



Our November speaker was...

Peter Black,
Fair Vote Canada
"Does your vote count?"

~by Christina McGuire

Peter Black, a retired policy analyst, is Executive Secretary of the National Capital Chapter of Fair Vote Canada (FVC). FVC is a multi-partisan citizens' lobby group including people from all geographic regions and walks of life, and from all political stripes. Its mandate is to a) study different voting systems and b) promote the choice of fairer voting systems, both provincially and federally.

He gave a most interesting and informative presentation on proportional representation systems of voting, which FVC advocates. Most democratic countries have such systems. He noted that for its first 85 years, Canada had a two-party system, so that "first past the post" voting worked well, since the winning party had to get at least 51% of the popular vote. However, this changed in the early 1900's with the addition of new

parties, so that today, with four parties in play federally (and more waiting in the wings), one party can win 60% of the seats and 100% of the power with only 40% of the vote. Parliament is therefore neither responsible nor accountable to the electorate.

Some provinces have been studying this issue. B.C. carried out a lengthy study followed by a referendum. 57% voted for change to mixed member proportional voting. However, 60% was required, so the initiative failed. P.E.I. also held a referendum, but support was less than 50%. New Brunswick is also studying the issue. Meanwhile, Ontario has the "Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform", an independent body of randomly-selected individuals, who are currently assessing the need for voting system reform. If they recommend for such reform, a referendum may be held prior to the

October 4, 2007 provincial election. Peter Black's presentation generated much discussion and, I am sure, interesting debates at the dinner tables of many Probians.



VP Helen Black thanks Peter Black (no relation!) for his presentation.



THE PROBIAN CLUB OF PERTH

Meets first Wednesday of each month, September to June

P. O. Box 2164, Perth, Ontario, K7H 3M9

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Management Team 2006/2007

Notes from the Management Team

This year, Mike Hurren represented Probus by laying our wreath at the War Memorial on November 11.

Mike and Sheila Hurren have also agreed to make the coffee at the next few meetings so, coffee drinkers, you are saved! Thanks, Sheila and Mike!

The Team is proposing to add a position of Member-at-large. This will enable a member to learn what needs to be done, and to see first-

hand that it's more fun to be actively involved. President Keith will discuss this at the December meeting.

Eight **new members** received pins and were welcomed in November. They are (front row) Miriam McCormack, Carol Dillon, Pat Gurney, Dorothy Robertson, and (back row) Keith Pollard, Leo Brierley, Paul Corbeil, Mel Dillon and, hiding coyly, Membership rep. Rod Woolham.



Personal Profile— Malcolm MacDiarmid

Malcolm (Mac) and his wife Esther were both born in Glengarry County, north of Cornwall. They met in high school, married in 1958 and lived in Montreal for the next 26 years. Their family grew to include three sons and one daughter.

Mac started his career with the Sperry Gyroscope Division of Sperry Rand. At the same time, he continued his education at Sir George Williams University.

In 1974, Mac moved to Albany International, the world's largest producer of

custom designed fabrics for the paper industry. With Albany, Mac and Esther lived in Montreal and Cowansville. In 1983, they moved briefly to Perth where Mac helped start up the company's newest division. Then it was Hudson, Quebec, for eight years, back to Perth, and finally to Cowansville for three more years, returning to Perth on weekends.

Since retiring, Mac and Esther have travelled extensively. Their sons live in Calgary and their daughter in Alaska, so

they have enjoyed many adventures in the west and have explored Alaska and the Yukon as far north as the Arctic Circle. In the past two years they have visited Ireland and Scotland, tracing the heritage of both their families, but they are always happy to return to their chosen home in Perth.

The current issue of the **Probian** can be viewed on the Web at

<http://www.probus.org/6perth.htm>

Check out the news from other Probus clubs in Canada and around the world at

<http://www.probus.org>

Haiku for the wired age

~thanks to
Wasaga Beach Probus

- Stay the patient course. Of little worth is your ire. The network is down.
- Yesterday it worked. Today it is not working. *Windows* is like that.

- Serious error. All shortcuts have disappeared. Screen. Mind. Both are blank.
- Chaos reigns within. Reflect, repent, and reboot. Order shall return.

SPECIAL EVENTS

December 14: Annual Probus Christmas Dinner at Links o'Tay. This event is sold out at the moment, but see Denise at the December meeting to see if there have been any cancellations.

May 30 - June 2, 2007: TRIP CANCELLED
Denise has been informed that Auberge Memphré Inn has been sold. It will

become a retirement residence, which doesn't seem like quite so much fun! All deposits will be returned at the December meeting or by mail.

If you have ideas for new events or trips, talk to Denise Mullins (267-3479).

Speaker's Corner

In **December**, our speaker will be **David Jacklin**, President of Barn-door Productions, the resident dramatic company of the Studio Theatre.

Our Program Coordinator, Ian Doig, is always open to your suggestions for future topics and speakers.