

Shorelines

NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF NORTH SHORE VANCOUVER

February 2018

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Monthly Meeting at the Capilano Golf and Country Club

420 Southborough Drive, West Vancouver, 604-922-9331 Coffee and Fellowship: 9:00 am, Club Business and Speaker: 9:30 - 11:15 am

Monday, February 5th

with speaker

Dr. Peter Ross,

Vice-President of Research, Ocean Wise

“Oceans In Peril: Microplastics And The Destruction Of The Oceans”



Dr. Peter S. Ross is the Vice-President of Research at Ocean Wise, an initiative of the Vancouver Aquarium family. He holds an Adjunct Professor position at the University of Victoria, and served as a Research Scientist with the Canadian government between 1996 and 2013.

He has published over 150 scientific articles and book chapters on topics in ocean pollution, with a focus on the source, transport, fate and effects of priority pollutants.

He launched the Ocean Pollution Research Program at Ocean Wise in 2014, and continues to lead a solution-oriented microplastic pollution research program. His team is working with major outdoor retailers and Metro Vancouver waste water treatment operators to evaluate the possible role of textiles and other domestic sources to microplastics in coastal environments.

Visible plastic debris continues to threaten charismatic species such as seabirds, marine mammals and turtles, requiring concerted efforts at the local, national and international level. New concerns have emerged about the issue of microplastics in aquatic environments. Despite the increasing number of reports on microplastics in the ocean and in the food web, less is known about their effects in aquatic species. The work of Dr. Ross and his research team has found microplastics to be present in zooplankton, fish and seabirds. Microplastics have even been found in cultured shellfish, thereby bringing human health concerns to the table. Dr. Ross will discuss the latest from his research team, and their pioneering work with outdoor retailers, wastewater treatment plant operators and governments to better understand the sources of microplastic pollution and solutions to this global crisis.

Mark Your Calendars for the next meeting ...

Meetings at Capilano Golf and Country Club

- **Monday, March 12th** - Jon Lumer, *“Electoral Reform”*
- **Special Events** - page 2 ...



President's Notes



The good news is that the month of January is almost behind us! The start of the year is not welcomed as it should be because of the short days that are too often very damp and cold. This year has been no exception, although we can take some comfort that we have not endured the type of winter most of Canada has had to endure. I was out in my garden on the weekend and the daffodils have sprouted from the ground and there is new growth slowly emerging on evergreen shrubs. My sister in Winnipeg did not appreciate me passing on that information!

Two themes occur to me at this time of year – how to escape the weather and how am I doing on my New Years resolutions? On the weather front, there are two options – escape or deal with it. My escape is not happening for a while, but I have been doing my research, looking into warm weather destinations that have not already been booked. Many of us are fortunate to own winter homes or have welcoming friends who are owners always happy to have guests. In either situation, concerns over health care and the exchange rate have kept many of us home or made for shorter trips. For those who have chosen to remain on the North Shore, the good news is that at this time of year all the community groups have an increased pace of activity, so there are lots of indoor and outdoor activities from which to choose.

For resolutions, it is a testing time. I am trying to eat more fruits and vegetables and less meat; drink more water and less wine; spend more time reading; and more quality time with my family. So far, so good, but there are eleven months to go! On the reading front, I have another corollary to reading more, and that is to understand the author or source of my reading. With the cascade of material that comes to us daily – from links on emails sent by well-meaning friends to columns in the daily newspapers – I have committed to try to understand all points of view, not just the one I recently read or the one from the author whose view I share. The opportunity to hear our speakers and participate in a lively question and answer period is part of the effort to really understand the issues in front of us.

We have another very informative speaker at this month's meeting and I encourage you to attend. If there are topics you think we should learn more about please contact Michael Coady, our Speaker's Chair who would be pleased to listen to your suggestions. All the best!

John Zaplatynsky

Contact - president@probus-northshorevancouver.ca

Special Events

Tuesday, May 8 Shaughnessy Residential Area Walk Guided by John Atkin

Mark your calendars for this limited attendance special event. Registration information will be in the March Shorelines.

John Elliott



A Little Humour

As we have a little space to fill this issue, I thought a little humour would be welcome. Hope this joke brings a smile to your face - it did to mine! *Linda Metcalfe*



A police officer pulled over a driver and informed him that, because he was wearing his seat belt, he had just won \$1,000 in a safety competition.

“What are you going to do with the prize money?” the officer asked.

The man responded, “I guess I’ll go to the driving school and get my license.”

At that moment, his wife, who was seated next to him, chimed in, “Officer, don’t listen to him. He’s a smart ass when he’s drunk.”

