



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

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Clubs for retired and semi-retired professional and business persons, former executives and others

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday October 16, 2001,
TIME: 9:15 AM**

**NEW LOCATION: H.R. MacMillan
Planetarium and Space Centre - lower level**

SPEAKER: Verona Marie Edelstein

TOPIC: To be announced

Minutes from September 18, 2001

Attendance: 128 and 2 guests

President John Hopkins opened the meeting by asking for a moments silence for September 11. He then reminded the members that this was the AGM and he wanted to thank the Executive for their help in the past year. He read the Nominating Committee's report which was:

President - Norm Weitzel

Vice-President - Don Farquhar

Treasurer - Bill Wallace

Secretary - Denis Creighton

Speakers Committee - Fred Cotton

Membership Committee - Dick Matthews

Visits and Entertainment - Tom McCusker

House Committee - Doug Lambert

Newsletter Editor - Roy Williams

Greeters Committee - Leo Sauve

Rotary Liaison - John Hoyle

Historian and Archivist - Peter McCabe

After the Nominating Committee's report was adopted (no floor nominations) **Norm Weitzel** took the chair. **John Hopkins** gave a brief Past President's Report. **Don Farquhar** reported that the BCR Lillooet trip was a great success and that in the mail soon would

be the invoice for dues, and a questionnaire (please give suggestions for speakers).

Fred Cotton reported that the October speaker would be a former Canadian diplomat, Verona Edelstein, most recently our High Commissioner to Tanzania. **Dick Matthews** reported there was a small wait list but that he expected that after the AGM the 'wait' list would disappear. **Hugh Legg** introduced the former Chief Justice of British Columbia Allan McEachern (the 'Chief') by referring to his relatively recent legal background, the Northern B.C. aboriginal land claim case of 374 trial days, four years, use of computer to keep track of evidence and the fact that he was the first judge to have a web site and respond to the public's questions.

Before giving his talk 'What is the Law?' the Chief briefly referred to the events of Tuesday September 11 from the stand point of international law e.g. the World court (criminal Law) set up by the Treaty of Rome (38 of 60 countries have signed - Canada has - the U.S. has not), trials of Yugoslavian and Rwandan individuals were ad hoc Courts set up by the U.N. and Lockerbie was an international agreement between the affected countries (not practical in the case of September).

In Chief's opinion there was wide public interest in the law but that few people understood what it is. There are four groups of rules which make up the Law.

1. Constitution (supreme) set of rules enacted by Parliament and adopted by Provinces (institutions of the state). Federal jurisdiction (Charter of Rights - partly enshrined common law practice - added legal rights - difficulties

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of interpretation but perhaps more fair to the public). Canada and Provinces have had, by and large, good police forces which have helped the courts on the criminal side of the law.

2. Statute Law - various enactment's of Federal and Provincial Legislatures (Orders in Council - must have an authorization of a statute).

3. Common Law - accumulated wisdom of judges expressed in judgments over a period of time - stream of judgments e.g. law of negligence (lack of care that gives rise to damages), the adoption of the U.K. common law by B.C. in 1859. Common law is the operating system of the law.

4. Rules of Equity - stem from the Courts of Chancery in U.K. and generally ameliorate the harshness of the Common Law.

The Chief next dealt with the Courts, pointing out that judges of Superior Courts were appointed and paid by the Federal Government with the Prime Minister appointing the Chief Justices of the Provinces and the members of the Supreme Court of Canada (after prior consultations). In B.C. the courts were made up of the Supreme Court of B.C. (Court of original jurisdiction with about 100 judges), The Court of Appeal (18 judges, 2 vacancies) and Provincial Court (about 150 judges appointed by the A.G. of B.C.). Supreme Court of Canada hears about 80 cases a year, approximately 10-12 cases from B.C.). One other court namely, the Federal Court (based in Ottawa - hears cases involving Federal Crown).

Reference was made to procedures used in the Supreme Court of B.C. which 'fast tracked' cases and resulted in the speediness of the judicial process (in force for the past 15 years and only jurisdiction in Canada to have). In 1979 there was 1 woman in B.C. Supreme Court now there are some 30 with an additional 8 being on Court of Appeal with the Provincial Court being over 1/3 women. While it appears that nearly every criminal case involves a charter agreement the vast majority of judges deal in nuts and bolts i.e. civil cases.

The Chief said that judges are accountable (can be reversed on appeal, their reasons are published) but that they are not subject to discipline for their decisions - judicial independence.

