



# NEWSLETTER

## PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

#252-2025 West 42nd Avenue, Vancouver B.C. V6M 2B5 (604) 261-6818

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

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday February 20, 2001  
**TIME:** 9:30AM  
**LOCATION:** Stanley Park Pavilion  
**SPEAKER:** Jim Taylor, Sports Columnist  
**TOPIC:** T.B.A.

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Minutes from January 16, 2001

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**Attendance 144 including three guests.**

President **John Hopkins** opened the meeting at 10:08 A.M. He thanked **Pidge McBride** and **Tom McCusker** for arranging the luncheon. He introduced and gave tribute to three previous Presidents - **Fred Cotton**, **Pidge McBride** and **Roy Williams**.

**Management Committee:** The Stanley Park Pavilion has a lease renewal where they will be required to make renovations. This could be disruptive and expensive for **PROBUS**. An alternative venue would be the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre whose rental costs are similar. This has a 250 seat auditorium style arrangement. Parking is free. We will hold the April meeting there.

**Visits and Entertainment:**

February 14: Valentine Lunch \$70.00 per couple at Capilano Golf Club.

February 20 Monthly meeting at Stanley Park Pavilion.

April 10: Bus tour to La Connor \$40.00 per person including lunch. Partners welcome.

✓ April 30: Golf Tournament for members and guests lunch and dinner included, minimum 40 required.

May 23: Indian Arm Cruise. Members and partners, \$40.00 per person including lunch.

**Brice Macdougall** introduced guest speaker David Mitchell whose CV is in last month's **PROBUS NEWSLETTER**. His talk was devoted to the weird, wonderful and wacky personalities of some of the Premiers that have shaped British Columbia's history

- "the politics of personality". In the mid 1800's Bill Smith did not receive his mail while working in the gold fields of California because his name was so common. What does he do? He becomes "Amor de Cosmos" a mixed language "lover of the world". He never again loses his mail. He moved northward with the gold frontier eventually settling in Victoria and becoming a journalist, editor, small business proprietor and eventually BC's second Premier as well as a Federal MP. He promoted BC's entry into Confederation then supported US annexation when the promised railroad was not built fast enough. He retired in Victoria and died alone. However, he was the start of a tradition in BC of Premiers who were larger than life, flamboyant politicians, and claiming to be men of the people. And since politics mirrors our personality, our leaders show us who we are. They define BC as a unique political culture.

From 1871 until 1903 there were no political parties in the BC Legislature. A strong sense of individualism developed among the members of the Legislature. The Premier, usually the dean of the group was chosen by the Lieutenant Governor. Thus developed the cult of personality. After 1903 Provincial parties developed out of the Federal parties - becoming somewhat of a "political farm system".

Richard McBride, a man in his early thirties, became the first Conservative party leader. He was a lawyer from New Westminster. An aristocratic man with the common touch - "the people's Dick" is how he described himself. He was knighted by Queen Victoria. He had a larger than life personality and was a Province builder. He set the form for party politics in BC.

Following this pattern of maverick politicians was "Honest John Oliver". This folksy populist Delta farmer was a 1920's Liberal leader. He dressed casually in a time of Conservatism. Ottawa called him a yokal. He had no post secondary education (common to most Premiers). Yet he was a good Premier in the boom time 1920's.



**President:**

John Hopkins  
985-8422

**Past President:**

Roy E. Williams  
926-4727

**Vice-president:**

Norm Weitzel  
925-3574

**Secretary:**

Don Farquhar  
948-9908

**Treasurer:**

Bill Wallace  
947-0340

**Speakers****Committee:**

Brice Macdougall  
684-1757

**Membership****Committee:**

Dick Matthews  
922-0358

**Visits and****Entertainment:**

Tom McCusker  
261-4763

**House****Committee:**

Doug Lambert  
266-2422

**Greeters****Committee:**

Leo Sauve  
925-2702

**Rotary Liaison:**

John Hoyle  
926-2667

**Historian and  
Archivist**

Peter McBade  
224-4870

Thomas Dufferin Pattullo, elected during the Depression in the 30's, was a model for modern partisan government. He was a "fed basher" who developed a "new deal" which he believed was copied by FDR. He was a former activist mayor elected from Prince Rupert. His strident political ways got him fighting with the Vancouver Liberal machine who kicked him out of the party while he was still in office. He was re-elected in 1941 attacking Mackenzie-King. A Liberal party convention created the coalition government. Pattullo was kicked out. This maverick predicted from the back benches that "the Liberal party will die and not come back for fifty years". He was right.

"Wacky" Bennett admired and befriended Pattullo. This wealthy hardware merchant from Kelowna, Alberta and New Brunswick had failed at numerous attempts politically before he joined a far out Social Credit Party in 1951. Within 6 months he fluked into the premiership when an experimental "transferable ballot" was used in the 1952 election. On counting the ballots the candidate with the lowest vote would be dropped and the second choice on his ballot would be added to the designated candidates total. This process continued until a candidate had a majority. Bennett promptly abolished this voting method once he was in power. During his 20 year career he took many risks, received a majority in each of the seven elections that he called every three years. He espoused free enterprise, yet was a "state capitalist" - taking over the Ferry systems and the BC Electric from private enterprise. He shaped BC's identity to his profile like his predecessors. In a Don Quixote way he was a populist and a Province builder, yet had many detractors.

Dave Barrett was a "mini WAC" but failed miserably in trying to live up to that model. He was always tilting at windmills. He was a "man of the

people". He centralized power in Victoria. BC had a rest from flamboyant politics with the ten year reign of Bill Bennett who kept out of the media as much as possible and led a low profile existence.

