



NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

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

Enriching members with topical, entertaining speakers and social activities

www.probusvancouver.com

March, 2018

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 13 at 9:30 am
Location: H.R. MacMillan Space Centre
Speaker: Kevin Desmond, CEO, Translink
Topic: TBA

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER
April 10: Dr. Paul Evans, UBC
Topic: Dealing with global
China—what's next?

MARCH IS PROBUS CANADA MONTH IN CANADA!

KEVIN DESMOND



Kevin is an experienced executive with a career built in the public transportation industry.

Prior to joining TransLink, Kevin was General Manager of King County Metro Transit serving the Seattle metropolitan region. At Metro, he oversaw a mix of transit modes, including buses, trains, vanpools, paratransit vans, as well as approximately 5,000 employees. In his 12 years tenure, he helped to grow ridership by 44 per cent and launch the ORCA Card, as well as light rail, streetcar service, and several bus rapid transit lines. Kevin was also part of three successful votes on transit funding.

Prior to Metro Transit, Kevin was Vice-President of Operations and Development at Pierce Transit in Tacoma, Washington. Before relocating to the West Coast, Kevin acted as Chief of Operations Planning for New York City Transit which included bus and subway operations. Earlier in his career he served as Deputy Director in Mayor Koch's Transportation Office and Assistant Commissioner for the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.

Kevin has a master's degree in public administration from New York University. He is a member of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Board of Directors and the first chair of the organization's Sustainability Committee. His wife is a nurse practitioner and he has two adult children. Kevin and his wife have settled in New Westminster where he is able to walk or bike to work, or take a short SkyTrain ride to TransLink's Sapperton office.

PROCLAMATION FROM THE
CITY OF VANCOUVER BY
MAYOR GREGOR
ROBERTSON TO CELEBRATE
PROBUS MONTH

Whereas The City of Vancouver supports opportunities for Vancouver seniors to get involved and stay active.

And Whereas the three Probus Clubs in the City of Vancouver offer opportunities for retired and semi-retired professionals, business people and others to attend monthly addresses on topical subjects, and participate in activities which include visits by members to places and organizations of interest.

Now Therefore, I, Gregor Robertson, Mayor of the City of Vancouver, DO hereby proclaim Tuesday, March 13, 2018 as

PROBUS DAY

In the City of Vancouver

Report of the February 13th Meeting

Attendance: 168 Members and Guests

President Hugh Lindsay opened the meeting and welcomed the guests present, especially our speaker, our own member, Bob Ross. Hugh then told an amusing story about an unfortunate Valentine's Day encounter between a woman, her husband with a beautiful pink azalea and a young lady, presumably her husband's "niece". Jack Zaleski introduced three new members (see page 3). Chris Finch, representing the Activities Committee, reported on several upcoming activities all of which are explained on pages 4, 5 and 6. Raymond Greenwood thanked his cashiers and greeter, after which, Hugh asked Richard Dunsterville to introduce his friend, Bob Ross.

When people ask Bob Ross why he decided to visit North Korea last September his answer is fairly simple: he likes to travel to out of the way places and discover unique experiences. Even places that used to be very isolated now attract large numbers of tourists. Antarctica and Everest Base Camp, for example, each attract 40,000 visitors every year while North Korea only draws in 4,000. His second reason for visiting was curiosity. He wanted to know what was real and what was false. Was it really a land of darkness where the people are starving? Is the country on the verge of war? To visit North Korea as a tourist you must travel as a member of a tour group. However, it took Bob seven months to sign up for a tour group as the previous groups kept on getting cancelled for lack of participation. People were being scared off by the Trump-era rhetoric and increasing awareness of North Korea's missile capabilities. By July, however, he finally managed to find a tour group that wasn't fully subscribed. The 12 person group took the only route available to tourists who wish to visit the reclusive state: a two hour flight from Beijing to Pyongyang. During the flight they were asked to list all of their electronics and written material. Additionally, customs officials searched their luggage for any USB sticks which is how a lot of Western media is smuggled into the country.

