



The Probe

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Lotta Hitschmanova "Dr. Lotta"

The Early Years

Lotte Hitschmann (1909-1990) was born in Prague. She moved to Paris in 1932 to study journalism at the Sorbonne and returned to Prague in 1935 to work as a journalist while earning her PhD. An outspoken critic of the Nazis, she was forced to flee from Czechoslovakia in 1938.

"I experienced personally how much it hurts to be hungry. To be a refugee, to be without a home, to be without country, to be without friends. And this is something dreadful; you have no more roots, you have no one to turn to."

The War Years

Lotte changed her name from the Germanic Lotte Hitschmann to Lotta Hitschmanova. For four years she was forced to wander about Europe, eventually finding her way to Marseilles, where she worked with refugee support groups. In 1942, after a 46 day voyage from Lisbon to New York on a converted banana boat, she arrived penniless in Montreal and, as she put it, feeling completely lost.

Dr. Lotta and the USC

Within 3 years Lotta had established herself and, in 1945, founded USC Canada, the organization to whose humanitarian mission she would dedicate the rest of her life. Her work took her back to post-war Europe, and to Africa and Asia - to conflict zones and newly-independent nations - where the need was greatest. Her field work was just part of her efforts. She became the best known, and most effective, Canadian fundraiser. In one of her radio spots, her message was, "Charity begins at home. Indeed it does. And then it goes on to embrace next-door neighbours and all those who need help. So start by caring for those near you and then give a thought and, if you can, a dollar, to the children far away, who have no hope without your help." Canadians responded massively.

The Uniform

Lotta designed her own uniform and said that it was practical and the only real way to travel in the areas where the USC had programs. At times she was taken for an air stewardess, a serving member of the RCAF, and a baby-sitter when she said her organization looked after children.



Unitarian Service Committee

The Unitarian Service Committee of Canada is a non-profit, non-sectarian associate member organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association that works to provide disaster relief and promote human rights and social justice around the world.

Our Speaker, **David Rain**, served on the USC for 22 years.

Beer

Professor Matthew Bellamy gave us a view of Canadian history as seen through a glass lightly, a beer glass. 1925 saw the trend to beer drinking and today it is the Canadian tippie of choice.

If we look back, before Confederation brandy filled Canadians' glasses. The Charlottetown Conference was almost awash with booze, probably a factor in its success. The trend then was from brandy to whisky with no lesser ambassador than Sir John A. - a 2-bottle-a-day man. Sir John was not an alcoholic, he was a binge drinker - a fine distinction.

The Temperance Movement gathered pace and the "Prohibition Women's League" was formed in May 1874. Its aim was to revoke the liquor licenses of grocery stores because alcohol threatened family life. Another argument was that if alcohol was eliminated the crime rate would drop and Canada would become a dry heaven on earth!

WW I changed things. Prohibitionists argued that our fighting forces would fight better without alcohol. At the start of Prohibition the 124 breweries in Canada were reduced to about half that number at the end. The Big 3 - Labatts, Molson and Carling, survived by producing non-alcoholic beer (1.5%). A counter effect was the returning veterans who had been fighting for liberty which included the liberty to drink. "They never stopped drinking."

The law in the US forbade production and supply. There was no bar to production in Canada and fleets of fishing boats crossed the Great Lakes. Labatts went from a small regional brewery to one of the biggest in Canada.

The brewers organized workers and veterans into a "Moderation League" to lobby governments. Ontario responded with the LCBO in 1927 "... to allow people to exercise a God-given freedom under reasonable restrictions."

After WW II, the three remaining brewers went national. Canadian law said that to sell in a Province a brewer must have a physical presence in that Province, so they quickly expanded their operations and by 1957 they had 95% of the business. In the '70's microbreweries started up and Canadians discovered that beer did not have to be bland. The Big 3 discounted the impact and today many pubs sell more microbrewery beer than Big 3 beer.

Matthew's work on brewing has been recently published in *The Walrus*, *Canada's History Magazine*, *Legion Magazine*, the *CHR* and the international journal of *Brewery History*. He is also a regular contributor to *Taps: The Beer Magazine*.

15 Years Ago in Probe

Our speakers were **Phil Jenkins** and **Christine Sadler**.