In 1986 Easterners exhibited stunned disbelief on learning that the Premier of BC was living in a windmill in a theme park. Bill Vander Zalm arrived penniless and not speaking English from Holland and rose to be a multimillionaire, garden shop keeper. He made his mark when Mayor of Surrey as a controversial outrageous individual. As Premier he loved the media, was larger than life, took everything personally, was the epitome of "politics of personality" but ultimately self destructed.

Mike Harcourt again gave BC a brief rest from the politics of personality. He came from municipal politics - a difficult feat since it is not a good training ground for the rough and tumble Provincial political scene. However, BC's tradition of political personality was saved by the arrival of Glen Clark who was in the mold of his flamboyant predecessors. This boy Premier trusted no one, ran a one man government, bashed the Feds and the Americans, fought with the media, but was a "man of the people". He self destructed by a personality ran amok. He fits the BC tradition more than any recent political figure and he also confirmed the life cycle of all recent BC Premiers...early euphoria, scandal, more scandal, humiliation, and resigning, then a new Premier.

The Speaker proposed this rotation periodically needs a short rest from Premiers with outrageous, pugnacious personalities by electing those with a quieter disposition. BC has come through a ten year period being the model of instability with 7 individuals rotating through the Premier's office. This is not good for BC and the voters are longing for a period of stability. He wonders if the one year with a stable Dosanjh is enough to rekindle the voter's need for flamboyance again.



If so then quiet Gordon Campbell needs to fear a new "man of the people" suddenly thrusting himself into the next election. The Speaker reminded us that politics is a mirror of ourselves and our own personalities. This is what determines the character of British Columbia politics, so we can not blame the media etc. but only ourselves for what we get in Victoria.

**Question Period:** Strong personalities rather than charisma, system impervious to reform, stifling party discipline; BC NDP=labour party vs. prairie=populist, compulsory voting, Campbell proposes fixed election dates, proportional representation, no strong personalities on the political horizon; change from resource to service economy, opposition leader and type cast as opposers and are hard to be seen by the voters as Province builders; political journalists are perverse, cynical, snide, condescending and difficult to hold accountable.

**Fred Cotton** thanked David Mitchell for an interesting and provocative presentation. A special presentation was made to Brice Macdougall. Brice was a member of the founding group of **PROBUS VANCOUVER**. He has served since as the Chair of the Speaker Committee and on the Management Committee. He is retiring from these positions so he can give full time as President of the Vancouver Rotary Club.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



A milestone was reached at the January 16th meeting, at the Point Grey Golf Club, with 145 members present - largest ever attendance.

David Mitchell, our speaker, was outstanding, as was the lunch that followed. I offer, on your behalf, thanks to **Tom McCusker** and **Pidge McBride** for making all the necessary arrangements.

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, a well deserved honour and presentation of Life Membership in the Club, was conferred on Brice Macdougall, as he retired from the Chairmanship of the Speakers Committee. A standing ovation followed, for a job well done.

It is still not too late for you to sign up for the Valentines luncheon at the Capilano Golf Club, for members and partners. The time is 12:00 noon on Wednesday February 14th.

At press time we have 35 couples coming. If you are interested please call **Bill Manson** 988-2365 or **Doug Lambert** 266-2422.

Notices for the LaConnor bus trip and the Golf game at the University Golf Club are included with this newsletter. It is important that you sign up now and return your **NOTICE** and **CHEQUE** (payable to the Probus Club Vancouver) at either the February 20th meeting or by mailing same to the Probus Office.

A great amount of time and effort, by the Visits and Entertainment Committee goes into arranging and booking these various events. Your support by participating is necessary so please sign up early.

Please note the next regular meeting of the Probus Club, is Tuesday February 20th at the Stanley Park Pavilion, when Jim Taylor will be our speaker. You don't want to miss this one - see you there.

John Hopkins  
President

## Announcements

**Plan to attend a field trip to LaConnor - April 10th.** More information in March Newsletter!

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 23RD**

**10:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

Reserve this date for the first Probus boat excursion for members and wives on the 62 foot catamaran cruiser **SEAQUEST**. Plaza of Nations Marina, False Creek. We will travel from the Marina to the north end of Indian Arm and return. Historic and exotic highlights will be noted and a buffet luncheon will be served enroute.

**\$40.00 each**

**Cash Bar**

Look for further information and a registration form in the March newsletter. Registration forms and cheques for full payment will be collected before the meeting on March 20th.

Contact **Chris Lee** for further information  
926-1022.

**ALL ABOARD! WE LOOK FORWARD  
TO A GREAT DAY!**



## BRICE MACDOUGALL HONOURED

*At the Presidents' Luncheon January 16th. Brice Macdougall was presented with a framed letter as follows:*

*From left to right:  
Fred Cotton, Brice  
Macdougall, John Hopkins*



*Dear Brice:*

*In recognition of your retirement from the Speakers Chair, the Probus Club would like to honour and acknowledge your tireless efforts in arranging speakers for every meeting since the Club's founding in 1997.*

*On behalf of the Club, it gives me great pleasure, to grant you, **LIFE MEMBERSHIP IN PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER.***

*Sincere thanks from all of us,*

*John A. Hopkins,  
President*

## JIM TAYLOR

Jim Taylor is a nationally syndicated sports columnist for Toronto's Sun Media chain. Most of his professional life has been spent with the Vancouver Sun and Province.

He is the author of eight books, including the Rick Hansen biography, *Man in Motion*; two with Wayne Gretzky; and one each with Igor Larionov and football players Dan Kepley and Jim Young, plus two column collections; *Forgive Me My Press Passes*, and *You Mean I get PAID to do this?*

He also has a thrice-daily syndicated radio show.

Taylor lives in West Vancouver with one wife, one cat and one Dalmatian.

## FEBRUARY GREETERS:



Bill Ibbott and Gordon Thom