His first impression of Pyongyang was a very clean and modern city with little traffic and no graffiti. Furthermore, he saw no sign of a repressive regime or any distress. His hotel was as good as any Western hotel, better than many. He saw no evidence of the poverty-stricken country under sanctions that we see on the news. Instead he saw many people in uniforms travelling in large groups including: farm workers, factory workers, college students and school children. The entire visit was tightly controlled so there were very few opportunities for Bob to interact with the average North Korean citizen. One of those opportunities presented itself on the first morning of his trip when his tour group travelled to a park for a picnic. On their way they passed several families who were having picnics who jumped from their groups to offer him alcohol and food including quail's eggs and dog meat. His minder, however, told him not to interact with these people and pulled him away. When another person offered Bob food the minder physically knocked them down. Bob was trying to figure out where the boundaries were for his interaction with the local people. When he visited Kim Il

Sung Square, where the marching demonstrations and military parades take place, he noticed the participants in the mass dances. He says they are very snow-faced and don't appear to have any joy on their faces until you try to engage with them. He soon discovered that if he waved to them or attempted to give a high five they would respond.

On the following day Bob and the only other member of the group who remembered to bring the requisite formal attire visited the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun where the embalmed bodies of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il are displayed in glass coffins. As they wound their way through the mausoleum they intermixed with trainloads and busloads of Koreans who had come from the farms to pay their respects. Many of them were tearful. The tourists were asked to buy flowers and put them in the appropriate place. This would show the Koreans that even well-dressed Westerners must love Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il too.

At the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum the group learned the North Korean perspective on the Korean War, or the American War as they call it. The collection included an American tank, a downed American airplane, Radar O'Reilly's MASH helicopter and the prized USS Pueblo. Outside the museum, however, Bob saw very little evidence of tanks, equipment, guns or marching soldiers.

From Pyongyang the group drove down typical highways which were beautiful eight lane roads that were built in the 1970s but have no traffic. Bob notes that the roads were riddled with potholes. Along the highway he noticed large concrete monuments that are packed with explosives in the base. In the event of a war the military would detonate the columns which would fall across the road and obstruct any tanks. They passed many villages that appeared to be well-maintained. However, Bob saw only three tractors and no combines, harvesters or even trucks that could carry produce to market. There were a lot of people who carried sacks of corn or rice on their bicycles but it didn't seem to be enough to sustain a country.

At the end of the trip his group visited the International Friendship Exhibition hall which contains 120,000 gifts that have been given to the Kims by leaders of countries from around the world. These included: a train car donated by Stalin, three Mercedes cars donated by Muammar Gaddafi and a canoe paddle and beaver pelt donated by CUPE 314 in Peterborough, Ontario. This is presented to the North Korean people as evidence of how the rest of the world respects their leaders.

Bob left North Korea with more questions than answers about what was fake and what was real and whether what he saw was what it was really supposed to be.

Following an extensive period of questions and answers, Hugh asked Jim Matkin to thank our speaker and present him with our customary honorarium.

For an unabridged version of the above which includes questions and answers, go to our PROBUS website at www.probusvancouver.com, click on "Speakers" and then on "Bob Ross"

Rotarians' Investment Club

Our February 22nd meeting was appropriate for the season being informative talks by John Ormiston, Tax Partner of Smythe LLP and one of our Club members Phil Webber (a retired, taxation, wills & estate lawyer).

Our March 29th guest speaker has not yet been confirmed, but the next Probus Newsletter should be published before that meeting, otherwise call me to confirm details by mid-March. Club meetings are held at the RVYC at 6.30 pm on the last Thursday of every month (except summer & Christmas when we have a social function with partners. No-host bar at 6.00 pm. An excellent 3 course dinner is served with dinner wine etc. for \$60.00 (please bring a cheque) and you must confirm your attendance by the Tuesday before the meeting as we have to pay for "no-shows".

Please email me for the Agenda and Club information.
John Sullivan, Membership Chair,
Email: johnws@telus.net
Tel. res: 604-263-4486



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bob Ross our February speaker and member of our Probus Club of Vancouver, treated us to a fascinating presentation on his recent visit to North Korea, on a tightly controlled, choreographed and somewhat surreal official tour. He described a country of puzzling features: a magnificent capital city with few motor vehicles, shops or pedestrians; farm land with no tractors or trucks; warlike posters but little evidence of the military; and a DMZ that was more relaxed than one might expect. The people he met were cautiously friendly despite official propaganda against foreigners. Bob's fine collection of photos and videos nicely complemented a compelling and timely story.

