



# NEWSLETTER

## PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

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

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

...to find more about Probud go to [www.probus.org](http://www.probus.org)

**JULY 2007**

### President

Jack Farley  
604-922-1515

### Director

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604-274-0446

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604-922-6469

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604-732-7758

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### Activities Committee

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### Membership Services

Tremayne Perry  
604-261-9669

### Historian and Archivist

Gordon Thom  
604-739-0714

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday July 10, 2007

**Time:** 9:30 AM

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

**Speaker:** Robert S. Piecas

**Topic:** A Mandarin Remembers...An Insider  
Compares Bill Bennett With His Peers.

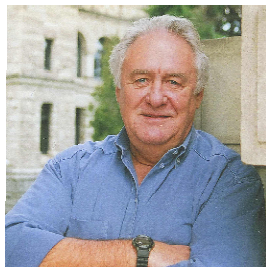
### UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 15** - Holland America Luncheon  
(Limited registration available)

**September 13** - Capilano Watershed Bus  
Tour

**September 28** - Holland America  
Repositioning Cruise

## Robert S. Piecas



Robert Piecas is a senior, seasoned negotiator and problem solver equally at home in the private sector business community

and government. He recently authored his first book, "Bill Bennett, a Mandarin's View."

In government, he was a career public servant for over 20 years serving under both the Social Credit and NDP administrations. Over half that time he served as Deputy Minister in numerous portfolios including the Premier's Office and Provincial Secretary.

He was concurrently responsible for government wide personnel issues, labor negotiations during the 80's outsourcing and privatization (including the gas division of B.C. Hydro to form B.C. Gas), Royal and VIP visits during Expo, creation of BC Lotteries and acted as the Provinces' trouble shooter and fixer.

In the private sector Robert Piecas was a self-employed business and government relations consultant from 1991- 96 and 1998-2005. Major clients included Canfor and other forestry firms,

Telus, Imperial Oil, International Wood and Allied Workers (IWA) and the Coalition of BC Businesses.

As a mediator, he handled the dispute between the Government of Canada, Musqueam Indian Band, City of Richmond and Canada Lands over the disposal of Garden City Lands.

He served as President, BC Lumber Trade Council from 1998-2002, the Association that led negotiations on the export of softwood lumber to the U.S.A.

As a lecturer at the University of Victoria and Queen's, he has developed and teaches: "Negotiation Strategies", "Crisis Management" and "Best Practices."

Today, he specializes in a very few, highly selected, complicated, difficult private or public sector intractable problems that require a high level of skill and experience to solve. He has a BA Honours and MA in Political Science from the University of Victoria and is a political pundit for CBC radio. He also appears on television news and political commentary programs such as Vaughan Palmer's "Voice of the Province."

## Minutes of the June 12th Meeting

**Attendance: 180 including guests**

True to form, President **Jack Farley** opened the meeting right on time with warm greetings for all. He then asked **Don Hudson** to give us the latest details on upcoming events (see details inside). **Nick Thornton** was called upon to introduce the new members. (See Welcome New Members). **Bill Ibbott** then introduced this morning's speaker, Dr. Brian Day, president-elect of the Canadian Medical Association.

Dr. Day's illustrated talk began by telling us of his early years. He was born into a socialistic home where both his parents voted labour. Further, during his early years of medical practice he strongly supported a government-controlled health system.

It was the cost controlling efforts of the 70s, when the Provincial Government cut individual surgeon's operating-room time from 22 to an eventual five hours per week, which caused eyebrows to rise. At that time surgeons had little alternative but to watch their patient backlogs grow and they became acutely aware that something had to give. But that wasn't the only change afoot. Medical research and technology was springing ahead with new and expensive procedures that offered a longer and more fulfilling life. However, this most certainly stressed the medical budget already fraught with cost overruns due, in part, to operating inefficiencies. Nevertheless, the scenario continues where the public becomes alerted to the medical advances and demands the very latest and best modern medicine has to offer. Furthermore, they want immediate delivery and all this for free! Thus began our medical system crisis and the need to make some very tough choices.