Phil, a local historian talked about the 4 phases of Lebreton Flats. For the first phase he asked us to imagine the splash as a huge slab of limestone fell into the sea that covered Ottawa in pre-historic times.

When the Algonquin people came to the area some 5000 years ago, the second stage of Lebreton's history began. Possibly as many as 4000 lived and traded in the area and used the Ottawa River as their major trade route.

The third, or property stage, began when Samuel Champlain came to the area in 1613. The last phase, continuing to our present time, has been characterized by Real Estate ownership and development.

Christine, the Senior Project Manager for Exhibitions at the National Gallery, spoke about mounting exhibitions in other places. This works both ways - the NAG may be a borrower or a lender. Packaging, transportation and security are the major problems. The environment of the building in which the articles are to be displayed, is crucial. Objects and paintings have a finite life. Some are very delicate, particularly Greek and Roman art. Apparently sharing aircraft with horses is to be avoided.

New members included Wib Neal who went on to serve on the Management Committee, including a term as President, and recently on the Membership Desk.

There was an oddity tucked away at the bottom of the back page: The Complaints Department Supervisor at the [redacted] Company has an interesting business card. On the back it says:

Suppose we refund your money, send you another one without charge, close the store and have the manager shot at sunrise tomorrow. Would that be satisfactory?

I Like Beer

I like beer, it makes me a jolly good fellow

I like beer, it helps me unwind and sometimes it makes me feel mellow.

Whiskey's too rough, Champagne costs too much, vodka puts my mouth in gear.

This little refrain should help me explain, as a matter of fact I like beer.

(From a **Max Bygraves** album)

www.probus.org

The newly designed **Probus Canada** web-site is getting some attention. Check it out - there is some interesting stuff

Next Speakers

May 22: Pamela Holm - *Music Therapy*

Pamela Holm is a registered psychotherapist with the **College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario**, and a certified music therapist accredited by the Canadian Association for Music Therapy. Previous to her music therapy training at Capilano University in BC, she studied music at Concordia University.



Pamela has worked with people aged 4 to 98 years, in a wide range of settings. She works with both individuals and groups. Pamela's work has supported people with dementia, strokes, multiple sclerosis, developmental delays, autism, mental illnesses, emotional and behavioural challenges, depression, AIDS, palliative care, learning disabilities and adults interested in personal growth and healing.

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



Helen Cooper's career has taken her from the London School of Economics to Tanzania, teaching English and Math on a CUSO assignment; to City Council in Kingston and then Kingston's first woman Mayor; to the Ontario

Municipal Board (Chair); to the Advisory Council of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization.

More relevant to her talk to us is her term on the Board of Cancer Care Ontario and as a provincial manager for program delivery of adult developmental services in the Ontario Public Service.

She was recently appointed a Distinguished Fellow at the Queen's School of Policy Studies and president of Oasis Senior Supportive Living Inc. in Kingston.

July 24: In-house

Bob Mady is still in recruitment mode. At last count he had 2 of the 4 speakers needed to complete our Summer Picnic Program. If anyone has got the hang of all this Social Media business, many of us would like to know more - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and all that. (Ed: I thought twitter stood for Trump Writes Intemperate Treatises To Everyone's Regret.).

All other possibilities are wide open - her story, his story, travel, hobbies, growing tomatoes, Hip Hop as a metaphor for the 21st century - the list is infinite. Talk to **Bob Mady**.

August 28: Michelle Davis Medical Cannabis

September 25: Bob Paulson Community Policing & RCMP Experience

October 23: Derrill Henderson & Mitzi Ross WWII Battle for Hong Kong

November 27: Benny Forget Call Centre Stories & where is my luggage?

Sparks

In April 2011 our speaker was **Brian Hull**, a gt-gt-gt-grandson of **Nicholas Sparks**, "The Laird of Bytown". Not to be outdone, the Ottawa Citizen, on March 23rd, published a 3-page spread by **Andrew Duffy** on the Sparks family tree with Brian featured prominently.

