



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

PO Box 74539, KITSILANO, Vancouver, BC, V6K 4P4

<https://probusvancouver.com/>

Enriching members with topical, entertaining speakers and social activities

January, 2026

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 13 at The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre

Speaker: Brian Yu, Chief Economist, Central One Credit Union

Topic: "Financial Forecast"

9:00: Coffee and Timbit

9:45: Meeting commences followed by our speaker's presentation.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As we go into a new year, your 2025 parking passes will no longer be valid. If you haven't already picked up your 2026 pass, please proceed immediately to the desk at the top of the stairs where they will be available to be hung from your mirror or put onto the dashboard of your vehicle.

Bryan Yu



Bryan Yu has extensive experience in economics and advisory roles. Bryan is currently the AVP & Chief Economist at Central 1, where they lead a team in economic research and advisory. Bryan also manages macroeconomic monitoring and forecasting for the credit union system. Prior to this, they held the roles of Chief Economist and Deputy Chief Economist at Central 1. In addition to their work at Central 1, Bryan is the Principal at Bryan Yu Economic Advisory, providing further expertise in economics.

Bryan has also served as a Member of the Board of Directors at S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and as the Committee Chair for the Government Budget and Finance Committee at the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. Bryan has further contributed to the field as an Instructor at UBC Sauder School of Business and as an Economist at the British Columbia Real Estate Association. Bryan began their career as an Analyst at CMHC-SCHL. Bryan Yu has a Bachelor of Arts degree (Honours) in Economics with a focus on Econometrics/Statistics from the University of Manitoba. Bryan also holds a Master of Arts degree in Economics from Simon Fraser University.

NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM—TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Speaker: Dr. Brenda Lau, Changepain Clinic c-founder

Topic: TBA

Report of the December 9th Meeting

Attendance: 95 Members and Guests

President John Kay started the formal meeting at 9:45 with the customary welcome and recognition of our guests and speaker. As usual, he started with the traditional story. He then asked Jack Zaleski to introduce a new member (see Welcome Our New Member on page 3). JKohn then introduced our speaker, Geoff Croll.

One of the guiding principles of British Properties is to share its story. Geoff Croll's presentation did just that. It was a fascinating history lesson about Vancouver's evolution, West Vancouver's unlikely beginnings, and the long view required to shape communities that endure.

The story of British Properties begins well before Geoff's tenure, with the notable Alfred J.T. Taylor. Born in Victoria in 1887 to a scientist and preacher father, Taylor's early life was shaped by responsibility and resilience. After his mother's death, he helped raise his younger siblings before heading to Vancouver at age 19 to pursue engineering. He rented a shack with a friend at the foot of Burrard Inlet for \$2 a week. Taylor quickly proved himself both technically skilled and fiercely entrepreneurial.

By the 1910s and 1920s, Taylor had built several successful engineering ventures and developed a keen interest in industrial engines. His career took him to the United Kingdom, where he rose rapidly through elite business and social circles. There, through a club connection with Lord Southborough, financial adviser to the Guinness family, Taylor laid the groundwork for a vision that would permanently reshape Vancouver's North Shore.

At the time, West Vancouver was bankrupt and burdened with thousands of acres of steep, forested land that no one was paying taxes on. Early subdivision schemes had wildly misrepresented the terrain, which overseas speculative buyers purchased sight unseen. This vast area sat above the snow line without power or water facilities. By the 1920s, during the depths of the Great Depression, the District was desperate to offload this "worthless" land. They even proposed to trade it for someone willing to build a bridge. In 1931, through Taylor's efforts, the Guinness family purchased roughly 4,000 acres for \$75,000 and committed substantial funding to infrastructure, employment, and the construction of Capilano Golf Course. With these critical investments, British Pacific Properties was officially incorporated.

The results were transformative. Property tax payments from British Properties helped save West Vancouver from bankruptcy, while neighbouring North Vancouver was not so fortunate. Taylor's boldest idea - the Lions Gate Bridge - finally connected the North Shore to downtown Vancouver. Built in just 20 months and opened in 1938, the bridge became both a literal and symbolic link, accelerating the region's growth. Fun fact: While the bridge was eventually sold to the province for \$6 million, the Guinness family later paid to illuminate the bridge during Expo '86.

