



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



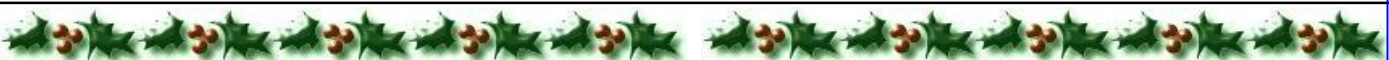
Newsletter of the PROBUS Club of Ottawa Alta Vista

The Probe

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December 2019, #113



Management Committee 2019

PRESIDENT

Marie-Neige de C. Atchison

PAST-PRESIDENT

Hugh Reekie

TREASURER

Bob Edgerton

SECRETARY

Bonnie Barber

PROGRAM

Bob Mady

Ute Davis

MEMBERSHIP

Bob Atchison

Jane Wickham

EDITOR & WEB MASTER

John Wright

GOODWILL & SPECIAL EVENTS

Open

TELEPHONE

Barbara Wilson

PUBLICITY

Geraldine Dixon

Shannon Pichette

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Allan Higdon

Colin Galigan

ROTARY LIAISON

Eva Hammond

Management Committee Changes

After five years as Secretary, **Bonnie Barber** (tandbbarber@rogers.com) was elected President at our Annual General Meeting in November. **John Wright** replaced Bonnie as Secretary, and will continue as Web Master. This leaves the Editor position open. **Geraldine Dixon** and **Shannon Pichette** will add Hospitality to their mandate which will ensure a regular supply of coffee.

Returning to their 2019 tasks are **Bob Edgerton** (Treasurer), **Bob Mady** and **Ute Davis** (Program), **Bob Atchison** and **Jane Wickham** (Membership), **Barbara Wilson** (Telephone) and **Colin Galigan** (Member-at-Large). **Marie-Neige Atchison** becomes Past-president and **Eva Hammond** remains our Rotary Liaison.

The AGM was an opportunity to recognize the members of the Telephone Committee, **Lorraine Balderson**, **Gerri Doherty**, **Judy Foreman**, **Ada McEwan** and **Jean Saldanha** who make sure everyone is aware of the next speaker and any special activities.

The Treasurer's Report was more positive than last year due to the fee increase, which was acceptable to our members, plus a few new members and increased revenue from donations to the coffee pot. However ten more new members would make things a little more comfortable. Twenty would be just great!

In her President's report, Marie-Neige thanked the members of the Management Committee for their efforts throughout the year, particularly Bob Mady for the excellent program, She also mentioned three outside events which members had attended - Spring Fling in Kemptville, Perth Summer Theatre, the Ontario District #1 meeting, which we hosted, and the Bicycle Brewery.

Management Committee 2020

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VICE-PRESIDENT

Open

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Derrill Henderson *The Battle for Hong Kong*

Derrill's father was one of the Canadian soldiers who fought, was captured and survived. After 2 years in hospital recuperating from the treatment he had received as a POW, he worked on obtaining pensions and benefits for ex-POWs. Derrill worked with his father and is now the Secretary of the Hong Kong Veterans Association.

His talk included the voices and videos of some of the veterans.

Starting with the departure of the Canadian troops, 1000 Royal Rifles of Canada, 1,000 Winnipeg Grenadiers, HQ Staff, 2 Nursing Sisters and a dog, sent to reinforce the Hong Kong garrison, he moved into a description of the battle against the then invincible Japanese army and the harrowing life and, in many cases, death of the POWs.

An account of the battle is available at:

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/second-world-war/canadians-hong-kong>

Derrill's presentation brought home the details, with much more immediacy and impact than the formal description provides. Three-hundred Canadians died and over 500 were injured.



But the worst was yet to come. For the duration of the war the POW's were treated as slaves. They were worked long hours and subsisted on half (or less) of the necessary calories a young man needs. The other enemy was disease - beri-beri, dysentery, pellagra, pneumonia and malaria. Three-hundred more died. A "kill" order was rescinded in the last minutes of the war or most of the rest would have been killed.

Footnote ... and a dog

Sgt. Granger, a Newfoundland, was killed in action carrying a thrown grenade back towards the enemy lines. He was awarded the Dickin Medal, the military animal equivalent of the VC.

