

PROBUS CLUB OF SAINT JOHN
MONTHLY MEETING
JANUARY 21ST, 2009

The meeting was convened at 10 am at the Boys and Girls Club, with President Richard Burpee chairing and about 40 members in attendance. Following "O Canada", Clarence Blois led a sing-along, accompanied by Don Tompkins and including two Scottish numbers in honour of the 250th birthday of Robbie Burns on January 23rd.

Minutes of December 17th, 2008 were read and duly approved, by a Scotsman, no less!

Member News: A moment's silence was observed in memory of Past President, Hon. Gordon Fairweather, OC, who died on Christmas Eve. No new members were introduced, and there were no birthdays, at least none that members wished to admit to. Ray Willis was reported to be in hospital until he can be placed in a nursing home.

Rendezvous 2008: Bill Brydges read a comprehensive thank-you which he and Fred Shillington have posted at www.sjprobus.ca (attached). Richard Burpee repeated his thanks to the co-Chairs and the committees. The committee met for a wrap-up lunch at the Mediterranean last Thursday.

Financial: Treasurer Don Mitchener reported that he did not spend the Club funds in Florida. There is \$1834.12 in the bank. He filed with the Secretary a listing of who has paid their dues (three members paid twice) and who has not. We currently have 127 paid members. A cheque was presented to the Club from Bayview Credit Union.

House Committee: Gordon Mouland reserved 20 spots for beef stew lunch. At the lunch, he was accused of false advertising, as the rolls that he said would be whole wheat, were white (but nonetheless delicious). He said he still had three decals, but he forgot them at home. He reported he still has several Rendezvous shirts.

Nominating Committee: David Lester reported that one member is considering the position of 2nd Vice President. He did not say whether the committee met on Christmas Day.

Web Site: New material and photos have been submitted, and Richard Burpee expressed his thanks for this. The President gave approval for the Secretary to submit Club Minutes that he has back to September 2006, partly in order to have a record of program speakers for a possible Program page on the web site. The site is www.sjprobus.ca, and to access the secure section, which is the membership list, members can use their mother's maiden name as a password. Richard had to take pains to explain to the less computer literate, that that means your mother's family name before she got married! Richard read a note he received from the Webmaster, Robert Lockhart, indicating that Freeway Technology is absorbing the monthly fee of \$30 for the site, and just charges us the \$30 annual hosting fee; Richard will send them a thank-you for this, along with the 2009 fee.

Signing Officers: It was **moved** by Gordon Young and **seconded** by David Fraser that the following Club Officers be authorized to sign cheques: any two (2) of the President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. Currently these are Richard Burpee, Robert Taylor, and Don Mitchener respectively. **Motion carried.** All of the signing officers are required to present ID at BMO in City Hall and sign the signature card before we can cash any cheques, several of which Don Mitchener wrote today in anticipation of being absent next month.

Name Tags: Richard reported that he mislaid the names of several members who asked for name tags, and asked them to tell him again so he can order them.

60/40 Draw: Robert Taylor drew one of Don Mitchener's tickets, and he donated \$100 to the Boys and Girls Club.

Program: Richard Burpee introduced Don MacGowan, a Club member who is retired from Clark-Drummie. He spoke about the Ghost Ship "Rock Terrace", built in the Portland Place Shipyard in 1874 by Troop and Son, and named after the Troop residence on Orange Street. The ship was 240 feet long and had a main mast 79 feet high. A shipping company in Philadelphia sent it to Japan in September 1887 with a cargo of kerosene and other products. It ran into a submerged reef in February 1888, but released itself. Water was entering the hold, but could be pumped out. However, the crew became exhausted with this extra duty, and the captain ordered "Abandon ship" on March 2nd, 1888. The crew was taken to Manila, where the captain was charged with dereliction of duty and his certificate suspended for six months. The ship continued to sail under full sail but unmanned (hence the name "ghost ship") for five months until it hit a second reef and broke up.

Laurie Hossack thanked Don MacGowan for this story, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Taylor, Secretary.