Geoff emphasized that British Properties has always seen itself as a long-term steward rather than a short-term developer.

Another one of their guiding principles is to be masters of their craft. Early on, the company hired the Olmsted Brothers, among North America's most renowned landscape architects, setting a tone of design excellence and environmental sensitivity that continues today. Even now, homeowners in British Properties must seek approval for renovations - a practice intended to preserve both character and landscape. Post-war development brought Park Royal, Canada's first covered shopping centre, which opened in 1950 to save residents the long drive across the bridge for shopping. While the mall was sold in 1990 to refocus the company on land development, it remains a lasting legacy. Meanwhile, housing evolved from large estates to smaller "California bungalows," allowing West Coast modern architecture to flourish.

In recent decades, British Properties has shifted toward more holistic planning. The Rodgers Creek neighbourhood marked a turning point, prioritizing clustered development, green space preservation, diverse housing types, trails, and energy efficiency. Trails have become central, not just for recreation, but for real transportation alternatives, especially with the rise of e-bikes.

Environmental stewardship runs throughout the company's work. British Properties supports salmon restoration, stream keepers, wetlands, foreshore resilience, and has dedicated over 500 acres of parkland to date. Geoff stressed that trust has been earned through action, not words - a foundation that has made current planning efforts more collaborative. Looking ahead, the most ambitious project is Cypress Village, envisioned as a walkable, transit-supported community above the highway, which West Vancouver has long lacked. After 20 years of planning, the project includes housing diversity, schools, community facilities, independent transit links, wildfire protection, affordable rental housing, and a new fire hall. A defining feature is the dedication of 3,500 acres of contiguous parkland, now formally protected and adjacent to Cypress Provincial Park, forming one of North America's largest urban-adjacent green spaces.

Traffic remains the one issue everyone agrees on: everyone hates it. Cypress Village aims to address this by allowing people to live, work, and access services in the same community to reduce commuting, improve safety, and strengthen resilience.

Throughout the talk, Geoff returned to a central idea: well-being. British Properties' tagline, "a new elevation of well-being," reflects the belief that access to nature, walkability, and thoughtful design support both physical and mental health. It's a philosophy rooted in nearly a century of planning and stewardship.

Geoff may insist he wasn't there to sell property, but by the end of his talk, many in the room were likely wondering if moving uphill, closer to the trails, salmon streams, and sweeping views, might not be such a bad idea after all.

John Dawson thanked our speaker and presented him our customary honorarium.

Rotarians' Investment Club

Our December Meeting was a social gathering of Club Members and their partners, plus our Raymond James representative, Cameron Runte, attending the sumptuous Christmas Buffet at the RVYC.

Our next guest speaker will be Brendon Haynes, of AxiNorth Industries, talking about large scale & cloud based data centres and their impact on the new AI world. He has some interesting ideas going forward which could give our Club a potential capital gain opportunity for our portfolio.

Our next meeting is on Thursday, January 25th and will start at 6.30 pm (sharp !) (with a "no-host" bar 6.00 pm) at the RVYC 3811 Point Grey Road. Guests are welcome (we have three lady members) The cost is now \$110.00 (cash or cheque please) for an excellent 3 course dinner including wine with the meal, gratuities & taxes etc.

If you would like to attend, please email our secretary (Emily - emilybarcket@gmail.com) and myself to confirm your attendance, and I will email the Agenda etc. to you prior to the meeting.

For detailed information about our 26 year old Club, please email or phone me.

John Sullivan; Membership Chair
604-263-4486 (land line)

Probus Insights From The President



Happy New Year.

I trust you had a very nice holiday season and are now refreshed and looking forward to 2026.

This time of year gives us the opportunity to look back over the past year. We had a very successful year and welcomed 17 new members to our club. We had many interesting presentations of which one of the highlights for me was our sit down session with Wally Buono at the Past Presidents' Lunch.