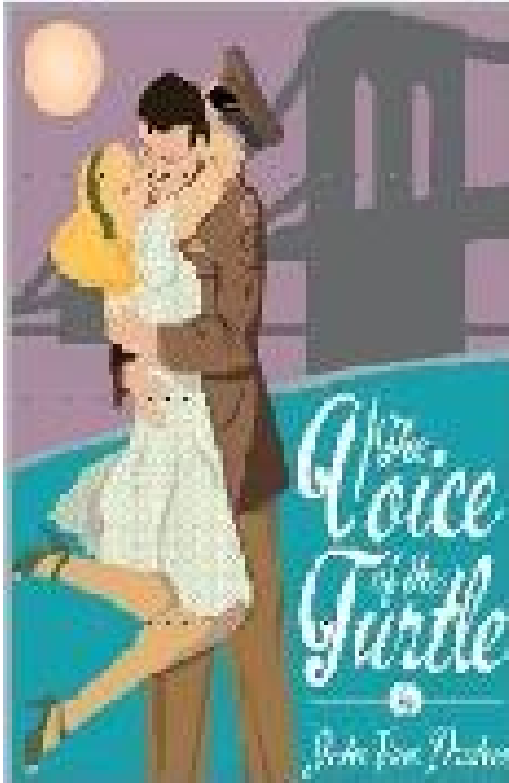
The article includes half-columns on Sparks' daughter **Esther Sparks Slater**, Esther's daughter **Florence Augusta Slater Currier**, Florence's son **Cyril Currier** and Cyril's daughter, **Katherine Jane Currier**, Brian's mother.

When he walks the streets of downtown Ottawa Brian says that he is constantly reminded of his family's contribution to the city. On Wellington Street is the place where his Gt-gt-grandmother, Esther, once held court in a fine brick mansion. Next door was another mansion where Great-grandmother Florence pondered the scandalous love affair that would make her an outcast. Grandfather Cyril sold insurance in an office on Sparks Street - and made some disastrous financial decisions. A two-story stone house used to stand at the north-west corner of Sparks and Lyon, Nicholas Sparks' home.

The article was printed in time for Katherine to read it, but only just. On April 6th, the Citizen published her obituary. She was in her hundredth year.

Vox Populi

The Voice is the choice. With the votes in, the popular choice is “The Voice of the Turtle” by John van Druten. Van Druten seems to be a staple of our visits to Perth Summer Theatre, last year we enjoyed his, “There’s Always Juliet”.



Friday, June 28th

Lunch at **Michael’s Table** at **11:30am**

Theatre at 2pm BUT being there for the 20 minute pre-performance talk adds to the pleasure.

The restaurant is a 10-minute walk from the theatre so plan on finishing lunch just before 1:30.

Controversial in its time, “The Voice of the Turtle” explores the struggles of Sally Middleton, a young woman dealing with the challenges of the single life in New York City during World War II. Sally attempts to reconcile her childhood teachings on the importance of chastity with her newfound affection for Bill Page.

The play derives its name from a verse in the Song of Solomon in the Bible, which reads "The voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

The show opened at the Morosco Theatre on December 8, 1943, and ran for 1,557 performances, making it the 9th longest-running play in Broadway history. In 1947, the stage play was adapted into a film of the same name starring Ronald Reagan, Eleanor Parker, Eve Arden, and Wayne Morris.

Hugh Reekie is coordinating the event. He has reserved the restaurant and 24 seats for the show. The cost, with the ‘early bird’ price, group discount and tax, is \$32 (really it is \$31.64 but your cash strapped club can’t pass up making 36¢ profit). Hugh can accept reservations by mail up to June 15th, but making your payment at our May meeting is probably best. ***Tickets will be distributed at Michael’s Table.***

If you need a ride, talk to Jane or Bob on the Membership Desk and we will see what can be done.

Hugh will have a flyer available at the May meeting with all the fine details.

A Harbinger of Spring

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. (Song of Solomon, Ch 2, v 11 & 12)

Not before time.

For relevance to the play, a few more verses are needed.

Remote Control

Woman: A device for changing from one TV channel to another.

Man: A device for scanning through all 375 channels every 5 minutes.

It is also said that a woman can exercise remote control by taking it with her when she goes shopping.

Dues 2019

Please check the sign-in sheet and make sure it says “Paid 19” against your name.

If not, **Jane or Bob** will be pleased to take your dues. (\$30 for singles, \$50 for family)



Ottawa 2019 April brings the sweet spring showers
Down and down for hours and hours.

Flanders and Swann

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-centred.

You knew it was turtle-dove, didn’t you?