that was a paramount issue. Several sites were considered for this first incursion back into



Squadrons of RCAF bombers, were heavily involved attacking Axis airfield in Sicily and mainland Italy.

The 10 Jul 1943 main landing was in the south of Sicily with Canadians (25,000 troops and 1800 officers) taking position between the US and UK forces. The advance inland was rapid despite the presence of 270,000 Axis troops (although many were demoralized Italians, the Germans put up stiff resistance). The presence of malaria, and difficult terrain and inadequate transport complicated the advance. To facilitate their activities, soldiers were given “Soldiers Guides” to Italy and Sicily. The ability of many Allied soldiers to speak Italian was an asset.

The quick success of the operation meant that Canadian troops began withdrawing in late Aug and were all off Sicily by Sep 43. Casualties were 2,300, including 563 deaths.

The Sicilian defeat was the prelude to the collapse of Italy's role in the war, although many German forces escaped to mainland Italy and continued to fight the Allied advance up the mainland over the next months of the war. For Canada the experience was key in improving Army morale and in battle testing the troops for subsequent campaigns.

Colin Galigan

Europe, including the Balkans and Sardinia, but these were rejected for a range of reasons. The operation would eventually involve 100s of thousands of Allied troops in what would ultimately be a two pronged attack on the southern side of the island of Sicily.

Initial planning of the operation did not include any significant Canadian involvement. Army morale was low due to lack of action, especially in light of the large role being played by RCN and RCAF. Following domestic political and public pressure it was agreed that Canadian battalions would be integrated into the British element of the attack. Canadian Generals McNaughton and Simmonds provided the leadership for the 1st Canadian Division.

The size of the overall operation meant that forces were moved from the UK, North Africa, and even North America. The staging was not without incident as several ships were lost, including one carrying much of the HQ element's equipment. With an overall involvement of some 180,000 troops, this was a larger invasion than that in Normandy in 1944. Allied air forces, including 4 Squadrons of RCAF fighters and 3

Page 5

There have been one or two occasions when *Probe* has run to six pages but much more often there is a Page 5.

Page 5 is where items which get squeezed out of the published version are saved. There they languish. Maybe not worthy of “Full many a flower is born to blush unseen” but sometimes they are worth bringing to the fore - especially on occasions like today when this space was blank and it was almost time to print.

Paul Marland (January 2018) taught English Literature for 36 years. He believes that the finest opening to any novel is that of *The Gobetween*, by LP Hartley: “The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.” Do you have a favourite opening line? How about “Marley was dead to begin with, dead as a doornail”? Appropriate for this time of year. Or, *Omnia Gallia in tres partes divisa est?*

Send your choice to jcwright@bell.net We will try not to relegate it to page 5.

Mindfulness

This was a new concept for many members, or put a name to a way of life for others. Sonja Roth explained Mindfulness and provided the background to its development and application. Tara Cohen complemented Sonja's talk by leading us through an introductory session. Both are certified Mindfulness Facilitators, Sonja working mainly with teens and Tara at the other end of the age range.

Mindfulness is: "Paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non judgmentally."

Sonja emphasized and amplified each part of the description. This led to a discussion of some misconceptions, which were quickly laid to rest. Mindfulness does not mean doing nothing. Mindfulness is not spiritual or religious. Mindfulness is not a distraction technique nor way to escape reality nor is it a way to get high. It is not a means shutting of your thoughts nor is it merely relaxation. Distracted driving is clearly no Mindfulness.

Sonja presented the findings of several studies but a more telling endorsement was a slide showing five celebrities who use the techniques, **Johanna Konta** and **Novak Djokovich** (Tennis), **Nicola Benedetti** (Violin), **Kobe Bryant** (Basketball) and **Steve Jobs** - the founder of Apple. **William George of Goldman Sachs** was quoted as saying, "The main business case for (mindfulness) is that if you are fully present on the job, you will be more effective as a leader, you will make better decisions, and you will work better with other people."

Tara led us through a Mindfulness session. She asked us



to relax, close eyes, think about where we were and what we were doing, eschewing thoughts of yesterday and plans for tomorrow. Think about our breathing and holding all those thoughts for a few moments.

At the Q & A session, some of the answers



were: Mindfulness, like most human activities, needs practice to be effective. Optimal timing is when it works for you. Fit a session into your day. Yes, there are Apps! It can't be an analgesic but can help with coping.

