



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

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

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NOVEMBER 2006

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Next Meeting: November 14, 2006

Time: 9:30 AM

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

**Speaker: Mark Angelo C.M.,
O.B.C., MSc., BSc.**

Topic: BC's River Heritage

UPCOMING EVENTS

Presidents' Luncheon

**WEDNESDAY, January 10th, 2007
Point Grey Golf and Country Club**

Mark Angelo



As the Program Head of the BCIT Fish, Wildlife and Recreation Department and the founder and Chair of both BC and World Rivers Day, Mark Angelo's

presentation will center on BC's great river heritage and will take the audience on a highly visual, world-wind tour of our province's great waterways. The many values of our BC rivers will be discussed as well as some of the threats confronting them and Mark makes a strong case that we may well have the world's finest river heritage right here in British Columbia.

Mark is a noted educator, river conservationist, outdoor leader, writer and volunteer and is founder of B.C. Rivers Day (which started in 1980), a province wide celebration of B.C.'s rivers that now attracts up to 75,000 people every year. Mark received the Order of British Columbia in recognition of outstanding service and achievements in river conservation and the Order of Canada "for

exceptional and on-going achievements in the protection and restoration of Canada's waterways." He was the inaugural recipient of the "10 year National River Conservation Award" as Canada's outstanding river conservationist of the past decade. In 2004 his work was recognized with the inaugural recipient of the United Nations Stewardship Award for river conservation and stewardship efforts associated with the International Year of Fresh Water. He served as the inaugural World Rivers Day chair in 2005. In 2005 he was listed in the CBC Almanac Book of the 100 Greatest British Columbians.

Mark is the author of over 250 articles and editorials pertaining to river conservation and other Environmental topics. He has provided extensive volunteer service amounting to tens of thousands of hours over the past 30 years and is an avid and renowned paddler having traveled on several hundred rivers throughout Canada and on 6 separate continents.

Mark created and presented "Riverworld, a personal journey to the world's wildest waters and places" which played throughout North America in 2003-2005. He is past chair and B.C. representative, as well as the first non-government board member of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, Mark has served as chair of the B.C. Heritage Rivers Program. Mark Angelo has coordinated numerous environment and river-related conferences including the O.R.C. Riverfest series and the 1998 National Rivers Conference. He speaks regularly at conferences throughout Canada and the world. Mark was appointed by the Hon. David Anderson as a member of the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council and is currently Deputy Chair. He was recipient of the 1998 Murray Newman Lifetime Achievement Award in conservation and aquatic sciences. Mark serves as current faculty representative of the BCIT Board of Governors. He is a director on several foundations. Mark is a Paul Harris fellow and was the 2002 recipient of a Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

Minutes of the October 10th Meeting

Attendance: 146 including guests

President Jack Farley opened the meeting by saying the annual dues letter will soon be in the mail. It will also include a questionnaire and President Jack encouraged all to complete and return, along with our cheques, of course! He then asked Gordon Thom to speak on two Rotary/Probus activities, Bridge and Investment Club. Gordon said that both could use additional members. The Chair then called upon Nick Thornton to introduce our new members. They are: Hugh Chaun, physician; Keith, (he responds better to Duff) Graham, armed services

and civil service (telecommunications); George Taylor, forestry and travel industries; and Peter Hamilton, petroleum and executive recruiting. Don Hudson was then asked to introduce our guest speaker, Dr. Jack Blaney.

As a start, Dr. Blaney walked us along the Canada/US border from east to west and then, the Alaska-Yukon/BC border. This was a 7500 mile jaunt, 40% of which is over water. After that he explained the watershed concept and earmarked those of major importance along the border. They are: The Fraser River basin, encompassing over 25% of BC; Lake Winnipeg, a very stressed area and the Great Lakes watershed, which is glacially fed and only 1% renewable.

Dr. Blaney then provided a little background on the International Joint Commission (IJC), the subject of today's talk. The IJC was formed as a requirement of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, which was instigated by a water dispute between Montana and Alberta and was the world's first treaty to address pollution. The Commission's structure consists of three Americans and three Canadians, of which our speaker is currently one. It's mandate is to assist the governments of both countries in preventing and resolving transboundary, fresh-water disputes. This they do by accepting and processing requests from both governments, approving structures such as dams and managing on-going requests such as the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. This Commission operates with complete equity between the two countries. Decisions are usually by consensus but require at least a majority support. They do not take instructions from, and work independently of, their respective governments. Through the years and over more than a hundred decisions, only two were divided along country lines.

While stating that both Canada and the US abound with fresh-water, and that both are the world's greatest users on a per capita basis, Dr. Blaney stressed that access to fresh-water is one of the world's most critical issues. He made his point crystal clear by offering the following:

- More than 20% of the world's population does not have access to safe drinking water.
- Dirty water intake by humans results in more than 2,000,000 deaths each year.
- At any given time, more than 71/2% of the world's hospital beds are occupied by people with water-borne diseases.
- A World Bank VP is on record saying that any third world war would be over potable water and not oil!

