



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

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

MAY 2006

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 9th, 2006

Time: 9:30 AM

**Location: H.R. MacMillan Planetarium and
Space Centre - Lower Level**

Speaker: Tim Armstrong

**Topic: Hurricane Katrina Aftermath,
Vancouver Urban Search & Rescue -
Eye-Witness Report**

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 17 - Tour of UBC

June 20 - Princess Louisa Inlet Cruise

August - Bard On The Beach

(Date to be finalized)

Sept. 16. Football Game

(BC Lions vs Toronto)

**October 7 - Fraser River Cruise to Fort
Langley Cranberry Festival**

TIM ARMSTRONG



The 46-member Vancouver Urban Search and Rescue Team was the first sign of relief effort to arrive in St. Bernard Parish (Louisiana) after having shipped out on August 31 - two days after Hurricane Katrina struck. Tim Armstrong, one of the team's leaders, will recount some of their experiences: although they were exhausted, they had some rewarding results to show for their

work - 119 people rescued.

Tim Armstrong joined Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services in 1981. Since then he has spent most of his career involved in technical rescue operations ranging from vehicle extrication to elevated rope and confined space rescues. In 1995 the City of Vancouver, as part of the emergency preparedness initiative, started the development of the Vancouver Urban Search & Rescue Team. Tim has been involved with the development of the program not only in Vancouver but as Chair of the National Instructor Development Program across Canada. His current position is that of Task Force Leader for the team where his on-going duties include training, recruitment, and overall team development.

Minutes of the April 11th Meeting

Attendance: 163 including guests

On a sad note, President Denis expressed his sorrow at the passing of Art Jones. He then called the meeting to order and asked Nick Thornton to introduce the new members. They are: Bill New, Marine Industry, George Cook, Banking, Alan Brown, School Administration, and Carl Brandes, Packaging Equipment. Next, President Denis asked Don Farquhar to speak to the Princess Louisa Inlet Cruise detailed elsewhere within. The May speaker is Tim Armstrong of the Vancouver Urban Search and Rescue Team. Denis then called upon David Scott to introduce our speaker, Mr. Steven Frasher, CEO Washington Marine Group.

Steven explained that the Washington Marine Group (WMG) consisted of five separate companies, all of which share common management problems: personal safety, alcohol/drug, labour strategy and succession planning. He first addressed these common problems and then described the five individual companies.

WMG measures safety by OSHA's lost time frequency formula. When Steven joined the Company the lost time incident was 1:3. This means that during any given year one in every three employees was injured and lost work. Through the use of safety professionals, the frequency incident was reduced to 1:10 but stayed there for three years. While the Safety Department accepted this static rating, Steven expressed his displeasure and organized supervisor/worker meetings. These meetings uncovered widespread and erroneous beliefs such as productivity being more important than safety and safety being the sole responsibility of the Safety Department. Now, new goals have been set and further improvement

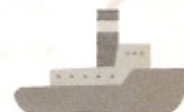
is being experienced.

The second problem is alcohol and drugs. While a widely prevalent issue, Steven has found it more exasperating in B.C. This is due to the Federal privacy laws and our strong drug/alcohol culture. However, salvation was found in the forest sector's "Courage to Care" program where disclosure, both self and otherwise, is encouraged and peer support to have fellow workers seeking professional help is promoted.

The other two problems are: labour strategy, where WMG bring their unionized workers and management together for frank open discussions of all grievances, and succession planning, where WMG is working with the unions to streamline the hiring procedure.

The Washington Marine's Group of Companies are:

- **Seaspan.** Seaspan has about 600 employees, 51 tugs, over 200 barges and one specialty bulk cargo ship. Other than the above problems they are fighting global price pressures and business volatility.
- **Seaspan Intermodal.** This is a continuation of the CPR railcar/truck line between Vancouver and the Island. The company has some 100 employees and five vessels of various configuration to handle rail cars and trucks. Besides the other problems, the company is faced with direct competition from both BC Ferries and Van Isle Barge.
- **Vancouver Ship Yard:** This North Vancouver Company has 300 or so employees and can construct new barges and maintain both tugs and barges. It has a lift and transfer device allowing several vessels to be serviced at the same time. The capacity is 300 feet in length and 1200 tons weight.



Vancouver Dry Dock. Located at the foot of Lonsdale, the Company has 200 employees and two dry docks. This plant can service vessels up to 700 feet and 36,000 tons. It generally serves a non-Seaspan market. They upgraded four BC Ferries over the last three years. There are environmental problems brewing as an open-air market and high-rise living accommodations will be crowding the area.

Victoria Ship Yard. This facility is owned by the Federal Government and uses the Esquimalt Graving Dock. It is 1,176 feet long and 126 feet wide and can lift 100,000 tons. While the overhead cost is low, the official policy states that it must be available to all comers.

