

The **PROBUS** “**PHOGHORN Newsletter**”



Saint John, NB - CANADA

February 16 —2022

Monthly Edition

A Professional and Business Retirees Club.

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Meetings are at the *Canada Best Value Inn on Main St, next to the Lord Beaverbrook Arena*, every third Wednesday of the month,
10:00 am. Website <http://www.sjprobus.ca> --- **PROBUS CANADA** website www.probus.org
Mail delivery; Canadas Best Value Inn, c/o PROBUS, 10 Portland St. Saint John NB E2K 4H8 CA.

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Frank McCarey----- 2nd Vice President
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President *Don LeBlanc*

This issue will be delivered before the February meeting, as usual. It also assumes we will have a February meeting, but the telephone committee will advise you of that.

This is February's edition of the **Phoghorn Newsletter**. As you are aware, there was no meeting for the month of January and as such, no minutes, or pictures to report.

With that in mind, I think I have found some interesting stories and a few jokes to pass along.

I remember a few years ago of a story between a young girl and her father. He was questioning her as to "why does she wants a computer? She thought about it for a minute and replied, " it a great way to stay in touch with family and friends no matter where they live"

She got the computer.

That is what I am attempting to do here when there is no meeting due to COVID or whatever, to stay in touch with all the members. Our club is only as strong as our members stay bonded, together.

This is a copy of an email I received from my cousin in Tuson , Arizona who taught history for 40 plus years. It worth the read.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Although I've been off the School Board for about 2 years, I'm imbued with "once a Country Day schooler, always a Country Day schooler." Richard Cooper's integrity and conscientiousness instilled these traits in all TCDS's staff and students, both past and present.

A few years ago, I wrote to you about the derivation of some of the names of the months, i.e., starting with the Roman god Janus. This year I'd like to share some new year traditions with you.

Did you ever wonder how the tradition of new year's resolutions started? (Well, why didn't you?)

From the Babylonians (circa 2,350 to 312 B.C.E.) who resolved to return borrowed farm equipment to medieval knights who would renew their vow to chivalry, new year's resolutions are nothing new. Read this brief history -

and compare the top 10 resolutions (further down the page) from the 1940's to today. You may be surprised.

A very brief history of new year's resolutions.

New year's resolutions go back to ancient times, so let's explore the history behind this tradition.

About 2000 B.C.E., the Babylonians celebrated the new year during a 12-day festival called *Akitu*, starting with the vernal equinox. (**Vernal equinox**, two moments in the year when the Sun is exactly above the Equator and day and night are of equal length; also, either of the two points in the sky where the Ecliptic, the Sun's annual pathway, and the celestial equator intersect.) This was the start of the farming season to plant crops, crown their king, and make promises to pay their debts. One common resolution was the returning of borrowed farm equipment, which made sense for an agriculturally based society.

The Babylonian new year was adopted by the ancient Romans, as was the tradition of resolutions. The timing, however, eventually shifted with the Julian calendar in 46 B.C.E., which declared *January First* as the start of the new year.

January, named for Roman god Janus, is depicted with two faces, one looked forward for new beginnings and the other looked backward for reflection and resolution. The Romans would offer sacrifices to Janus and make promises of good behavior for the year ahead.

As guardian of gates and doors, Janus presided over the *temple of peace*, where the gates were only opened during wartime. It was a place of safety, where new beginnings and new resolutions could be forged.

If you think about the land and the the seasons in the northern hemisphere, the timing of early January makes sense for most of Europe and North America. The active harvest season has passed. The holiday frenzy is ending. This is a time of leisure to farmers and settling accounts with your neighbors after having been industrious all summer.

A Boston newspaper from **1813** featured the first recorded use of the phrase, “New Year Resolution.” The article states:

“And yet, I believe there are multitudes of people, accustomed to receiving injunctions of new year resolutions, who will sin all the month of December, with a serious determination of beginning the new year with new resolutions and new behavior, and with the full belief that they shall thus expiate (atone for) and wipe away all their former faults.”

How resolutions have changed.

In the U.S., resolutions are still a tradition, but the type of resolutions have changed. As a legacy of our predominate Protestant history, resolutions in the early 1900s were more religious or spiritual in nature, reflecting a desire to develop stronger moral character, a stronger work ethic, and more restraint in the face of earthly pleasures.

