



# THE NEWSLETTER

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



## Christmas lunch

**THURSDAY NOON, DEC. 8, 2022,  
Hi-Way Restaurant, 63 Queensway West, Simcoe.  
Members, spouses and guests welcome!**

**Order individual meals from the menu.**

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### Review of Nov. 8, 2022, meeting:

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed 20 members and one guest, **Peter Depotter**. **Keith Rumble** led the singing of O Canada. **President Murray** led a moment of silence for longtime member **Bruce Bowyer**, who passed away on Oct. 15.

### PROBUS Annual General Meeting:

Finances: **Treasurer Dave Montross** said our finances are in good shape. Twenty-seven members have paid for 2022-2023.

Executive: **President Murray** said all current executive members will continue for another year. They are: **President Murray Uren, Past President Gerry Kott, Vice President and Treasurer Dave Montross, Secretary David Judd, Membership Co-ordinator Tom Vandertuin, Program Co-ordinator and Wellness Co-ordinator Gerald Sheppard, Tours Co-ordinator Dick Pearson, House Co-ordinator Rick Middaugh.**

Constitution and Bylaws: **David Judd** explained changes to the Constitution and bylaws. PROBUS Canada has removed a reference in the Constitution allowing men-only and women-only clubs. New wording says membership is open to “retired or semi-retired people, regardless of marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation, or any other ground protected under Section I.3 (1) of the Canadian Human Rights Act.”

Moved by **Zeke Gulabsingh** and seconded by **Dan Pearson** that our club bylaws be amended to read: “Membership is open to retired or semi-retired men, regardless of marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation, or any other ground protected under Section I.3 (1) of the Canadian Human Rights Act.” This wording makes clear our club will continue as men only while respecting the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Members unanimously approved this wording and all other changes to bylaws suggested by PROBUS Canada.

## **Guest speaker: David Judd on Vimy Oaks**

**David Judd** gave a presentation about the First World War battle of Vimy Ridge and the oaks that remind us of the sacrifices of the Canadian soldiers who won the victory. The battle fought April 9-12, 1917, in northern France was the greatest victory in the history of Canada's military.

It's been said Canada became a nation at Vimy Ridge. Canadian soldiers gained the respect of the world as they captured the ridge from the German army, something British and French forces had been unable to do. The Canadians used innovative training and tactics — primarily the “rolling barrage” of artillery fire — to reach the top of the ridge before the Germans emerged from their underground defences. The cost was enormous. Ten thousand Canadians were wounded or killed; 24 men from Norfolk County gave their lives.

David's grandfather, **Charles Judd**, took part in the battle. He belonged to a construction unit, which built plank roads, dug trenches, laid barbed wire and brought up ammunition and supplies, extremely dangerous work often done in the front lines under enemy fire. At Vimy Ridge, Private Judd lost much of his hearing. He and other men built a plank road directly in front of Canadian artillery. The big guns fired continuously over their heads for hours. There was no ear protection. Grandpa Judd used a hearing aid for the rest of his life.

Grandpa Judd was a proud Vimy veteran. In the 1950s, he wrote down his memories about the First World War and told young David some of his stories. Grandpa Judd felt he had been part of something historic and he wanted to share his story.

Before the war, Vimy Ridge had been home to many large oak trees. Unfortunately, they were destroyed by artillery bombardment. After the battle, a Canadian soldier picked up some acorns, put them in a metal box and mailed them home. After the war, he planted the acorns at his Vimy Oaks Farm in Scarborough, Ont. The oaks grew and flourished.

In 2002, a man who had helped take care of the oaks in Ontario toured the Vimy battlefield in France and realized all the oaks were gone. He started a group to return oaks to the Vimy Memorial Forest. In 2017, on the 100th anniversary of the battle, 450 oaks grown from Vimy Farm acorns were planted at Vimy, France.

Meanwhile, 1,000 oak saplings were sold to Legions and municipalities for planting at cenotaphs, cemeteries and parks across Canada. Norfolk County bought about a dozen young Vimy Oaks to plant in Simcoe, Waterford, Delhi, Port Dover, Vittoria and Port Rowan. The Judd family sponsored a Vimy Oak in memory of Charles Judd. It was dedicated on Remembrance Day 2022 in the park on Norfolk Street, across from the Simcoe Carillon Tower.



**Private Charles Judd**



**David Judd with Vimy Oak.**

**Stuart Rusk** showed two examples of First World War trench art: a wedge-shaped lighter that could be affixed to the side of a trench and two English pennies joined together. **President Murray** recommended the Netflix movie *All Quiet on the Western Front* as an accurate depiction of the war.

### **Who Am I: Dave Montross**

**Dave Montross** was born in Simcoe in 1944 and raised at his family's home at 252 Norfolk St. S. He graduated from South Public School and Simcoe District High School. He enrolled at Hamilton Institute of Technology but found he lacked the mathematical background to continue.



**Dave Montross**

In January 1965 20-year-old Dave embarked on a six-month, around-the-world adventure of a lifetime. He took passage from New York to Southampton on the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth 2. He had with him a Eurorail pass good for three months, a \$1,200 travel voucher and \$300 in cash.

After visiting relatives in England, Dave toured around Europe for three months, sleeping at night on trains. At the Tuborg brewery in Denmark, he saw his first Canadian maple leaf flag, which had just become official. He visited Rome, Pompeii and spent one day in Communist East Berlin.

In Egypt, he climbed the pyramids, then it was on to Bombay, Singapore and Australia. He got off the ship in Perth in Western Australia and with \$5 in his pocket made his way by train, hitchhiking and walking across the country to Melbourne where an aunt lived. Dave worked for two months in Melbourne then caught a plane back to Canada.

Dave applied for a job at the Bank of Commerce. His main qualification: he had travelled the world before age 21. He worked 40 years for the bank, moving locations 12 times. In 1968, he married **Shirley**. They have two children: **Tonya**, who is a teacher like her mother, and **Chandi**, who works for CIBC like Dave. Dave and Shirley have two grandchildren.

Dave retired in 2005 and moved to Simcoe, where for many years he has been our treasurer. Thanks, Dave, for telling your story.

### **PROBUS Canada update:**

PROBUS Canada has updated its message and it has a new website at [probuscanada.ca](http://probuscanada.ca). Do you know someone who might be interested in PROBUS? Invite them to check out the website, which tells all about PROBUS. *“Our goal is to provide Fellowship, Friendship, and Fun for men and women in their retirement and semi-retirement years. We are a volunteer-based, non-profit, non-political, non-sectarian fellowship organization with over 4,000 clubs worldwide, some 250 being Canadian clubs made up of over 38,000 members. Our clubs are all about encouraging healthy minds and bodies and socializing with other retirees in the community.”*