Enterprising medical practitioners, facing this scene, would be expected to seek solutions. This Dr. Day and several associates did by conceiving and building the largest private health care clinic in the country. It operates on a for-profit basis and offers many surgical procedures. The Canadian Health Act has provision for the use of private medical facilities by organizations such as Work Safe BC, the military and police forces. Also, out-of province/country patients are likewise entitled. There are others, as well, but you and I are legally not allowed. However, faced with the unsustainable aspect of our medical system one

wonders how long our so-called one-tier system will survive. There are many examples where politicians, dignitaries and the wealthy have either jumped the queue or sought the services of a private clinic. All the above underwrites the realism that equality in Canadian health care is an impossibility!

Many medical practitioners are of the opinion that our system is in crisis. Examples put forward supporting this opinion include: 1) Large numbers of graduating medical students are leaving the country. 2) Economics is the driving force behind government financing and medical costs are out of control - inefficiencies to the point of taking funds from other essential services. 3) Bench marking and guaranteed maximum wait periods equate to additional administrative expenses with questionable results and the costs/damages associated with extended surgical wait periods are serious. 4) The Federal Court ruled, "Access to waiting lists is not access to health care." Countering these is ample evidence that private clinics can process many procedures quickly, safely and at lower costs.

Dr. Day concluded by encouraging progressive global medical care investigation and updating our once proud system. It's worth keeping but it certainly needs updating! He said light can be seen at the end of the tunnel – but, "look out for it may be the headlight of an oncoming train".

During the question period we learned that:

- Mental health needs are under-funded and the money required could come from the administration budget. At present, there are mentally challenged folk on the street that should be patients in proper facilities. These people don't have the where-with-all to fight the system so they accept what's given to them. Very sad.
- The block-funding concept is workable providing it is properly applied.
- Al Gore has conducted a very successful global warming propaganda campaign resulting in the public feeling well informed of the problems to

be faced. Health care is every bit as important to our needs and an equivalent crusade must be advanced on its behalf. Hopefully, in this way the public will become knowledgeable of our Health Care status and support governments that propose the proper, and some likely tough, corrective actions.

- Our Health Care system requires both long-term consideration and understanding. Unfortunately governments are forced to think in terms of four year "re-election cycles". We must encourage Victoria to give our medical system futuristic consideration.
- Gordon Campbell is very likely aware that our present Health Care system is unsustainable, but his public handling of the matter should not be considered devious. Regardless, we must address inequities such as the example of a unionized gardener at the UBC Hospital being paid \$10 per hour more than the equivalent [unionized government employee] gardener downtown because of the health care affiliation.

**Don Newman** thanked the speaker.

Bill Weatherall, Secretary.

## Reflections From The President



The activities organized by our Club are interesting and informative and another great event took place on May 23rd when Chris and Mary Lee hosted and arranged a walking tour of Gastown and the Downtown East

Side. Our group of 30 gathered at the offices of the Architectural Institute of BC. This building at 440 Cambie Street was constructed in 1910 and for many years housed the Province newspaper operation. After receiving an overview of our pending tour, we then left in search of history and adventure with our tour guide, Lauren English, of the Institute.

Here are some of the highlights of our walking tour:

The first stop was to view the beautiful Dominion Building at the corner of Hastings and Cambie. This 14 story building was constructed in 1910 and was the tallest building in the British Empire at the time. Its architect was J.S. Helyer, who later died after falling off the

staircase in front of the building and it is rumoured that his ghost still haunts the building. We then saw one of Vancouver's tourist attractions - the steam clock which was erected in 1977. It appears to have run out of steam!

The building at 321 Water St. has some interesting history. It was the Hudsons Bay's first department store in Vancouver and opened its doors in 1894 to sell furs and liquor! And near the corner of Water and Carrall is the site of Gaolers Mews which contained the original court house, police station and jail. The jail consisted of 2 small log cells and doors but no locks. Most of the offenders were arrested for being drunk and after they sobered up were free to go!

