



# 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

June, 2026

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**Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 9 at The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre**  
**Speaker: Dr. Marco Marra, UBC Professor of Medical Genetics**  
**Topic: "Towards precision cancer genomic medicine resources for BC & Canada: BC's Personalized Oncogenomics Program"**  
**9:00: Coffee and Timbits**  
**9:45: Meeting commences followed by our speaker's presentation.**

### SCAM ALERT

Some of our members have received scam emails appearing to be from one of our directors, requesting them to purchase several hundred dollars worth of gift cards. Please be aware that these are scams and we do not need members to purchase anything for any reason. If you receive one of these emails, delete it immediately!

### Dr. Marco Marra



Dr. Marra is a UBC Professor of Medical Genetics and the Michael Smith Laboratories. Formerly Head of Medical Genetics (UBC) and co-founder and past Director of Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre for more than two decades, Dr. Marra is known for his work in genomics and precision cancer genomic medicine.

Dr. Marra earned BSc and PhD degrees from SFU. During a post-doctoral fellowship in St. Louis, working on the Human Genome Project, Dr. Marra devised approaches to build sequence-ready maps of the human genome and led the team that created the map, fueling the production of the human genome sequence. Dr. Marra was recruited to Vancouver by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Smith, where he led teams that contributed to sequencing model organism genomes. From Vancouver, Dr. Marra sought to drive the expansion of genomics in Canada. Dr. Marra led or co-led numerous cancer projects, revealing new mutations, biomarkers, and therapeutic targets in ovarian cancers, B cell lymphomas, brain cancers, breast cancers, medulloblastomas, leukemias, rhabdoid tumours and cervical cancers. In 2003, he led the effort that generated the first sequence of the agent causing SARS, revealing it to be a coronavirus and demonstrating that genome sequencing of a pathogen could be a key part of a rapid response to an emerging infectious disease. Dr. Marra currently co-leads the first program to demonstrate the use of whole genome and transcriptome sequencing to personalize cancer medicine. The program team, including 80% of the medical oncologists in BC, recruited 2,000 patients with advanced cancer and published >50 manuscripts describing how whole genome and transcriptome sequencing can influence clinical treatment decision making to bring benefit to cancer patients and their families.

### **NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM—TUESDAY, JULY 14th**

**Speaker: Michael Goehring, President and CEO, Mining Association of British Columbia**

**Topic: "The resurgence of mining in BC in the current politico-economic context."**

## Report of the May12<sup>th</sup> Meeting

*Attendance: 55 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 Richard Spencer to introduce a new member (see Welcome New Members on page 3). John then called on Chris Finch and Richard Earthy to go over 2 upcoming activities, details of which are in this newsletter. Bill Hooker then introduced our speaker, Bob Mackay.

As someone who has spent years living with the stories behind the dates, maps and unit names, Bob Mackay offered Probus members an account of Canada's role in a war that still shapes global politics. For Canada, Korea was a demanding test of postwar military readiness, international obligation and political resolve.

In the First World War, 600,000 Canadians served. In the Second World War, more than one million did. In the Korean War, Canada's contribution was smaller: about 27,000 served, with 516 killed and more than 1,200 wounded. Yet those numbers should not obscure the severity of the fighting or the importance of the mission. In the United States, nearly two million personnel were involved, with more than 36,000 killed.

The war began on June 25, 1950, when North Korea, backed by Soviet and Chinese support, attacked across the 38th parallel. South Korea's forces were badly outmatched. Seoul fell quickly, and United Nations forces were forced south into a precarious defensive position around Busan. Because the Soviet Union was boycotting the Security Council over the question of China's representation, President Harry Truman was able to secure UN support for South Korea's defence.

As a founding member of NATO, Canada faced pressure to contribute. The Canadian Armed Forces had been dramatically reduced after the Second World War and were already struggling to meet new NATO commitments in Europe. Still, Ottawa appealed for volunteers. They hoped for perhaps 5,000 men. More than 10,000 came forward.