After the practice session, some members left feeling better about themselves, some left as skeptics. Whether the skeptics felt any better about themselves is not known.

"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, that's why today is called a present!"

15 Years Ago in Probe

Our lead story was Eva Hammond and the Rotary Polio Eradication Campaign. Eva's contribution was in Cameroon which welcomed the volunteers with open arms, festivals and state occasions. As they passed through villages there were often cries of "Go, polio!" and "Bye, polio!"



Col. Richard Williams, our October "Remembrance" speaker, introduced us to the discouraging phrase "War Without End" to describe the post 9/11 situation. (Ed: I hasten to add that this was not the notorious RCAF officer of the same name).



Joyce Wright was looking forward to her term as President and Wib Neal's name can be found among the new members.

There was a note from Probus Moncton. "I live in a semi-rural area. We recently had a new neighbour call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the Deer Crossing sign on our road. The reason: too many deer were being hit by cars and she didn't want them to cross there anymore." It came with a disclaimer that the lady involved was not a member.

There was also a note on the need to pay attention at meetings. Apparently there are 5 versions of any of our talks by (male) speakers.

1. What he meant to say.
2. What he did say.
3. What he thought, afterwards, he had said.
4. What he wished he had said.
5. What the *Probe* write-up said he said.

The article on polio eradication had the by-line **Mable Goldsmith**, a member at that time.

The editor pointed out that opportunities abound for anyone who would like to see their own by-line. It still holds.



Speakers 2019

January 23 *Perth Classic Theatre - Matthew Behrens*

Our outing to the Perth Classic Theatre Summer production of *There's Always Juliet* was very enjoyable, so we thought we should learn more about the Festival.

Matthew Behrens is a writer and community organizer who has been Associate Producer of **Perth's Classic Theatre Festival** since its founding in 2010.

He will discuss growing up in a theatrical family whose travels took them everywhere from the Stratford Festival to the Neptune in Halifax and a decade in Hollywood. Along the way, he learned a lot of lessons about the power of storytelling, not only as a form of entertainment, but also as a means of achieving community improvements.



February 27: *History of Brewing in Ottawa - Matthew Bellamy*

Dr. Bellamy, Carleton University, specializes in Canadian business and economic history. His latest research has taken him into the realm of brewing history. His work has been published recently in *The Walrus*, *Canada's History Magazine*, *Legion Magazine*, the *Canadian Historical Review*, and the international journal of *Business History*. He is also a regular contributor to *Taps: The Beer Magazine*. and is currently working on the history of the Labatt's brewery.



March 27:: *David Rain - Lotta Hirschmanova and the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada story.*

April 24: *Shirley-Ann Pyefinch - Genealogy Update*

May 22: *Pamela Holm - Music Therapy*

June 26: *Helen Cooper - Oasis Seniors Support Living Program*

July 24

In House
Speakers

WANTED

Very much **ALIVE**



BILLY THE KID

and (at least)
4 other Speakers



Speakers 2018

Thanks to our outgoing (in more ways than one) Program Director, we enjoyed a wide variety of good speakers in 2018.

Paul Marland got us off to a good start with a talk on **Richard III** which cleared up many things until the end of the talk when Paul threw all his points into the air and let them land where they may. **Dorothy-Anne Phillips** took us through the process of writing creative non-fiction. **Norma Domey** gave us a head start on **Viola Desmond's** recent appearance on the \$10 bill. **Brock Godfrey** returned to teach us more about security. (One of our Management Committee emails got hacked recently so his warnings are real). **Nick McCarthy** gave us a verbal and pictorial tour and history of **Beechwood** (which has many hemlocks). **Peter Kunstad** took us back to the dark days of the communist takeover of **Czechoslovakia** and the bright days of his life in Canada. **Lisgar** celebrated its 175th anniversary and **David Jeanes** took us through its history - physical and academic. **Leonard Barrie** gave us a scientific view of **Climate Change** free of the hyperbole which mars much of the discussion of the subject. We finished the year with the speakers covered in this issue, **Jeff Noakes** and the duo, **Sonja Roth** and **Tara Cohen**. The list would not be complete without mention of our In-house speakers, **Merle Brown**, **Barbara Wilson**, **Bob Mady** and **Hugh Reekie**.

We started the approach of having in-house speakers in 2007 so we must have heard from over 50 members. Not all are still members so that means there are many more we have yet to hear from. Is this year **your** chance to claim the limelight?

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(Information courtesy of **John Kruithof**)



"God bless us, every one"