Registration is now open for several Activities. A tour of the Ballard Power Systems plant in Burnaby on April 19; Vancouver Symphony Orchestra concert at the Orpheum on Monday on April 30; a walking tour with John Atkin on May 15 and a bus trip to Whistler to see the Audain Art Museum and Squamish-Lil'wat Cultural Centre on June 6. Guests will be welcome on the Whistler trip.

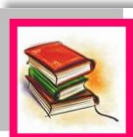
Our March speaker is Kevin Desmond – CEO of Translink, an organization that is often in the news. This will be an opportunity to learn about their operations and plans.

In April we shall hear from **Dr. Paul Evans**, Professor, Institute of Asian Research and Liu Institute of Global Affairs at UBC, who will speak on "China and the World". May brings us **Richard Glickman LLD**, Chairman and CEO of Aurinia Pharmaceutical Inc., who will speak on "Biotech in BC."

Vice President Brian Maunder recently worked with members of the Management Committee and former president David Scott on a strategic planning review to assess the performance of our club and consider opportunities for improvement. The conclusion was that our business plan works well and meets our mission of "Enriching members with topical, entertaining speakers and social activities." Action items include: conducting a membership survey; developing a welcoming information package for new members; revising the club's constitution to conform with the new BC Societies Act; and adjusting the annual dues to return to a balanced budget after a period in which we reduced dues to bring down an accumulated surplus.



PROBUS FRED COTTON BOOK CLUB



The Book Club meets at 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday each month (except July and August) at the White Spot, Georgia & Cardero.

Upcoming books we will discuss:

Mar. 7: "Double Cross"
By Ben Macintyre

April 4: "A World in Disarray"
By Richard Hass

For further information contact Ken Yule at

Thanks to our February
Member Services Team

Greeter: Billy Ellis

Cashiers: Mel Rowles & Ken Waithman

Welcome New Members



RON LONDON
SALES & MARKETING EXECUTIVE



JOHN LEATHLEY, QC
LAWYER



DICK RICHARDS
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

WALKING TOUR OF FAIRVIEW WITH JOHN ATKIN

“ Explore Your City’s History and Architecture”

Meeting point: - The Wicked Café – corner of Hemlock and West 7th Avenue

Date: Tuesday, May 15th—9:30 for 10am

25 MEMBERS ONLY—\$25 PER MEMBER

John Atkin is a well known and extremely knowledgeable Vancouver historian, researcher and tour guide. Fairview, once planned by the Canadian Pacific Railway as a neighbourhood of grand homes, didn't pan out as the company expected. Sawmills and other industry quickly found a home on the edge of the creek and the neighbourhood evolved into a home for workers along the Creek. By the 1970s, the area was again changing as condominiums began to appear under a new city zoning. We'll explore the history and development of the area, and find a few heritage houses along the way.

John has given many walking tours for Probus in recent years. **His tours are always popular, so, as this tour will be limited to 25 members, we suggest you sign up as soon as possible.**

ITINERARY

9:30 AM – ARRIVE FOR COFFEE

10:00 AM – WALKING TOUR STARTS

APROXIMATELY 12:00 NOON - GUIDED TOUR ENDS

LOCATION DETAILS

We will meet at the Wicked Café (corner of Hemlock and West 7th Avenue) for coffee and muffins.

Arriving by bus

The #16 bus runs down Arbutus, east on West Broadway then north on Granville St. to downtown. From Broadway and Granville, it is a two block walk to The Wicked Café.

The #10 bus runs north on Granville St. so get off at West 7th Avenue and walk one block east.

YOU MAY REGISTER:

At the Activity Desk at the PROBUS meetings on February 13, March 13, April 10 and May 8, with cash or cheque.

Additional information: David Phillips, email: dph13579h9@shaw.ca

Deadline for Registration: MAY 8th. Cancellation deadline MAY 10th.