The New Year promises to be equally good with a number of speakers already lined up by Bill Hooker and the Speakers Committee. In January we will host Bryan Yu, the Chief Economist at Central One Credit Union. Given the trade uncertainty, US tariffs and the upcoming renegotiation of the CUSMA agreement, it should be a very interesting presentation.

If you have any ideas for speakers or if you have a specific interest, please let Bill or me know. Your input is most welcome. I think the quality of our speakers and their intellectual stimulation is a crucial element in the continued success of our club.

Here's to a New Year filled with friendship and joy and I look forward to seeing many of you on January 13th.

Best wishes to you all.

John Kay
President



PROBUS FRED COTTON BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will meet at 9:30 am on
Wednesdays, Dec 3 and Jan 7 in

The Amenity Room at Elm Park Place, 5700 Larch Street,
(at W. 41st Avenue).

The books to be discussed when we meet are:

Jan 7: *Patriot: A Memoir* by Alexei Navalny.

Feb. 4 *Precipice* by Robert Harris

A list of books read since the Club began in 2008 may be found on the Club website by clicking the "Book Club" link. For further information contact Ken Yule at
kjqyc@shaw.ca or 604-266-4563



Welcome Our New Members

Krishan Anand
Structural Engineer
(Introduced at our
November meeting)



Nigel Findlay-Shirras
Anaesthetist

IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret that we announce the passing of
Barry McBride on October 14th
and

Philip Dean Winram on December 16th

Our condolences to their families and friends.

*The PROBUS Club of Vancouver
will make a donation in Barry's name to
The Parkinson's Society of BC
and in Dean's name to
The BC Cancer Research Centre*

PROBUS Club of Vancouver—Social Opportunity Groups

To see details of how to join any of these groups, click (or ctrl-click) on the heading of each group.

The Lunch Group

There is no convenor for this group which gathers after every monthly meeting (except our October, Presidents' Lunch) at The Local Public Eatery on the corner of Cornwall Avenue and Yew Street. The number of regular lunchers (I got this from AI!) is anywhere from 8 to 12 or more. If you would like to join us, just show up!

Tennis—Bill Hooker

Bill Hooker organises a fun tournament two or three times a year for a group of keen tennis players. They play at the UBC Tennis Centre.

If you might be interested in joining us, stay in touch with Bill Hooker at mayneid@yahoo.com.

Fred Cotton Book Club—Ken Yule

Information about the book club is featured every month on page 3 of the newsletter. By clicking on the header above, find out full details of the current activities as well as a list of all the books discussed since 2008. The club doesn't meet in July or August.

Breakfast Group—Peter Scott

On November 19, 11 hungry members of the breakfast group met at Yolks on West Broadway. We were seated at one fairly small table and if 2 hadn't cancelled, we would have needed to take turns to eat or 2 sit on someone's laps! However, the food was very good and despite a bit of a parking issue, it was most successful. As usual, several topics of conversation kept us all involved and didn't result in any arguments or fisticuffs! Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, December 17th** when we will return to the **Shaughnessy Golf Club** at 4300 W Marine Drive to enjoy the Christmas decorations and excellent food. Anyone interested in joining us can contact Peter at peter26@telus.net.

Rotarians' Investment Club

Everything you need to know about how The Rotarians' Investment Club operates can be found by clicking on the above heading. Information on the Club's monthly meetings is featured each month on page 3 of this newsletter. For more information, contact: John Sullivan, Chair Membership, Promotion and Hospitality at email: johnws@telus.net or telephone at 604-263-4486



PROBUS Club of Vancouver—Social Opportunity Groups

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Policy Conversations Cafe—Jim Matkin

We are perplexed by Trump's tariff policy against Canada, including new threats on Potash, when the tariffs will hurt both countries. Potash tariffs will cause We discussed tensions in Abo-Kamloops residential school rights from the Cowichan Court *Cover-Up Allegations: Compar-purported to be "probable buri-Report identifying similar mark-tioning the lack of ground truth-Call for Truth and Action: Em-tions and public awareness to*



tries, particularly US farm-more food inflation. riginal relations created over history and threats to property case. We noted - Kamloops ing GPR anomalies at Kamloops als" New Westminster's Golder ings as "drain lines," and ques-ing... phasizing the need for excava-challenge unverified narratives.