Question period covered a recent case in Vancouver (not commented on by the Chief), arbitration/mediation (90% of all cases in B.C. settled by lawyers), disparity of female law graduates Vs in practice (over 50% of UBC law Vs 29% in practice), aboriginal matters (widening gulf of misunderstanding with aboriginal under severe deprivation and problem not going to go away), cameras in court ("worst idea I've ever heard of - clear interference with administration of justice").

The Chief was thanked by Ken Meredith.

Chris Lee took a show of hands on the idea of a walking tour of Yaletown/ Concord Pacific Developments and the members were reminded that the October meeting would be at the H.R. MacMillan Planetarium and Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver.

Denis Creighton,
Secretary.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Our Club has completed another very successful year by meeting its two main objectives, namely, the provision of both social and educational benefits for its members.

I was reminded as I presented John Hopkins with his Past Presidents Pin that I would not have known him if it were not for Probus. I am sure all of us are enjoying new personal relationships within our Club. This is a particular advantage for retirees who have fewer opportunities to make new friends.

On retiring from careers, there is less opportunity to keep abreast of current activity in the business and professional world. Here again Probus gives us information on current affairs through our speakers program.

For those interested these advantages can be enhanced by becoming more involved in your club activities. As you review the enclosed questionnaire forming part of your renewal form, give some thought to getting involved even in a small way. The rewards are great and the demands very few.

Norm Weitzel
President

Map to H.R. MacMillan
Planetarium and Space Centre
Meet on lower level at 9:15 am

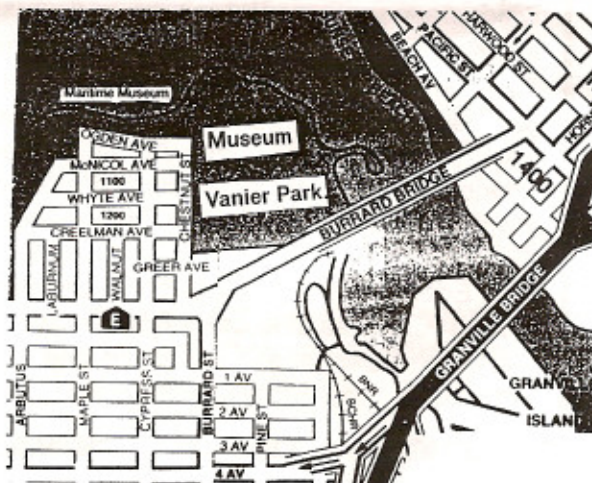
NOTICES AND ENTERTAINMENT:

LOST & FOUND IN LILLOOET

White plastic bag containing a book on Gold-Panning, an antique tin box, and (sadly) a broken ceramic cup. Owner please contact Doug Lambert.

Vancouver Symphony tickets:

Fred Cotton has reserved 50 seats at the Vancouver Symphony - A Night in Vienna on December 28th. We can hold these seats until November 1st. Please let the office or Fred know if you have any interest in going as soon as possible. We will try to get a room at the theatre for a small reception before the production. There will be a small reduction in the ticket price.





SEPTEMBER GREETERS:

Charlie Sale
Tom McCusker

Verona Marie Edelstein

Born in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Education: Began her schooling in Calgary later attending secondary school in Tokyo, Hong Kong and North Vancouver. She earned her BA in Political Science at UBC and is a Graduate of the National Defence College of Canada.

Languages: English, French and German and has some knowledge of Kiswahili.

Career: A Canadian diplomat for 35 years serving in London, England; Djakarta, Indonesia; United Nations in New York including Alternative Representative on the UN Security Council; and Canadian Representative on the Contact Group negotiating the independence plan for Namibia.

1978-1981 - Director of the UN Economic and Social Affairs Division in Ottawa.

1981-82 - Director of the Expansion of Trade for Africa Division.

1983-85 - Minister at the Canadian Embassy in the Federal Republic of Germany.

1986-1988 - Co-chaired the Interdepartmental Committee for the establishment of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

1988-92 - Director of Relations with Commonwealth, Eastern and Southern Africa.

1994 - High Commissioner of Canada to the United Republic of Tanzania.

1997 - 2000 - Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo following war which deposed Joseph Mobutu. In August 1998 a new war broke out following invasion by Ugandan, Rwandan and Burundi forces and continues today.

February 2001 - Took early retirement and returned to Vancouver. Her priority at present is to write a book about the current economic and political transformation of sub-Saharan Africa, from African socialism to free market economics and from single party states to multiparty democracies.

Hobbies: Enjoys golf, skiing, snorkelling, travel and holidays in the Bahamas.

Mrs. Edelstein is a member of Rotary club having initially been recruited by the Congo-Kinshasa club as its first female member. Formerly married to a fellow Canadian diplomat she enjoys visiting family in Langley, Calgary and Edmonton.