



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

May, 2025

President
Richard Earthy
604-603-3343
rdearthy@telus.net

Past President
Peter Scott
604-263-1746
peter26@telus.net

1ST Vice President
John Kay
604-261-3760
jkay33@shaw.ca

2ND Vice President
Jim Matkin
604-263-4723
james.matkin@gmail.com

Secretary
Tony Zoobkoff
604-980-9076
tony.zoobkoff@outlook.com

Treasurer
Greg Lonsbrough
604-261-5083
quillow@telus.net

Speakers Committee
Bill Hooker
604-261-5604
mayneid@yahoo.com

Membership Committee
Jack Zaleski
604-328-4288
jack.zaleski@gmail.com

Activities Committee
Al Hurwitz
778-895-6455
alhurwitz@gmail.com

Website and Database
Committee
Peter Brock
604-727-0380
pb@peterbrock.org

Member Services & House
Committee
Raymond Greenwood
604-351-3450
greenwd@telus.net

Newsletter Editor &
Publisher
Peter Scott
604-263-1746
peter26@telus.net

Historian/Archivist
Hugh Lindsay
604-732-0366

Counsel
Carl Jonsson
Bill Randall
Tim Sehmer

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 13 at The HR MacMillan Space Centre
Speaker: Glenn Faris: Member of our club and Psychiatrist
Topic: "Early influences on the genesis of Canada's role in international development"

9:00: Coffee and Timbits

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

**BRING A POTENTIAL MEMBER TO THE MAY PROBUS MEETING
AND SAVE THE GUEST FEE!**

So far this year, we're doing really well with bringing in new members but we'd love to see even more. So for the May meeting only, we are waiving the guest fee for any potential members that you bring—friends, neighbours, even relatives.

GLENN FARIS



Glenn Faris practised in his chosen field of psychiatry for about 30 years. Originally from northern BC, he completed a BA(Hons) in clinical psychology at SFU, and an MD at Queen's in Kingston. He completed a rotating internship at Toronto East General Hospital in 1991, and was granted a general medical licence. After completing his fellowship at University of Toronto, he began to practise in Ontario, first at Whitby Mental Health, and then in Mississauga. He was soon appointed chief of geriatric psychiatry at Credit Valley Hospital. Upon his return to BC in 2004, he established a diverse practise, as head of geriatric psychiatry for Fraser South, leading teams in community outreach, general adult outpatient and hospital Consultation-Liaison through Delta Mental Health & Addictions, and providing community teaching and support, whilst maintaining a busy private practice. In 2010, he moved his outpatient adult practice to Vancouver, and has recently retired. He has multiple interests, one of which being the formative years of Canadian contributions to international development aid.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER—TUESDAY, JUNE 10



Brian Antonson, Radio Personality, Associate Dean of the Broadcast Department, BCIT and Author

Topic: "In Search of a Legend—Slumach's Gold"

Report of the April 10th Meeting

Attendance: 95 Members and Guests

1st Vice President John Kay started the formal meeting at 9:45, welcoming guests and members. He asked any guests to stand and be recognised and told the traditional amusing story. He then asked Chris Finch to introduce 2 new members (see page 3). John then called on Terry Gill to introduce our speaker, Tom Davidoff.

When Professor Davidoff got started in his career back in 2002, urban and housing economics were real backwaters. They were minor issues that nobody really cared about. Since then, these once minor issues have only become bigger and bigger. Today it's one of the greatest issues facing our province.

At its core, B.C.'s housing crisis stems from a fundamental mismatch: high demand and limited supply, where demand is highly elastic and supply is rigid. Take, for instance, the beloved basement suite. In theory, it helps solve the supply crunch. In practice, kids in B.C. are living in their parents' basements far longer than they should. Household formation happens faster when housing is cheaper. But in B.C., the kids stay put.