Bridge Club Jack Zaleski

Like the Book Club, the Bridge Club doesn't meet in July or August. For information on how the Bridge Club works, click on the heading above for details and how to join. Bridge Club Member Hugh Chaun reports that the Bridge Club (which Jack Zaleski organizes) has had an excellent season of enjoyable games, hosted in rotation in different members' homes.

Anyone interested in joining this "fun" bridge group can get more details from Jack at

jack.zaleski@gmail.com



**THE KAY'S WITH THE 2025
WINNERS' TROPHY**

Pub Nights—Peter Phillips

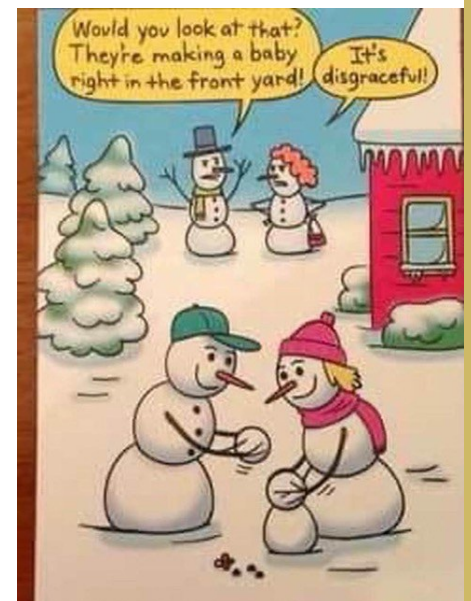
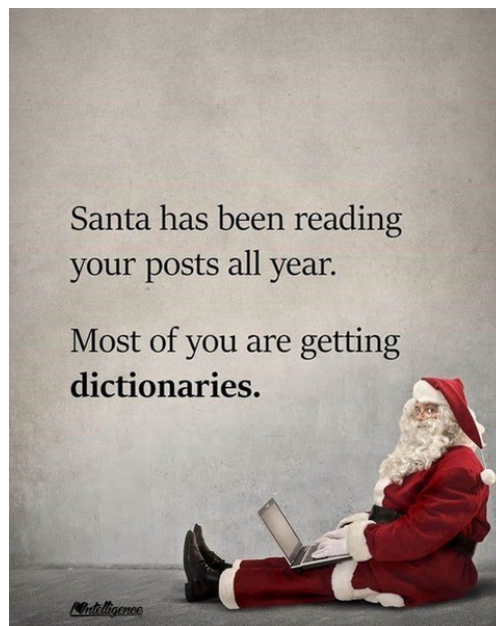
There was a real festive atmosphere when 11 cheery revelers met at the *King's Head Pub* to start their monthly thirst quenching session. Seasonal mirth and merriment was the topic when some beer quiz items were introduced. The festivities were finally brought to a sobering conclusion when *The Beer Prayer* was read out to assist with an orderly departure and the continuation of revelries at home!

The next Pub Night will be on **Thursday 15th Jan. 2026 at 4.00pm at the "Wolf and Hound" 3617 West Broadway**

Let us know if you will be there: pjpphillips@hotmail.com or glennndfaris@gmail.com

Peter Phillips, Master Thirst Quencher 🍺 🍻

To Take Us Into 2026, Here's Some Well-Needed Humour!



Website Now Hosted in Canada

Website Committee Chair, Peter Brock recently relocated the club's website from the USA to Canada. For many years we hosted our site in Fremont, California, but an unwarranted price hike combined with a desire to support Canadian businesses led to the decision to change hosts. Our website is now with a Montreal company on its Vancouver server. In the move we reduced our hosting cost by \$224 in the first year with future savings of \$116 annually.

By the way, if you are interested in the Probus website and would like to help us manage it, please contact Jack Zaleski at jack.zaleski@gmail.com.