Over the years, resolutions seem to have migrated from denying physical indulgences to general self-improvement, such as loosing weight. While it may seem artificial, medical sociologist Natalie Boero of San Jose State University suggests that today’s resolutions are also a reflection of status, financial wealth, responsibility, and self-discipline - which isn’t that different from how the new year’s resolution tradition began.

Differences

Resolutions from 1947 Gallup Poll

Today’s Resolutions

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Improve my disposition; be more understanding; control my temper | 1. Lose weight |
| 2. Improve my character; live a better life | 2. Get organized |
| 3. Stop smoking; smoke less | 3. Spend less; save more |
| 4. Save more money | 4. Enjoy life to the fullest |
| 5. Stop drinking; drink less | 5. Stay fit and healthy |
| 6. Be more religious; go to church more often | 6. Learn something exciting |
| 7. Be more efficient; do a better job | 7. Quit smoking |
| 8. Take better care of my health | 8. Help others fulfill their dreams |
| 9. Take a greater part in home life | 9. Fall in love |
| 10. Lose (or gain) weight | 10. Spend more time with family |

Whether we TCDSers resolve to return borrowed farm equipment as the Babylonians did or drop a few pounds, we're tapping into an ancient and powerful longing for a fresh start by setting resolutions.

Unusual events: the average person never sees something like this, unless you happen to be in "this spot" at the "right time". Film is in "fast" motion.

Imagine sitting in this place during the day (in between Russia and Canada in the Arctic) when the moon appears in this big size for 30 seconds and after blocking the Sun for 5 seconds disappears.



Arctic Moon.mp4

Double click to start video. "Thanks to Paul Meier for this video."



BuddyHackett-AGuy
GoestotheDoctor.m

Double Click to start video.

Stress Management.

A young lady confidently walked around the room while leading and explaining stress management to an audience with a raised glass of water. Everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, 'half empty or half full?'

She fooled them all"How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile. Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied , "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it.

If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes." She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden - holding stress longer and better each time practiced. So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night."

1. Accept the fact that some days you're the pigeon and some days you're the statue!
 2. Always keep your words soft and sweet just in case you must eat them.
 3. Drive carefully... It's not only cars that can be recalled by their Maker.
 4. It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to serve as a warning to others.
 5. Never buy a car you can't push
 6. Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on
 7. The second mouse gets the cheese.
 8. When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
 9. Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.
 10. A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.
 11. AND MOST IMPORTANTLY
 12. Save the earth.... It's the only planet with chocolate!
-

Time is like a river. You cannot touch the same water twice because the flow that has passed will never pass again. Enjoy every moment of life.

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Nova Scotia back country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost and being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions.

I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late.

I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man.

And as I played "Amazing Grace", the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car.

Though my head was hung low, my heart was full.

As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen anything like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Apparently, I'm still lost.

A senior citizen says to his eighty-year-old buddy:

So, I hear you are getting married?

Yep!

Do you know her?

Nope!

This woman, is she good looking?

Not really.

Is she a good cook?

No, she can't gook too well.

Does she have a lot of money?

Nope, Poor as a church mouse.

Well, then, is she good in bed?

I don't know

Why in the world do you want to marry her then?

Because she can drive!

Morris, an 82-year-old man went to the doctor to get a physical.

A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm.

A couple days later the doctor spoke to Morris and said, you're doing great, aren't you? Morris replied. ' Just doing what you said to do doc, "Get a hot mamma and be cheerful".

The doctor said, I didn't say that "***I said you have a heart murmur*** , be careful."

I asked a supermarket market worker where they kept the tinned peaches. He said, "I'll see," and walked away. I asked another and he also said, "I'll see," and walked away.

In the end I gave up and found them myself, in Aisle C.

J



- **AT&T** fired President John Walter after nine months, saying he lacked intellectual leadership. He received a \$26 million severance package. Perhaps it's not Walter who's lacking the intelligence
- **WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS:** Police in Oakland, CA spent two hours attempting to subdue a gunman who had barricaded himself inside his home. After firing ten tear gas canisters, officers discovered that the man was standing beside them in the police line, shouting, 'Please come out and give yourself up.'
- **WHAT WAS PLAN B?** An Illinois man, pretending to have a gun, kidnapped a motorist and forced him to drive to two different automated teller machines, wherein the kidnapper proceeded to withdraw money from his own bank accounts.
- **THE GETAWAY!** A man walked into a Topeka, Kansas Kwik Stop, and asked for all the money in the cash drawer. Apparently, the take was too small, so he tied up the store clerk and worked the counter himself for three hours until police showed up and grabbed him.



