



THE NEWSLETTER

The PROBUS Club of Simcoe & District
Meets second Tuesday of each month at St. James United Church hall



MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

10 a.m., Muriel Bridge Room, St. James United Church, Simcoe.

9:30 a.m., Book Exchange, Socializing and Coffee.

Guest Speaker

Anita Buehner,

Bonnieheath Estate Lavender Farm and Winery.

Review of March 13, 2018, meeting

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed guests **Bernie Mueller** of Fishers Glen and **Dave Stone** of Simcoe. **Brian Cook** led us in our national anthem.

PROBUS business

Special events: **Dick Pearson** is arranging a tour of a bulk tobacco farm near Windham Centre in early September.

Newsletter: **David Judd** is clearing out old stock in the book exchange.

Wellness: **Gerald Sheppard** had no reports of illness.

House: **Rick Middaugh** reported all is well.

Finances: **President Murray** reported that our annual membership fee may need to be increased. He encouraged everyone to invite new members. At **Dick Pearson's** suggestion, **President Murray** will ask Welcome Wagon to give our brochure to newcomers to our community.

Guest Speaker: Toby Barrett

Toby Barrett spoke to us three days after ending a six-week “wild ride” over the leadership of the Ontario Progressive Conservative party. The Haldimand-Norfolk MPP did not come to our meeting to electioneer. But he did answer a question about the leadership race that had just been won by **Doug Ford**.

Toby has represented our area since June 1995. He had risen to be chair of the PC members’ caucus. Things changed after Toby opposed his party's successful push to remove leader **Patrick Brown**. Toby reminded the caucus about loyalty and the optics of removing their leader so close to a provincial election on June 7. The next day Toby was no longer caucus chair and, after 22 years in the legislature, his seat was moved to the back row.

Toby said the Conservatives were wrong to make a snap decision to remove Mr. Brown. Toby spent a month talking to people in Haldimand-Norfolk. Toby said 100 per cent of those he talked to felt Mr. Brown had been removed for political reasons.

Toby was one of two MPPs who supported Mr. Ford for the party’s leadership. Mr. Ford got the most votes from Haldimand-Norfolk’s 700 party members.

Bruce Bowyer asked how the PC leadership election worked. Toby said all 120 ridings were given equal weight so that a riding in Northern Ontario with dozens of members equalled a riding in the GTA with thousands of members. A points system chose Mr. Ford, although he didn’t receive the most votes and he didn’t win the most ridings.

Zeke Gulabsingh asked why we don’t use ranked ballots to elect our MPs and MPPs. Toby said he likes the horse race of our elections where the winner is the first candidate past the post.

Murray Uren asked how social media has changed politics. Toby said he likes to drive his 1941 Dodge coupe with a computer on the front seat. Twitter delivers breaking news while Facebook is good for social news.

Stuart Rusk asked about agriculture and the environment. Toby replied that under Patrick Brown, the PCs supported a carbon tax. Things have now changed. Toby said farmers and foresters have good ideas. Toby noted our area took a big hit with the loss of good jobs at the Nanticoke generating station.

Nestor Rosa asked about medical drugs entering our drinking water. Toby said he wasn’t sure if the issue is a priority.

Dan Pearson introduced Toby and **David Judd** thanked him.



Toby Barrett

Who Am I: Michael Kite

Life has been good to **Mike Kite**. From his childhood and youth in England, through his 50 years in Canada, Mike has had a wonderful time.

Mike was born on Dec. 12, 1935, in Sevenoaks, southeast of London, England. He left school at age 15 to apprentice as an industrial electrician. At age 21, he began two years' national service with the Royal Air Force. In June 1959, he married his wife, **Phyllis**. Their first daughter, **Belinda**, was born in 1964.

Although life was good in England, Mike and his wife looked at emigrating to New Zealand, Australia or Canada. Canada won and in April 1967 they moved to Fort William, Ont., where Mike's sister lived. They arrived on a Wednesday. Mike interviewed for a job the next day and started work as an electrician with Canadian National Railway on Monday.

In 1976, Mike got a new job with the Ministry of Transportation in Northwestern Ontario. He worked on traffic lights, street lights and helped build airport runways, including installing runway lights.

After 10 years with the MTO, he took work with the Thunder Bay housing authority. The Kites and their three daughters enjoyed life in their home with five acres in Thunder Bay. They liked winter sports like skiing and enjoyed tending chickens and a vegetable garden.

Mike retired in 1996. He and Phyllis moved for two years to the Northern Ontario town of Manitouwadge. From there, they moved to Mill Bay, north of Victoria, B.C., to be near their daughter, **Miranda**. In 2004, Mike and Phyllis came to Simcoe, where their daughter **Samantha** lives. Their first daughter, **Belinda**, lives in Manitouwadge. In all, Mike and Phyllis have six grandchildren.

Thank you, Mike, for telling us your story.



Mike Kite