Just around the corner on Maple Tree Square stands the statue of Gassy Jack. In 1867 Jack Deighton arrived in a canoe from New Westminster with his family and a barrel of whiskey. He immediately set up business by building the Globe Saloon at Maple Tree Square. Because Jack was the type of person who told tall tales and talked incessantly with his saloon customers, he was nicknamed "Gassy Jack". This settlement became known as Gastown in honour of "Gassy" Jack Deighton. In 1886 it was incorporated into the City of Vancouver and in the same year, an out of control fire burned down all but two of Vancouver's buildings. Across from Maple Tree Square is the Europe Hotel built in 1909 and was the first reinforced concrete structure in Canada. This flat iron shaped building is triangular in order to fit the shape of the lot.

We then made our way to the infamous corner of Main and Hastings where we viewed the many problems facing the Downtown East Side. Today was "Welfare Wednesday" with a lot of activity on the street! At the corner is Vancouver's first public library, the Carnegie building, which was financed by a donation of \$50,000 from Andrew Carnegie in 1902. Across the street at 139 East Hastings, more activity was taking place as this is the location of Canada's first safe injection site, known as Insite. Our Federal Government has only extended the funding of Insite until the end of 2007, at which time a decision must be made on its future.

We viewed the site of the old Woodward's Department store, built in 1908 by Charles Woodward

and closed its doors forever in 1993. All that remains today is a huge excavation but they have saved part of the east facade and of course the big "W" which is being restored and will occupy its rightful place on top of the new building. Once completed the new Woodwards will bring a change of activity to Hastings Street, with mixed housing, stores and a SFU campus. This could be the catalyst for the redevelopment of the entire block across the street.

On our return to the Institute we were treated to a light lunch and refreshments. We were joined by two Sergeants from VPD, Reuben Sorge and Richard Rabinovich who led us with a candid discussion of the problems facing the Downtown East Side residents. What we witnessed on our tour was only the "tip of the iceberg" of the problem. New York appears to have solved its problem by substantially adding to the police presence. There is no easy answers for Vancouver but having proper treatment centres in support of the Four Pillars program and increasing the size of our police force may go a long way to providing the solution.

Again many thanks to the LEES for hosting and arranging the walking tour and to LAUREN for describing the sights. If you are interested in the history of Vancouver, the Institute is offering 6 architectural tours from July 3 to August 31st. Each tour will cover one of the following areas: Victory Square and Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona, Yaletown, the West End and finally the Downtown Business Core. For further information visit the Institute's website [www.aibc.ca](http://www.aibc.ca) or telephone 604-683-8588.

Jack

## NOTICES

**Members Services Desk:** Tremayne Perry

**Cash Desk:** Duthie Welsford, Grover Sinclair

**Greeters:** Lloyd Doidgo, Bob Cowan, Stan Clarke

## **WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

**David Clark** - General Insurance

**Bill Cutt** - Airline Pilot

**Eric Hayne** - Banker

**Peter Jefferson** - Business Owner

**Carl Meilike** - Health Services Administration

## **IMPORTANT CHANGE IN HOLLAND AMERICA CRUISE**

Lloyds Travel has advised us that our repositioning cruise for Sept. 27 needs to be changed as the **Ms Oosterdam** will be in drydock at the end of the Alaska cruise season. Consequently, we have replaced our cruise with the following:

### **September 28 - Ms. Volendam - 4 Nights**

Vancouver-Astoria-at sea-at sea-San Diego

Inside Cabin - \$540.00; Outside Cabin - \$610.00

Verandah Cabin - \$740.00

However due to the change of plans, you may also book on the following cruises

### **September 26, MS Zaandam - 5 nights** Vancouver –

Victoria – Astoria– at sea – at sea – San Diego

Inside Cabin - \$699.00; Outside Cabin - \$782.00

Verandah Cabin - \$1055.00

### **September 29, MS Zuiderdam - 4 nights**

Vancouver – at sea – at sea – at sea – Los Angeles

Inside Cabin - \$589.00; Outside Cabin - \$670.00

Verandah Cabin - \$790.00

In addition to the above costs, the return air fare will be in the order of \$350.00. All costs shown are in Canadian dollars.