This woke up the guy in the back seat, who, when he saw the cop, blurted out, “I knew we wouldn’t get far in this stolen car.”

At that moment, there was a knock from the trunk and a voice asked “are we over the border yet?”

New Members Introduced and Welcomed at January Meeting



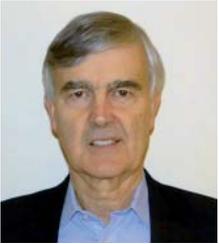
Howard Dallimore (*member since December 2017*) Howard was born in Cardiff, Wales and got his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering at the University of Wales and a Masters degree in Engineering Geology at Imperial College, London. He has lived in North Vancouver since 1975 and worked for engineering consultants such as Simons and Sandwell, finishing with Metro Vancouver and all connected with water and waste water treatment.

Work took him to a variety of places such as Argentina, Vietnam, Peru and Australia and he still lists travel as a current interest, together with theatre, reading and choral singing (Pacific Spirit Choir). He is also President of his Strata Council.



John Dalton (*member since January 2018*) John was born in Vancouver and received his degree in Forestry at UBC. He started his career with Rayonier and then joined Doman Forest Products. He became General Manager of Wood Supply and continued in that position when Doman was acquired by Western Forest Products.

He has lived in the same house in West Vancouver for 46 years and enjoys squash, tennis, skiing, fishing and gardening, and is involved with West Vancouver Streamkeepers.



Spencer Harrington (*member since January 2018*) Spencer was born in Limerick, Ireland and got a Business Degree at Trinity College, Dublin and went on to become a Chartered Accountant. He worked as an auditor for Touche Ross in London and Vancouver, and has lived in North Vancouver since 1975. He was the General Manager of Swinton and Company and then Director of Administration with Miller Thomson when the two law firms merged.

His interests are squash, biking and golf, and, at one time, he was secretary of the Canadian Field Hockey Association and, later, General Manager of the West Van Girls Field Hockey Club.



Greeters
Gerald McCann
and Brian Tough



Membership Committee
Jeremy Marr
and Pete Stacey



President John Zaplatynsky welcomes new members

Special thanks to photographer Darryl Stodalka

Last Month Speaker - Dennis Molnar



President John Zaplatynsky thanks guest speaker Dennis Molnar with a bottle of wine.

This month we had the second half of Dennis Molnar's presentation on life in East Berlin. The first part of the Berlin Saga was about how life was deteriorating before the Wall was built, and the early desperate attempts to flee to the west. This month's presentation was about the conditions when the wall was in place and when escape was barely possible. The East German State's objective was to remake German society into a form collective in which the State was supreme and all other influences subordinate or obsolete. The State embodied the Borg theme: "Resistance is futile; you will be assimilated."

Resistance did continue but punishment was draconian. If a person did escape, their family was arrested. If you posted critical posters or signs, you were arrested, and probably all your family and friends as well. There were rewards for following the rules - opportunities for holidays (but not to the west), better schooling and housing. However, the bulk of rewards went to faithful party members, based on political connection and not on merit.

One dissident said life was toxic. The only practical means of resisting was to do small things that would not attract the attention of the Stasi, the East German Secret Police. The presence of the Stasi was felt everywhere. Among other things, the police had a special research bureau to investigate how successful escapes were made. For this reason, few details were released in the western press about escapes - it became information the Stasi used to prevent further attempts.

There were some creative escapes. One family built a balloon and floated across the border. Another person discovered there was an unused rail line between the East and West. He commandeered an engine and succeeded in crossing. The next day the Stasi dug up the train line.

Our Speaker's thesis was the State may have tried to force people into conformity, but it couldn't force the economy to perform. The State was under heavy pressure to provide goods for internal consumption and at the same

time pressure to export goods for hard currency so that the essentials (like coffee) could be imported. Ultimately the economy began to fail. Workers were essentially paid for meeting production quotas, but this became less and less possible to achieve. There was a saying "We pretend to work, and you pretend to pay us."

One shoe factory, faced with an acute shortage of leather, met its quotas by producing only small sized left foot shoes instead of a variety of sizes and pairs. These were then exported to Africa (for hard currency) as a fashion item. The outcome of this story is not known.

Economic failures lead to growing unrest and more pressure on the State. East Germany was forced ultimately to borrow from West Germany, which in turn imposed ever additional conditions on the East for relaxing immigration and travel. As the economy continued to deteriorate internal pressures continued to grow and pressure from West Germany increased. Eventually the government had to allow some free passage between east and west, and within days a trickle became a flood. The wall was doomed, and the East German State along with it.

Tom Gunn

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