Housing policy in B.C. is a very layered issue of economics, ethics, engineering, and politics. The policy landscape involves intricate strategies for managing demand and increasing housing supply and elasticity. Davidoff laid out six broad policy strategies for tackling this supply-demand mismatch, each with its own quirks:

The first is to **delete (certain) people**. Through restrictions on immigration, foreign buyers, or vacation homes, this has been an actual policy lever. The Foreign Buyers Tax, the federal ban on foreign ownership, the end of Airbnb, and the empty homes tax all fall into this category. This is effective to a point, but ethically and economically, Davidoff finds the foreign buyer approach questionable. Nationality isn't the problem—it's how the property is used. If a Mexican investor buys a condo and rents it to locals, that's good. But if a Torontonian buys it and leaves it empty, that's bad. Yet we tax the former and not the latter.

A classic option is to **redistribute income**. Also known as giving people money. Whether through direct subsidies or interest rate support, governments (especially the NDP) are floating plans to help buyers and renters make ends meet. But while this helps individuals, it doesn't change the structural imbalance between supply and demand.

The favourite option among economists is to **enable market housing**. Deregulate, upzone, and let the market build, build, build. Davidoff noted that supply elasticity is key: "The more flexible the supply, the more new housing can absorb rising demand without sending prices skyrocketing." The problem in BC is the complete delegation of zoning power to municipalities - the Free Riding Problem. This has led to no coordination and no regional oversight, leading to NIMBYism on a Metro Van-wide scale.

Fortunately, that's beginning to change. Provincially, Bills 44 through 47—now mandate multiplex zoning in formerly single-family neighbourhoods and allows more density near transit. But municipalities can still drag their feet through costly fees, vague planning processes, or just plain stalling. The carrot-and-

stick approach is gaining steam, with both the federal Liberals and Conservatives tying infrastructure funding to municipal cooperation on housing targets. Of course, it's not just politics. While Davidoff admitted to knowing nothing about infrastructure, he did highlight how water, sewers, and electricity matter. New development brings costs, and the question of who pays—municipalities, provinces, or developers—is still up for debate. Fees can be useful, but if they're too high, they push the supply curve up and strangle new construction. Vancouver's current strategy of negotiating bespoke development fees has some merit, so long as it doesn't kill projects.

Another option is to **subsidize development**. Remember MERBs (Multiple-unit Residential Buildings) and tax breaks for developers? Subsidizing construction can grease the wheels, but can also line developer pockets if not carefully managed. Perhaps the least favoured option in Davidoff's playbook is to simply **give people homes** in-kind. Giving brand new, government-owned homes for people who can't afford housing is a popular idea, but economically doesn't make much sense. Government construction that sells below market misses a big opportunity to fund other social needs, while limiting recipients to a certain type of housing based on a lottery system. We shouldn't conflate the housing issue with poverty. The issue of people not having enough money is different from the issue of housing being scarce—and Davidoff argues that combining the two leads to confused policy.

Finally, our last option - a hot topic on the political left, **fighting financialization**. Financialization refers to housing being treated as an investment vehicle rather than a place to live. Davidoff made a case for distinguishing between good and bad investors. Pre-sale flippers, for instance, are often vilified—but they're essentially equity financiers taking on construction risk, not hoarders of livable units.

At the end of the day when demand rises and supply can't follow, prices spike—and that spike hurts most those with the least. But counterintuitively, when demand is elastic (think: global investors waiting for prices to dip), building more doesn't lower prices—it just attracts more buyers. Still, the takeaway wasn't pessimistic. "Just because prices might not fall doesn't mean you shouldn't build," Davidoff insisted. "In fact, it means you *should*."

Ultimately, the approach to housing policy requires a comprehensive, nuanced strategy that considers economic, social, and demographic factors. It demands collaboration between municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government, as well as innovative thinking from urban planners, economists, and community stakeholders.

The path forward involves continuous adaptation, careful analysis, and a commitment to creating housing solutions that serve the diverse needs of Vancouver's population. It requires moving beyond simplistic approaches and embracing the complexity of urban housing markets.

John Kay thanked our speaker.

To view Tom Davidoff's slides, [click here](#).

Rotarians' Investment Club

Our Thursday, March 27th meeting at the RVYC, provided a presentation by Marcus Murdock of BMO Global Asset Management entitled "Market Outlook and Factor Investing". Patience may be required for small mid-cap stocks; consider gold; tariffs will impact Canada - but not in the long run; factors are growth over time, quality, ROE, low debt to equity. Many other thoughts and ideas were given in his interesting talk. April's Speaker was Teal Linde of the Linde Equity Fund, who spoke to us many years ago, and we were very fortunate to have him as a guest once more.