Sue and David Williams *An Adventure at Sea and The Journey Within*

While in their early 50s, Sue Williams and her husband David, left their three sons, and cast off from Hamilton, Ontario in 2007 in their 37 foot sailboat, heading east for the North Atlantic Ocean. 373 days later they returned home, having traveled 11,000 nautical miles, spent a total of 86 days at sea, and completed two transatlantic crossings.

Sue and David came to talk to us, armed with photos and videos of their adventure, and took us right along with them on the high seas. It would be worth listening to them again. You could almost feel the helplessness watching the roiling waves off the bow of their sailboat, but it just kept riding on top without ever being swamped. Of course, that was when they were taking the videos so there may have been other times when waves did break over them. Seeing where they slept though and being told that Sue could put her arm out and touch the water in calmer times, really drove home the great faith they must have had to carry on like that for 86 days, always moving. Of course, there were shore visits and the feel of solid ground to look forward to.



David supervising while Sue signs a copy of her book

Sue has written a memoir about their improbable adventure - some would say misadventure - on the high seas. Ready to Come About, her debut book. It was published by Dundurn Press this past spring and has become a Dundurn bestseller and a 'recommended read' by the Globe and Mail.

Especial thanks - they drove in from Guelph to talk to us.

Bob Atchison

Speakers' Corner

January 22nd, Jamie Doolittle

Probus, past, present and future

Jamie represents Ontario District #1 on the Probus Canada Board. He will give us the National and Global view of our organization.

February 26th, John Foster

Canada, Oil and World Politics

John addresses the role of petroleum in recent conflicts, including oil-producing countries and pipeline transit countries. Looking at major powers and allies, including Canada, he explores military interventions, tensions around sea routes, and economic sanctions. He describes the jockeying for control of the world's oil and gas, the ongoing rivalry among global and regional countries, each pursuing its own interests. Drawing on his book, *Oil and World Politics*, he illuminates petroleum-related actions that are rarely discussed publicly.

March 25th, Jamshed Merchant

Canada-US Relationship

Jamshed Merchant is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Policy Studies at Queens University. He started his career in the Department of Geography at McGill. Following this, Jamshed joined the Alberta Department of Environment as a soil scientist providing advice on land reclamation principles and practices. He joined the federal public service as a Soil Conservationist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. After assignments in several departments, he retired as Consul General for Canada in the US Upper Mid-West, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

April 22nd, Pascale Lalonde

Council on Aging-Making Ottawa more age-friendly

May 27th, Ed Bianchi

KAIROS Indigenous Blanket Exercise (KBE)

Jun 24th, Val Knowles

Well Known Ottawa Personalities from the Past

July 22nd, In-house Speakers

It's YOUR opportunity this year!


Photo Credit

The photograph of the Sai Wan War Cemetery is courtesy of John Kruithof, taken while he was living in Hong Kong.


15 Years Ago in Probe

John Kruithof was the "Guest Editor" for the December 2004 edition of *The Probe*. The reason was explained by an article on visits to Probus Clubs in New Zealand by the regular editor. At that time New Zealand had 449 Probus Clubs with 48,910 members. As the population was about 4 million this means that 1 person in 80 was a Probus member.

Among the new members was **Morley Craig**. Morley was one of our in-house speakers a few years later giving a fascinating talk on *Bees*. We were never able to persuade him to build it out into a full talk.

The speakers were David Anderson, Curator and Licensed Tenant of the Ontario Government Thompson-Bethune Heritage House in Williamstown, and Major David Ross who spent 13 months with UNAMA - United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan. 

David I delighted us with a remarkable story of the fascinating life of Canada's greatest explorer, surveyor, and mapmaker – David Thompson (1770-1857). David described to us a vivid narrative of the 28 years Thompson roamed the Canadian West – beginning with The Hudson's Bay Company. and then transferring to the Northwest Company based in Montreal.

 David II advised, "Drink all the tea you are offered, from a selection of grubby and greasy glasses, live with the consequences and, after 2 weeks, you will be ready for anything." Although there were many Canadian Forces troops in Afghanistan, David was the only one wearing the UN 'Blue Beret'. His illustrated talk covered the beauty of the country, the daily life of Afghans, the role of the Warlords, the drug economy and the prospects for Afghanistan. One thing his slides did not show was Afghan women - a forbidden subject for photography.