During the question period we learned that:

- There are very few world areas in which the Fast Ferries can operate successfully, the Gulf of Georgia being one. WMG polled 3,000 people and found a strong desire for car and foot passenger competition against BC Ferries. So WMG is currently conducting a parallel investigation, selling on one hand and developing a business plan to have them run between North Vancouver and the Island, on the other.
- The engine problems on the Fast Ferries were primarily due to overheating by the necessity to keep them operating while dockside. Other arrangements are possible.
- There are only 4 or 6 vessels available in the world suitable to replace the Queen of the North and all would require major refits before being put into service. Steven feels the best solution would be to rent one quickly and order a properly designed replacement for early delivery.
- There are very few containers lost at sea.
- It's not practical to salvage the Queen of the

North. It lies in deep water and was never designed for the service.

George Adams thanked the speaker.

Bill Weatherall, Secretary

NOTICES

It is with regret we announce the passing of Art Jones on April 7, 2006. Our condolences to his family. A donation will be made in his name by Probus to Saint Vincent's Hospital Foundation.

JOIN US FOR LUNCH after the meeting at the Chianti Cafe, 1850 West 4th Ave. (Just West of Burrard)

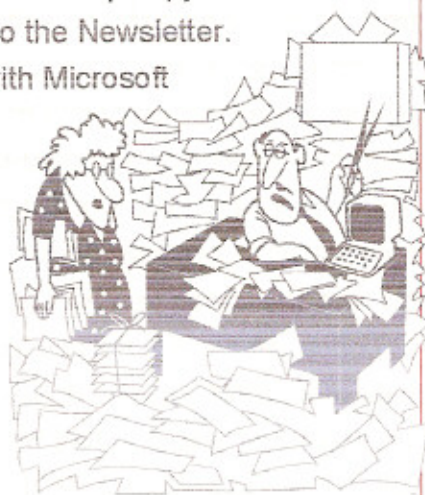
Member Services Desk: Ted Daem

Cash Desk: Ken Warner, Owen Owens

Greeters: Jim Roger, David Moir, David Rolfe

Help Wanted!

The Editor of the Newsletter is seeking an assistant to help out, especially when he is out-of-town. Almost Everything is done from your home using a computer for e-mail and a phone to round up copy from contributors to the Newsletter. Familiarity with Microsoft Word would be a plus. If you are interested contact, Roy Williams at (604) 926-4727.



UBC Walking Tour

The UBC Walking Tour proved to be popular and filled up to the maximum number of participants very quickly. There is also a waiting list. Successful registrants will be contacted by phone prior to the May 9th Probus meeting in order to confirm parking pass arrangements.

PRINCESS LOUISA INLET TOUR

The Trip: From Egmont to Princess Louisa Inlet and back on the Malibu Princess.
www.SunshineCoastTours.ca

The Date: Tuesday June 20th, 2006, departing at 1 PM from Malibu Landing at Egmont and returning there at 8 PM the same day. Have lunch before arrival!

The Food: Buffet dinner starting at 5:30 PM aboard ship on the return trip from Princess Louisa Inlet.

The Ship: Takes 330 passengers but they do not go over 200 on these tours leaving lots of room to wander about and to sightsee.

The Scenery: Breathtaking. I have been there five times and look forward to going again.

Accommodation: The Sechelt Peninsula has numerous bed and breakfasts, self contained cabins with kitchens, and hotel rooms. You can get information by acquiring the British Columbia Approved Accommodation Guide from Tourism BC by calling 604-435-5622. Sunshine Coast Tours also offers information on their web site. Plan to stay overnight on June 20 because the BC Ferries leave Langdale at 9:20PM and the drive from Egmont takes one and one half hours. So there would not be enough time to catch the ferry.

The Cost: \$121.98 per person which includes the Malibu ride, and the buffet. This is NOT an all inclusive package. The accommodation costs, transportation to and from Egmont are NOT included. Seniors ride free on BC Ferries, but there is a charge for vehicles.

NOTE - ON THE DAY OF THE TRIP THERE WILL BE TWO DRAWS. THE PRIZES WILL BE A REFUND OF ONE TICKET PRICE.

Did You Know

Did you know that Fort Langley was the first coastal trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company?

Fort Langley was built in 1827 near the mouth of the Fraser River, and the company's



West Coast headquarters, Fort Victoria, was erected in 1843. When the Oregon Treaty of 1846 established the 49th parallel as the boundary between British and United States territory, Victoria became the centre of British interest. In order to protect the territory, Britain proclaimed Vancouver's Island (the old name of Vancouver island) a crown colony in 1849, naming Victoria the capital. The first governor, Richard Blanshard, had little authority over the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. The British Government acknowledged this fact in 1851 by naming the head of the Hudson's Bay Company on the island James Douglas, Governor of the colony. In the same year the Queen Charlotte Islands were made a dependency of the Vancouver's Island colony.