Recruitment was rushed, sometimes chaotic, and the regular army did not always look kindly on the new Special Force volunteers. They called them "the bums from the slums," or simply "scruff." They were formed into second battalions of three infantry regiments, including the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, headquartered in Esquimalt. Together, they formed the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade. Leadership mattered. Mackay introduced Major-General John Rockingham, who left civilian life with BC Electric and Pacific Stage Lines to command the three battalions. He was in a meeting, negotiating with the bus drivers' union, when he got the call. He stepped out and never came back. Mackay also highlighted Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Stone, commanding officer of the 2nd Patricia's, who insisted that his troops not be rushed into combat before they were trained. When American commanders wanted the Canadians immediately in the line, Stone produced written authority from Ottawa and secured six more weeks of preparation. That decision proved crucial. By the time the 2nd Patricia's arrived, the war had shifted dramatically. General Douglas MacArthur's daring landing at Incheon had turned the tide against North Korea,

pushing UN forces far north toward the Yalu River. China then entered the war in force, driving UN troops back south in a brutal reversal. The Canadians were no longer arriving for peacekeeping duties. They were entering a hard, active war against experienced Chinese troops.

One of the highlights of Mackay's talk was the Battle of Kapyong in April 1951. After a period of rest near a flattened village called Kapyong, the Patricia's were ordered to defend Hill 677, west of the Kapyong River. The 3rd Royal Australian Regiment held Hill 504 to the east. Chinese forces had broken through South Korean lines and were driving south. The odds were daunting: roughly 700 Canadians faced 5,000 attackers. The terrain itself was unforgiving: steep, rugged hills defined much of the fighting in Korea. The infantry's task was brutally simple: climb one hill under fire, drive off the enemy, descend, and repeat. At Kapyong, several Canadian platoons were overrun, with Chinese troops entering their positions. The Canadians re-formed, counterattacked and held. Captain Mike Levy's 10 Platoon, on the highest ground, came under such pressure that Levy called artillery fire onto his own position. New Zealand guns hit the attackers while the Canadians sheltered in their trenches. The gamble worked and helped turn the battle. The next day, American "Flying Boxcars" dropped food, water and ammunition to the isolated Canadians. The Chinese withdrew. For their stand at Kapyong, the 2nd Patricia's received the United States Presidential Unit Citation, a rare honour for a Canadian unit. Mackay brought the story down to individual lives: Levy, who had escaped Japanese imprisonment in China during the Second World War; Ted Zuber, the wounded soldier whose wartime sketches later became noted paintings; and veterans such as John Bishop and Ted Any, whose memories helped preserve the record. Chinese Canadian volunteers from Vancouver served with Force 136, parachuting behind Japanese lines in Malaya as part of Churchill's Special Operations Executive.

Among the Korean War volunteers were young men who felt they had missed the great test of their older brothers' generation, veterans looking for a return to military life, and others drawn by adventure, pay, travel or restlessness. These "misfits" were the kinds of men who inspired the characters in Mackay's newest novel, which follows them through training, transport aboard the USS Martinez, and into the fighting at Kapyong. The book's purpose is clear: to rescue from obscurity a generation of Canadian soldiers who served in a war too often remembered, if at all, as "forgotten."

John then called on David Spicer to thank Rob and present him with the customary honorarium.

To view Bob's slide show, [click here](#).

**Recommended reading:**  
**Forces with History (Newsletter)**  
**Soldier of the Horse**  
**Terror on the Alert**  
**The Forgotten**

### Rotarians' Investment Club

Our April meeting commenced with a presentation on Macro Fundamentals & Navigating the Fog of War, made by Jay Kim and Michael Choi from RBC. Later, two members presented company profiles for investment consideration - Precision Drilling Corporation and Americold, and the group decided to forego investment in either, but to keep them on the watchlist. Our next meeting is on May 28; on the agenda is a presentation from Desjardins regarding target date fixed income funds, and two member's stock presentations.

Our meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month and start at 6:30 pm (sharp !) (with a "no-host" bar 6.00 pm) at the RVYC (3811 Point Grey Road, Vancouver). Guests are welcome (we have three lady members). The cost is now \$100.00 (cash or cheque please) for an excellent 3 course dinner for the meal, gratuities & taxes etc. Dinner wine is available at members own expense, in order to keep meal costs at a reasonable level. If you would like to attend, please email our secretary (Emily at [emilybarcket@gmail.com](mailto:emilybarcket@gmail.com)) and me, (see contact info below) to confirm your attendance. I will then email the Agenda etc. to you prior to the meeting. For detailed information about our 27 year old Club, contact John Sullivan at 604-263-4486 or at [johnws@telus.net](mailto:johnws@telus.net).