He finished with a photo of a road sign "Both sides of the road is mine". Afghanistan is the most heavily mined country in the world.

Allen Taylor was our new President and he offered Season's Greetings in the form of his late father's favourite mealtime grace:

For **food** in a world where many suffer famine
 For **faith** in a world where many live in fear
 For **family** and **friends** in a world where many live alone,

We give thee thanks, O Lord.



Speakers 2019

Bob Mady was new to the Program Job but quickly latched on to the concept and arranged an eclectic selection of speakers.

In January **Matthew Behrens** of the *Perth Summer Theatre* talked about theatre and particularly his parents, **Bunny Behrens** and **Deborah Cass**, and times in Hollywood and Stratford. **Matthew Bellamy** talked *Beer* which might have been the inspiration for **Colin Galigan** to set up a visit to the *Bicycle Brewing Company* later in the year. Matthew was voted the most popular lecturer at Carleton which, if nothing else shows that undergraduate interests have not changed in 50 years. **David Rain** took **Lotte Hitsmanova** as his subject and was followed by **Shirley-Ann Pyefinch** on *Genealogy*. Computerization has wrought many changes since **Noreen Wolf**'s talk in 2001.

Pamela Horn brought her guitar to illustrate her talk on *Music Therapy*. Her talk was written-up in June and four months later we were saddened to report that she had succumbed to cancer just three weeks after a diagnosis.

We moved our picnic and In-house speakers to August to accommodate **Helen Cooper**. Helen is the President of OASIS Senior Supportive Living in Kingston. Her talks was, "Senior Lifestyles - A Better Way". In September, **Maggie MacDonald** took us through the various kinds of medical cannabis - a talk she has given to several Probus Clubs in the area. **Bob Paulson**, a retired RCMP Commissioner talked about his career. He met head-on the disturbing stories that have dogged the RCMP in recent years. **Derrill Henderson** and **Sue Williams** rounded out the year.

The In-house speakers in August were **Geoff Wormell** (*Maps*), **Michael Davis** (*Digital Imaging*), **John Kruithof** (*Facebook*) and **Lenore Porter** (*Ageing and its Challenges*).

Poetry Corner

Poems have been useful fillers in many issues. This month we only have room for a very short one, "Fleas".

Adam
Had 'em



"God bless us, every one"



The Last Word

In February 2001, Joyce suggested that I go with her to a club she had joined, to hear a speaker, **Noreen Wolfe**, on *Genealogy*. I found myself among friends and colleagues from my time at Bell Canada. One of the ex-Bell members was the President, **Jim Rader** who asked the meeting if there was anyone who would write a newsletter. I thought about it, drafted something, took it to the Management Committee and said, "Is this the sort of thing you were thinking about?". Whether or not it was what they were thinking about they didn't really say. They just said, "Yes", quite loudly. It became Volume 1 Issue 1 of *The Probe*, dated Spring 2001, handed out in April.

At Issue 100 (October 2017) I applied for retirement. The Management Committee, now a completely different group, said (equally loudly), "No". After two more years I decided to take matters into my own hands and announced my retirement.

The original thought was to have three issues a year, but none of our Program Directors, before Bob Mady, were able to work 3 months ahead (I include myself in this group), so Issue 2 was in June. It soon became obvious that there was a problem with 2 month intervals. If someone missed an even month they would not know who would be speaking the next month. Starting in November 2001, odd months were covered by a single sheet flyer.

The mosquito warning was repeated several times, but even so, there were over 100 different fliers pictured in the top left corner. The listed includes *The Flying Scotsman*, a flying Dutchman, planes (from Leonardo to fighter jets), birds, insects and a few odds and ends, some of which required a generous interpretation to be part of the parade.

This is history. Nothing is carved on tablets of stone. A new editor can decide on format and content that suits - even the title can be changed (it was never approved). From one page per month to as many pages as the Treasurer will allow at 5 cents per printed page, plus tax.

One of the consequences of being editor for so long is that I have been on the Management Committee through 18 Presidencies. Only **Russ Hammond**, our first President did not have to fret over what might appear.

It's been interesting, sometimes challenging, but it's time for a change.

John Wright

Editor (Retired)