Can you name a person that owns these gloves?



Willard, heading to Florida ?



Meanwhile, John Doyle's Family enjoying the day.



It is reported this photo won the best picture award in 2020.



Skyscrapers breaking through the clouds, Dudai.

Can you imagine?



This Japanese warrior was constructed from one sheet of standard 8 ½” x 11” paper.

Also know as “Origami”

My Christmas story and the *Red Truck*

Six members of PROBUS attended a funeral in December of 2021 for one of our members, *Fenton Keirstead*. We functioned as honorary pall bearers.

They were *Gary Watson, John Doyle, Tom Craig, Wes Cosman, David Flewelling, Barry Snodgrass, and Willard Buckley*. Willard also performed the eulogy. This group was also known as the “*group of eight*” or the “*magnificent eight*.”

The service was nice. A lot of beautiful flower arrangements were also present considering “*KEIRSTEADS FLOWER SHOP*” was in that business.

When the service ended and the people were leaving, someone, I do not know who, suggested that anyone can have any arrangement they wish. I spotted a little red truck with an arrangement in the back. This was the one for me.

Since this was near Christmas, it would make a good center piece in my bay window. A good reminder to my friend FENTON.

A few days later, word got around the little “red truck” was part of the window display at Keirstead Flower Shop and were looking for its return. It not meant to be handed out and, in the confusion, it was.

I did return it to *Brian Keirstead*, Fenton’s son, and he offered it to me for the Christmas season. I said it would look better in the shops display. And besides, the truck ran out of gas! Brian got a laugh out of that he understood the circumstances. Here is the little red truck.



A few days later my wife and I were in the local mall just walking for the exercise when we passed a small, new shop. Something caught my attention.

There it was, and it was meant to be...”a little RED TRUCK” I wasted no time purchasing it and was on my way. It was placed on our coffee table for the next 2 weeks and it will be used every Christmas for a variety of reasons but remembering Fenton is the main one.

Next project is to have “*FENTON Keirstead Flower Shop*” printed on the doors. Here is the truck.



TOM CRAIG

Subject: UK ARMY PENSION

Lt. Colonel Robert Maclaren retired from the British Army in 2001, after a lengthy career. He received a letter from the Ministry of Defence setting out details of his monthly pension and the tax-free 'lump sum' award, (based on years of service), that he would receive.

The letter read:

"Dear Lt. Colonel Maclaren,

We write to confirm that you retired from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on 1st March 2001 at the rank of Lt Colonel, having been commissioned into the British Army at Edinburgh Castle as a 2nd Lieutenant on 1st February 1366. Accordingly, your lump sum payment, based on years served, has been calculated as £68,500. You will receive a cheque for this amount in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Army Paymaster"

Lt.-Col Maclaren replied:

"Dear Paymaster,

Thank you for your recent letter confirming that I served as an officer in the *Royal Scots Dragoon Guards between 1st February 1366 and 1st March 2001* – a total period of 635 years and 1 month. I note however that you have calculated my lump sum to be **£68,500.00**, which seems to be considerably less than it should be bearing in mind my length of service since I received my commission from King Edward III.

By my calculation, allowing for interest payments and currency fluctuations, my lump sum should be £ 6,427,586,619.47.

I look forward to receiving a cheque for this amount in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Maclaren (Lt Col Retd)"

A month passed, and then a second letter from the Ministry of Defence dropped into Col Maclaren's mailbox. It read:

"Dear Lt Colonel Maclaren,

We have reviewed the circumstances of your case as outlined in your recent letter to us dated 8th March inst. We do indeed confirm that you were commissioned into the *Royal Scots Dragoon Guards by King Edward III at Edinburgh Castle* on 1st February 1366, and that you served continuously for the following 635 years and 1 month. We have re-calculated your pension and have pleasure in confirming that the lump sum payment due to you is indeed £ 6,427,586,619.47.

However, we also note that according to our records you are the only surviving officer who had command responsibility during the following campaigns and battles.