We meet on the last Thursday of every month at the RVYC at 6.00 pm and guests are welcome (we have four lady members and would like to have more) but must register with our President Richard Higgins (bravo@shaw.ca) by 5.00 pm on Tuesday before our meetings as dinner numbers are required by RVYC and we are charged for "no shows". The cost is \$100.00 (cash or cheque please) for an excellent 3 course dinner including wine with the meal, tips & taxes etc.

Information about our 26 year old Investment Club is available from John Sullivan (604-263-4486) - johnws@telus.net

Probus Insights From The President



Greetings, Fellow Probus Members! Happy May Day. As we welcome the month of May, I am filled with gratitude for the vibrant community we share and the meaningful connections we continue to build. Spring is in full bloom, and with it comes a renewed sense

of energy and opportunity for us to come together, learn, and grow.



May Pole Dancing

We have an exciting activity planned – another **John Atkin Walk** - and our usual Social Groups – **Fred Cotton Book Club, Breakfast Group, Bridge Club, Investment Club, Pub Night, Policy Conversations Café.**

This Month, our guest speaker will be one of our own, drawn from the vast pool of talent which makes our club so special. **Dr. Glenn Faris** will speak on a somewhat unusual subject but will be of interest to all: **"The Influence of 1930s Canadian Church Missions to China on the Subsequent Development of Canada's Leadership Role in International Development."**

From our engaging guest speakers to our social gatherings, there is something for everyone to enjoy. I encourage each of you to actively participate and invite friends who might be interested in joining our Probus family. **For the May meeting, we will waive the usual \$10 guest fee!** Remember the strength of our club lies in our diversity and the enthusiasm of our members.

Thank you to our dedicated committee members who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of our club. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and we are truly fortunate to have such a committed team. As we move forward, let us continue to embrace the spirit of Probus—friendship, learning, and staying active. May this month bring you joy, new friendships, and memorable experiences.

Yours in the fellowship of PROBUS.

Richard

IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret that we announce the passing of Justice Duncan Shaw on March 24, 2025. Our condolences to his family and friends. The PROBUS Club of Vancouver will make a donation in his name to The Rotary Bike-a-Thon for Hearing



PROBUS FRED COTTON BOOK CLUB



The Book Club will meet at **9:30 am on Wednesdays, May 7 and June 4, in**

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

The books to be discussed when we meet are:

May 7: How Big Things Get Done: The Surprising Factors that Determine the Fate of Every project, from Home Renovations to Space Exploration and Everything In Between by Bent Flyvbjerg and Dan Gardner

June 4: What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds by Jennifer Ackerman

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 kjyqc@shaw.ca or 604-266-4563

Welcome New Members



**Nate Smith
BC Supreme Court
Judge**



**Glen Copping
CPA, PEng, CFIO**

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.

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 April 16, eight members of The Breakfast Group met at The Dockside Restaurant in the Granville Island Hotel. The food was excellent and, as usual, several lively discussions carried on while we enjoyed the sun shining in on us through the enormous windows. The next gathering which will be on May 21st. Will be at The Red Wagon Café at 2128 East Hastings.

Anyone interested in joining us can contact Peter at 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

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.

Pub Nights—Peter Phillips

Another thirst quenching event took place on April 10th at the Regal Beagle Pub when 8 enthusiastic Elbow Benders turned the event into another festive occasion. 🍻

The poetic abilities of one member were addressed and the lively conversations continued whilst respecting the stated rules of "No mention of Turd Face or Tariffs!". 🗣️

And a good time was had by all.

*Note: the next Probus Pub Night will be on May 15th at the Wolf and Hounds Pub
3617 West Broadway. Be there or.....stay thirsty!*

Peter Phillips, Master Thirst Quencher 🍻 🍷

Please contact Peter Phillips at pjpphillips@hotmail.com if you are interested in joining or just show up! They gather on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

PROBUS Club of Vancouver—Social Opportunity Groups

Policy Conversations Cafe—Jim Matkin



We are a monthly social opportunities group dedicated to discussing policy issues. For example, our next meeting on Tuesday, May 06 will look at the uncertainty from the Trump Tariffs, particularly as to growing skepticism on his constitutional authority.