MAKE CHEQUE PAYABLE TO PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

NOTE - YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED

I plan to attend: Name _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Cheque enclosed for: _____

OTHER ACTIVITIES PLANNED

VSO Concert—Monday, April 30

Estelle Jacobson reports that tickets are still available. Details are in the December and January Newsletters. Tickets ordered by March 31 will be available for pick up at the April meeting.

Ballard Power Systems Plant

See page 6.



FIRST NATIONS
MUSEUM
TOURS + GIFT SHOP + CAFÉ



Skwxwú7mesh Líl'wat
Cultural Centre
WHISTLER



&

AUDAIN ART MUSEUM



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6

**IF YOU HAVEN'T VISITED EITHER OF THESE MUSEUMS, NOW IS THE TIME!
THIS OUTING IS ONLY \$120 PER PERSON AND INCLUDES TRANSPORT TO WHISTLER
AND RETURN IN A DELUXE COACH, COFFEE AND SWEETS ON ARRIVAL IN WHISTLER,
A WESTCOAST LUNCH AND TOUR AT THE SQUAMISH LIL'WAT CULTURAL CENTRE
AND A GUIDED TOUR OF THE ARCHITECTURALLY RENOWNED AUDAIN ART MUSEUM.**

**PICK UP AT 8 AM IN THE SPACE CENTRE PARKING LOT—PLEASE NOTE THAT
YOUR PROBUS PARKING PASSES WILL NOT BE APPLICABLE—PAY PARKING
WILL BE REQUIRED. WE RECOMMEND CAR POOLING. RETURN TO THE
SPACE CENTRE IS ESTIMATED TO BE AT 5:30 PM.**

YOU MAY REGISTER:

At the Activity Desk at the PROBUS meetings on March 13, April 10 and May 8, with cash or cheque
OR mail cheque to Chris Finch, 105, 5760 Hampton Place, Vancouver, BC, V6T 2G1

Additional information: Richard Earthy, rdearthy@telus.net or Chris Finch, cafb@shaw.ca.

Deadline for Registration: MAY 8th. Cancellation deadline MAY 10th.

MAKE CHEQUE PAYABLE TO PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

NOTE - YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED

I plan to attend: Name _____

I will bring ___ guests: Name(s) of guests: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Cheque enclosed for: (# of people x \$120.00 =) _\$ _____



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
ON THURSDAY, APRIL 19, A TOUR OF THE
BALLARD POWER SYSTEMS PLANT IN BURNABY IS
BEING ORGANISED BY YOUR
ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE.**

**THE COMPANY WEBSITE STATES THAT
“BALLARD IS A LEADING GLOBAL
PROVIDER OF INNOVATIVE CLEAN
ENERGY AND FUEL CELL SOLUTIONS”**

**AT THIS TIME, THIS ACTIVITY IS FOR MEMBERS ONLY.
WE WILL MEET AT THE PLANT AT 9 AM FOR COFFEE, TO BE
FOLLOWED BY A PRESENTATION IN THEIR THEATRE, A PLANT
TOUR AND A RETURN TO THE THEATRE FOR FOLLOW UP
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS, TO BE FINISHED AROUND NOON.
THE CHARGE WILL BE \$20, ALL INCLUSIVE**

**CAR POOLING IS RECOMMENDED
THE ADDRESS IS 9000 GLENLYON PARKWAY, BURNABY**

**DIRECTIONS FROM VANCOUVER: DRIVE EAST ON MARINE WAY TO BOUNDARY. TURN
RIGHT ON BOUNDARY WHICH BECOMES NORTH FRASER WAY. FOLLOW N.F.W. TO
GLENLYON. TURN RIGHT ON GLENLYON TO THE BALLARD PLANT ON THE LEFT.**

YOU MAY REGISTER:

At the Activity Desk at the PROBUS meetings on February 13, March 13 and April 10, with cash or cheque OR

By mail, to Rich Carson, 6009 Alma Street, Vancouver, BC, V6N 1Y3

Additional information: Rich Carson, email: rcarson75@gmail.com or at 604 261 0974 (after March 5)

Deadline for Registration: April 10. Cancellation deadline April 10.

MAKE CHEQUE PAYABLE TO PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

NOTE - YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED

I plan to attend: Name _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Cheque enclosed for: _____