Through the years the IJC has operated very successfully and Dr. Blaney offers the following reasons for this achievement:

- The public takes fresh-water availability very seriously and generally recognizes the need to cooperate and share.
- The US and Canada have abundant supply and are much alike in outlook.
- On receipt of a request, the IJC starts with a thorough fact-finding mission. This approach aids timely and accurate decisions.
- They encourage public engagement wherever practical. The involved watershed populace have often settled issues on their own volition.
- The Boundary Waters Treaty has set the values and is based on equality between the two Countries.
- The IJC is binational and not bilateral in spirit.

During the question period we learned that:

- Lake Winnipeg, the world's tenth largest lake, is very stressed as witnessed by algae, contaminated fish and high levels of harmful nutrients.
- The warming trend reduces the amount of winter ice-cover on many lakes and rivers. The resulting evaporation gradually decreases the water supply

for the watershed.

- The US uses the Great Lakes for naval target practice, thus increasing fresh-water pollution.
- Fresh-water is not the renewable resource as once thought, and only represents 1% of the world's water. When ground water becomes contaminated, recovery is very slow. Desalination of ocean water isn't yet economically viable.
- Both Canada and US share IJC expenses equally. Canada's annual budget is in the 3 million dollar range.

President Jack asked Ted Daem to thank the speaker.

Bill Weatherall, Secretary

Reflections From The President



GONE NATIVE - On Thanksgiving Saturday 84 members of Probus, their families and friends, embarked on the sold out

paddlewheeler MV NATIVE, departing the New Westminster Quay, on their journey up the Fraser River in search of adventure, history and a great social event.

On the trip we were entertained with an interesting historical narrative from one of the crew aboard the paddlewheeler, learning about the early French history of Mallardville and hearing folklore about a prospector who discovered gold in the mountainous area north of Pitt Lake. It seems that the prospector returned from the wilds with pockets full of large gold nuggets and eventually other prospectors would try to follow him but would get hopelessly lost. He would take a lady friend on his trips but would always return alone and was eventually convicted of murder. But before the hanging judge carried out the sentence, the prospector put a curse on the lost gold mine and to this date 22 prospectors have tried to locate the mine and none of them returned.

Lunch was served as Haney came into view and as we passed the Billy Miner Pub another story unfolded about the old stage coach robber Billy Miner who was nicknamed "The Grey Fox." It seems that the demise of the stage coach era had cost this 65 year old his livelihood so he and his gang decided to rob trains - what a career change! The first heist was a CPR passenger train where they made off with a large amount of gold and cash. On his second attempt at looting another CPR train his luck ran out, and he was caught and sentenced to 20 years in the BC Pen. (A movie on the story of the Grey Fox, starring Richard Farnsworth, was produced in 1983.)

We then entered a narrow channel on the south side of McMillan Island and docked in the shadow of the Glover Road Bridge, just below one of the local pubs! We had arrived in Fort Langely where the Cranberry Festival was in full swing. The 84 adventurers scattered with some checking out the many stalls set up for the Festival while others continued the history lesson by visiting the Fort which was built by the Hudson's Bay co. in 1827.

Later we reboarded the MV NATIVE for our return trip down the Fraser. We heard the story of Simon Fraser who in 1808 explored the entire length of the river (some 850 miles) with the assistance of local natives who helped him and his crew portage Hell's Gate and some of the other rapids. When he landed at the mouth of the Fraser he learned to his horror that this was not the Columbia River that he had discovered but rather the mighty Fraser. The irony is that his friend and fellow explorer David Thompson named the Fraser after him. Simon reciprocated by naming the Thompson River after his friend David Thompson.

The remainder of the trip went without incident and we docked at the Quay at 5pm bringing to an end another enjoyable and educational Probus Club Vancouver outing. These affairs are organized for your benefit by the Activities Committee. Why not join up when the next one is announced! Your Probus Newsletter will give you the details of future adventures planned by Don Hudson and his committee.

Jack



Happy Probus members & guests enjoying the cruise



President Jack Farley and Activities Chairman Don Hudson aboard MV Native

NOTICES

Members Services Desk: Tremayne Perry

Cash Desk: Frank Willis, Michael Ashby

Greeters: Lindsay Mann, Jim Helmcken, John Hoyle

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Hugh Chaun - Physician, Gastroenterology

Keith Graham - Armed Forces/Civil Service
(telecommunications)

Peter Hamilton - Petroleum industry and executive
recruiting

George Taylor - Forestry and travel Industry

Our apologies to new member Brian Atkins who was incorrectly named in the October Newsletter.