We have also been advised that if you can organize a group booking in the order of ten people, you can discuss the possibility of a group fare reduction. Also, if you wish to arrange a visit to Las Vegas or another city, that can be arranged by Lloyd's as well. Lloyds Travel also advised that the heavy booking season for repositioning cruises is just starting and so if you are interested you should contact them as soon as possible in order to get the accommodation you would prefer.

The contact at Lloyds Travel is as follows:

Jude Harms - Lloyds Travel & Cruises

206 – 906 West

Broadway, Vancouver,  
BC

V5Z 1K7

Phone: 604-872-5464,  
ext. 104





## **BRIDGE 2006/2007**

Probus members, Conrad Rademaker, Lindsay Mann, Don Farquhar and Hugh Chaun were among the year end prize winners in the Rotary Club of Vancouver Members' Bridge Group for 2006/2007. While sponsored by the Rotary Club over half of the group plus a number of spares belong to the Probus Club Vancouver.

Conrad Rademaker and Lindsay Mann leading into the final wind-up evening ended the evening in the prizes with a strong second place finish in total plus minus scores for the season. Don Farquhar and Hugh Chaun placed in the prizes for most slams.

A great year of fellowship and fun was had by all. For information on next fall contact Gordon Thom 604-739-0714.

## **20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION of Probus Club of White Rock & Surrey Wednesday, September 12, 2007**

The 2nd Probus Club formed in Canada has invited our members and guests to their 20th anniversary dinner celebration. This event will be held at Eaglequest Golf Coyote Creek at 7778-152nd St. Surrey from 5:00pm to 9:00pm. There will be a special presentation followed by entertainment featuring Art Mutchers "Stardust" Swing Orchestra with songs and tenor band styling of the the Big Band era.

RSVP: Roger Amiot (604)535-3352 or ruthamiot@shaw.ca The cost is \$50.00 per person. You are requested to pre-pay by sending your cheque to The Probus Club of White Rock Surrey: Suite 7000 - 12850-26th Ave., Surrey, B.C. V4P 1S1

## **HOLLAND AMERICA LUNCHEON - AUGUST 15, 2007**

A draw will be held before the July 12 th Probus meeting to determine who will be invited to the luncheon. This is your last chance to enter the draw. If interested phone the Probus office by July 6th and leave your name and your wife's name if she is to be registered.

## **CAPILANO WATERSHED BUS TOUR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2007**

A bus has been reserved for Probus Vancouver on Thursday, September 13th at 12:30PM for a GVRD organized and guided tour of the Capilano watershed. The tour is four hours long and starts at the Grouse Mountain Tramway parking lot. Box lunch, water and soft drinks will be provided. There are several stops enroute and bathroom facilities are available. The GVRD has advised there are good photographic opportunities. The cost of the tour is \$20.00 which covers a box lunch, water, soft drinks and gratuities for guide and driver. Weather is obviously a factor in what you wear. If it is showery, some rain gear is in order and remember it will be cooler in the watershed area than in the city. Above all, wear comfortable warm clothing and shoes.

We want everyone there at least 15 minutes before departure. The bus will be in the upper parking lot next to the Tramway unloading area. The cost for all day parking is \$5.00.

As the GVRD says," this is a chance to see where your drinking water comes from." Also hear what the GVRD is doing to ensure both the quality and quantity of Vancouver's water.

So sign up using the form in this newsletter! Friends and relatives are welcome

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## **Capilano watershed Tour September 13, 2007**

### **Registration Form**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets @\$20.00\_\_\_\_\_ Total Cost \$\_\_\_\_\_

Drop off at next meeting or mail to: Probus Club Vancouver, 252-2025 West 42nd Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6M 2B5