



PROBUS CLUB OF COLLINGWOOD

Contact: collingwoodprobus @gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2017

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY DECEMBER 7, 2017 – BEAR ESTATE HALL – 9.45 A.M.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: RUBEN ROSEN

VICE PRESIDENT GREG GEEN

SOCIAL: SANDY WHITE

SECRETARY: AL WALLACE

TREASURER: MIKE MARTYNUK

SPEAKERS; PAUL TRANQUADA

MEMBERSHIP: JOHN MEGARRY

NEWSLETTER: ERIC SKEOCH

I.T. CHAIR HAL KEISER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Ruben Rosen began the meeting by calling upon Ian Godwin to lead us in the national anthem. After a brief welcome to this special Remembrance Day gathering, Ruben welcomed the following guests; Harold Higben, Gene Alleuto, Ralph Kunitsky, Peter Schuster, David Stanfore, Joe Baxter, David Philips, and a returning Barry Burk. They all sound like a nice bunch, and hopefully we will see them again. (Just in case, membership marketing man Megarry was introduced as the disseminator of application forms.)

And speaking of a nice bunch, the following new members were presented with their badges, and photographed for the OPP identity check: Terry Fitzgerald, Ron Ritchie, Sam Forrest, Michael Slocum, and Peter Hambly.

Past President Bob MacNair brought greetings from the Probus Board of Directors on this our 30th Anniversary as a club, and expressed the appreciation of our club to John Wiggins and Bud Crookes, two of our members who have been `visionaries`, not only to Probus Collingwood, but in the Probus community beyond our doors.

Bob went on to give a brief history of Probus world-wide and in its origins in the Georgian Triangle region. Past Presidents were recognized, and the 14 who are still in active membership (amidst thunderous) applause were called forward for a photograph. It was an emotional moment and many members quietly wept.

Bob finished by informing the members that Probus HQ now has a Probus license plate holder.

Members wishing to acquire one for a very nominal charge should connect with Bob.

We were reminded again that Richard Rood is our resident archivist, and with I.T. guru Hal Keiser is assembling a rapidly growing stock-pile of visuals. Ruben reminded us that our newly created SPIGS are gathering momentum. You will of course recall that Ruben introduced the term at our last meeting (Special Interest Groups). Jim Worts is leading the way with a SPIGs for Finance and Information Technology. The Library will be the meeting place. Those already signed up will be contacted by email. If there are other interests you have, contact Jim.

And finally, my notes from the November meeting referred to somebody reporting that he had met the spouse of one of our former presidents in a supermarket. She reported that she had recommended our club to somebody but he couldn't join because he had another meeting on the same day. The other commitment had apparently lasted for six years but he said that if he ever gets tired of that crowd he might give our club a whirl. (My notes were a bit vague on this item, so don't quote me on any of this.)

Needless to say next month we have our annual December Luncheon meeting and there are a few points you should keep in mind.

1. It is a social gathering. There is no normal business agenda and you must have a ticket. Contact Sandy White if you need one.)
2. There is a tradition that members bring a stuffed toy to be passed along to the G&M Hospital for kids who are at the hospital for

treatment. The toys should be new ones approximately 6 to 8 inches in size and unwrapped or their original packages.

3. Members usually get a little dressed up for the occasion. (Your spouse will help you on this point.)
4. Tickets will await you when you arrive at the Bear Estate on the 7th.
5. Our speaker is Thanh Campbell, author of Orphan 32.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Sandy White reported that the recent train ride was a great success and thanked Richard Isaacson for his work in organizing it. Here's what's next.

- November 13 – Tour of Homes in the Community
- January 17 – Snow-shoeing at the Christensen's
- February 7 – Tour of McLean Engineering
- February 8 – Curling Bonspiel

SPEAKERS REPORT

Our January speaker will be Cecily Ross, author of The Lost Diaries of Susanna Moodie.

MINISTER OF CULTURE

Minister of Culture Wayne Caswill, with Hal Keiser, Steve Hawker and Richard Rood presented a very moving tribute to Canadians who served in the armed forces.

SPEAKER TED BARRIS

Ted Barris has had an impressive background as an author a journalist a broadcaster and a teacher. His eighteen best sellers in most cases chronicle the stories of Canadians at war. In his words, 'Without the stories that come from Canada's veterans, I have nothing'.

Ted's presentation focused on The Great Escape, a very popular war film which featured Steve McQueen, Charles Bronson, James Garner, and Donald Pleasance. Most of us knew the story... or at least we thought we did.

Ted began by reviewing the main features of the Hollywood version of the story, the meticulously planned and executed escape from Stalag Luft III near Sagan, Poland on March 24, 1944.

This particular camp was for officer POWs. They were not required to work and thus, unwittingly the Germans had assembled a host of bad guys in one place with not much to do! Escape schemes abounded and Canadians played critical roles in the escape plan. Sorry Hollywood, no Americans.

Wally Floody, from Chatham, Ontario was the tunneling chief, Barry Davidson from Calgary the 'scrounger' pouncing upon anything that could aid in the scheme (like a carelessly discarded tire iron), Tony Pengelly from Nova Scotia was the forger of documents needed once the escapees were out, and Kingsley Brown, a journalist from Toronto was the 'intelligence' specialist with experience from two previous escape attempts. All the available talents were brought together and the details of the plan are mind-boggling.

-The three tunnels ('Tom Dick and Harry') were dug 30 feet down 360 feet along and 30 feet up.

-Barracks in the camp were built on stilts. This was so that the 'ferrets' (German guards) could easily inspect. This meant that the brown subsoil removed from the tunnels had to be packed into clothing and dropped surreptitiously outside the barracks. Laden down by the sand and walking a bit funny, the carriers were called 'penquins'. When the Germans permitted the building of a foundation for a theatre, the brown earth found a second home.

- The diggers were naked so that daytime clothes were clean; a bellows provided air underground, carried by pipes made of joined Klim food cans from Red Cross packages; the tunnel was supported by 22 inch slats from the 'bunk beds, dovetailed because there were no nails.

-Of the 80 men who got out, all but three were recaptured. On Hitler's orders, half were taken out in small groups and shot.

Ted's book is a fund of fascination details and his presentation was absolutely riveting. He was thanked by Ruben and presented with a Gerry DeLeskie pen and pencil set. Ted will donate his honorarium to the June Callwood scholarship at Centennial College.

The 50 winners were Al Fraser and Terence Wilkinson, who will person the table in December.