### **PROBUS FRED COTTON BOOK CLUB**

The Book Club will meet at **9:30 am on**

**Wednesdays, June 3 and Sept 2 in The Amenity Room at Elm Park Place, 5700 Larch Street (at W. 41st Avenue).**

**Please note – no meetings in July or August.**

The books to be discussed when we meet are:

**June 3 *The Whole Story: Adventures in Love, Life and Capitalism* by John Mackey.**

**Sept 2 *Embedded: The Irreconcilable Nature of War, Loss and Consequence* by Catherine Lang**

For information about the club, contact Ken Yule at [kjqc@shaw.ca](mailto:kjqc@shaw.ca) or 604-266-4563



### Probud Insights From The President



We usually consider June to be the start of summer but this year, it seems summer started sometime in April. It has been an amazing Spring so far.

Bob Mackay was our speaker last month and for those who missed his talk, he gave us a fascinating history lesson on the Korean War. What had been the “forgotten war” is no longer the case for many of us.

Our next speaker will be Dr Marco Marra, a distinguished scientist and head of the Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre at UBC. His specialty is the link between genetics and cancer, and his talk will be especially interesting as the science advances and continues to make those links.

I was once told by a doctor friend that he thought between 75% and 80% of our lives was determined by our genes which were “baked into our egg”. The remaining percentage of our destiny was due to lifestyle decisions we made. It will be interesting to hear Dr Marra’s opinion on that point.

We will have a number of activities in the summer and I encourage you to take advantage of them.

I want to put a plug in for the bridge group. We have 10 couples, including some husbands and wives, who each host a competitive bridge game for three other couples at their homes on alternative weeks starting in October. Jack Zaleski organizes the schedule in advance and we would welcome other members to join – either as a couple or join up to make a team with another member. The games are both competitive and social.

And now enjoy your summer and stay safe. I look forward to seeing many of you on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

John Kay  
President

### Welcome Our New Member



Joost Blom  
UBC Professor of Law

## **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**

Now that we have done this eight or nine times with three sessions per year, we seem to have established a strong constituency and everyone appears to be looking forward to the next session in the late spring or early summer. We did lose four regulars to injuries or other exigencies, so we advise you to stay in touch and get your bids in early with Bill Hooker at [mayneid@yahoo.com](mailto:mayneid@yahoo.com), your convenient convenor.

### **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 May 20, a small group of 6 members of The Breakfast Club met at Au Comptoir on West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This well-known French (very French!) restaurant provided a small but interesting menu with pommes frites cooked in duck fat! Our June 17 gathering will be at The Sylvia Hotel, there is no FIFA game that day! Everybody knows where that is! Anyone interested in joining us can contact Peter at [peter26@telus.net](mailto:peter26@telus.net).

### **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](mailto:jack.zaleski@gmail.com)

### **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: [johnws@telus.net](mailto:johnws@telus.net) or telephone at 604-263-4486

## **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.

### **Policy Conversations Cafe—Jim Matkin**

The impact of the Iran war concerned our dozen discussants rising inflation spreading: “**The 30-year Treasury Bond**, a key gauge of long-term fiscal risk, surged to nearly 5.20% - its highest level since the 200 Impact 7 global financial crisis.” Climate crisis concerns tumbling with the UN abandoning the extreme RCP8.5 prediction as implausible. It is foundational to radical Net Zero. Youth unemployment doubles with AI impact; Canada’s Bill C9 hate crime law to punish opinions, (speech); “Non crime hate incidents out of control in the UK” with over 12,000 prosecutions; Canada’s peculiar new Sovereign Wealth (debt) fund.



### **Pub Nights—Peter Phillips**

This month, the group chose the Milltown Pub, at the south end of the city. Despite many members traveling, 8 of us managed to show. It was surprisingly chilly, yet the waitstaff attended to our comfort: lively conversation, laughter, debate, and even a little beer and appies (life was a "bries").

Next time, June 11 @ 4 pm, back to Elwood's, 3357 W Broadway at Waterloo. Join us!