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

The tennis group is looking at another tournament in May, so get in touch with **Bill Hooker** if you would like to be on the list to play.

Wine Tasting—John Kay

22 members of the Probus Club of Vancouver attended an exceptional wine tasting event hosted by John Kay at the Arbutus Club on Feb 25th.

John not only provided 6 excellent red and white wines for sampling, he gave a very informative overview of each wine .

He explained the various growing conditions necessary for the vine to produce its fruit, as well as a description of the fermentation process.

The event left one with a greater understanding of the nuances in wine and how different varieties can elevate a meal.

He had two capable assistants, his son Stephen and his friend Dan , who produced a very nice bottle of his home made wine for the group to taste.

John hopes to organise another wine tasting sometime in 2026.

The groups below all need members and convenors. In a recent survey, several people indicated an interest in joining one or more of them. If you were one of those and are still interested, please contact Peter Scott at peter26@telus.net.

Pensions & Financial Planning

Theatre Nights

THURSDAY, MAY 22—9:30 am ANOTHER JOHN ATKIN WALK

**This time, John will start at The Roundhouse,
Pacific Blvd & Davie**



9:30 Gather at The Urban Fare at 177 Davie St. where underground parking is also available.

There is a coffee shop where you may wish to get a beverage and a pastry.

No special arrangements have been made.

10:00 Meet John at the Turntable on the Davie St. side of the Roundhouse Community Centre. He will lead us along the waterfront telling us about the various industries that were prevalent in the area before it was all taken over for EXPO 86. Who can remember Sweeney's Cooperage or Ondine's Restaurant?

This event is limited to 25 people, members only

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT

COST: \$20.00 per person with full refund if cancelled by May 18.

To register with EventBrite, [click here](#)

Please direct any questions to:

Al Hurwitz at alhurwitz@gmail.com

FRIDAY, JUNE 6, 2025—9:30 AM TO 12:30 PM

**WE NEED JUST 5 MORE TO REGISTER TO MEET THE MINIMUM
REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT, NOW REDUCED TO 18.**

**FOLLOWING CONSIDERABLE INTEREST FROM THOSE MEMBERS WHO
WERE NOT ABLE TO GO TO THE NEUROPEAK VISIT IN FEBRUARY, WE
HAVE ARRANGED A SECOND TOUR. THIS IS FOR A MINIMUM OF
18 AND A MAXIMUM OF 24 MEMBERS AND GUESTS.
THE DECISION TO GO OR CANCEL WILL BE MADE ON MAY 26 SO EARLY
REGISTRATION IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**

AGENDA AND DETAILS

Meeting Point: Mind Expansion Mansion Boardroom (10th floor, CC3 building) – 13761 96 Ave, Surrey

Arrival time: 20 minutes before stations begin.

Program:

A Guided Tour & Interactive Brain Health Experience – NeuroExplorer Program

Introductions & Group Division: 6 people per group.

Four Rotating Stations (30 Minutes Each, with 10-Minute Transitions)

Education – Nutrition & Supplements for Dementia Prevention

Led by one staff member (Mind Expansion Mansion).

Focuses on brain health strategies and preventative care through nutrition and supplements.

Shiftwave / Ammortal / Neuronc Experience

Led by two staff members (NeuroPeak Treatment Rooms).

Hands-on experience with leading neurotechnology tools.

Sensory Organization Test (SOT) & NeuroTracker

Led by one staff member (Gym).

Cognitive and physical assessments, with one participant per group completing the full assessment.

NeuroCatch Scans

Led by three staff members (NeuroPeak Multi-Purpose Room).

Each staff member supports two participants, conducting six scans at once.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT

COST: \$115.00 per person (includes GST)

**If fewer than 22 people register, the event will be cancelled with a
refund of the full amount less the Eventbrite fees.**

**The decision will be made on Monday, May 26 after which, if it goes
ahead, no cancellations will be accepted.**

To register with EventBrite [click here](#)

Please direct any questions to: Chris Finch at cafb@shaw.ca