Contact Glenn Faris [glennfaris@gmail.com](mailto:glennfaris@gmail.com) for more details and to confirm attendance

**THURSDAY, JUNE 18th—10:00**  
**A GUIDED TOUR AND LUNCH AT**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST TEMPLE**  
**9160 Steveston Highway, Richmond**



**We will meet at the main entrance to the building at 10 am**  
**At 10:30 the guided tour will start following which, you will be**  
**free to explore other areas before the vegetarian lunch**  
**is served in the restaurant**

**Come and experience the visual delights of this traditional and**  
**authentic style of Imperial Chinese architecture.**  
**Perhaps you will experience a spiritual awakening as you**  
**wander through the exotic grounds around The Temple!**

**THERE IS A MINIMUM GUARANTEE OF 15 TO ATTEND THIS EVENT.**  
**THE COST OF \$40.00 PER PERSON INCLUDES THE COST OF LUNCH**  
**AND A DONATION FOR THE TOUR**  
**MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO INVITE GUESTS**

**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT**  
**COST: \$40.00 PER PERSON THROUGH ADMITONE.**  
**(Please note that we have changed our booking service provider)**  
**NO REFUNDS AFTER FRIDAY, JUNE 12**  
**For refunds, please contact Peter Scott at [peter26@telus.net](mailto:peter26@telus.net)**  
**To register with AdmitONE [click here](#)**  
**Please direct any questions to Richard Earthy at [rdearthy@telus.net](mailto:rdearthy@telus.net)**

**THURSDAY, JULY 23rd—TIME TBA**  
**A GUIDED TOUR OF**  
**THE BRITANNIA MINE & MUSEUM**  
**150 Copper Drive, Britannia Beach**



We are in the early stages of planning this event but here are the preliminary plans. We will be having a private tour, which requires a minimum of 15 guests (and a maximum of 60!) There are several new features at the museum since my last visit. Here are some of the features our tour will include.

**The Underground Tour**

The Underground at Britannia Mine Museum offers a glimpse into life at one of British Columbia's largest historical copper mines. Board the mine train, just like miners did in 1914, and travel into an early haulage tunnel. Inside, interpreters demonstrate mining equipment and share insights about Britannia's copper mining history.

**Experience BOOM!**

Our Award-Winning, multi-sensory attraction. Discover a thrilling light, sound and special effects experience. BOOM! introduces audiences to the story, sights and sounds behind the architectural marvel, Mill No. 3, with an immersive live-action experience -- fun for all ages! This experience offers multiple screens, over thirty speakers, and leading-edge special effects bringing all 20-storeys back to life!

**30 minutes of your choice of either gold panning, exhibit explore or a live demonstration of how EPCOR works, called Chemistry of Cleanup.**

**Gold Panning**

Make a point of panning for gold and gemstones. You find it, you keep it! Gold-panning troughs are set at different heights. That way, both young and old, can dip in and try their luck. This is gold panning the fun and easy way.

**Terra Lab Exhibit**

Explore Britannia's journey of environmental remediation and the importance of sustainable practices in mining today. When the mine was active, this building was one of the company's assay labs - a space where scientists could test rock samples to determine their ingredients and concentration. Britannia Mine's successful search for valuable minerals allowed the company to thrive, but it also had a far-reaching impact on the surrounding environment. In the main portion of the lab, graphics, specimens and multimedia displays examine the chemical process known as acid rock drainage, and the ways modern remediation is restoring biodiversity to Britannia's waters.

**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT**  
**All registration details will be in the July newsletter**

## REPORT ON THE JOHN ATKIN WALK

Seventeen members and guests joined John on his walk around Shaughnessy on a bright and sunny day on May 21. The group gathered on the corner of The Crescent and Tecumseh Avenue and proceeded around that park and down Angus. As usual, John's knowledge of the area provided plenty of interesting stories about the original owners of many of these mansions which were built during the 1920's. Although many had since moved away, some were still in the original families' hands.

John explained the reason why the original owners built there, was that it was the highest in Vancouver, after Queen Elizabeth Park. The park was originally quarried for its rock which served to build Vancouver's first roadways. In 1929 the City proceeded to acquire the property which had become an abandoned eyesore, but still served as the site for two holding reservoirs for the City's drinking water.

He explained that originally First Shaughnessy covered from Arbutus St. to Oak St. between West 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. and West King Edward Ave. The area was later expanded south of West King Edward to West 41<sup>st</sup> Ave. and this is Shaughnessy 2 and 3, although the original area is considered by some to be more prestigious!

