



THE NEWSLETTER



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

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

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

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

Guest Speaker

**Perla Jaurji, Canopy Growth
Medical marijuana.**

What's My Hobby?

**Frank Brock,
Souvenirs of the CFL.**

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Review of May 14, 2019, meeting

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed new members **Tom Christiansen** and **Gary White**. **Keith Rumble** led us in our national anthem.

PROBUS business

Special events: **Dick Pearson** continues to work on a field trip concerning water treatment. President Murray said we will visit a poultry farm near Renton in August or early September.

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

Treasurer: **Dave Montross** reported our finances are in good shape.

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

You're invited to lunch!

PROBUS members and guests are invited to lunch together following our meeting on June 11. We have reservations at the **Blue Elephant restaurant**, 96 Norfolk St. S.
Order from the menu. Pay individually.

Guest speaker: Trevor Delvaux

The Boer War, also known as the South African War, 1899-1902, pitted the British empire against the Boers, Dutch-speaking farmers who fought unsuccessfully to preserve their way of life. In those days, when Britain was at war, Canada was at war. Volunteers from across Canada, including about a dozen men from Norfolk County, served in the conflict.

Trevor Delvaux of Port Rowan was born and raised in South Africa and served in its military. He has written a book about the Boer War that details the experiences of the Norfolk men from Simcoe, Port Rowan, St. Williams, Delhi, Port Dover, Windham Centre, Waterford, Walsh and Vittoria.

Boer is the Dutch word for farmer. The rural Boers came to South Africa in 1652. By the late 19th century, they felt they had to fight against the expanding grip of the British empire.

When war came, the British fielded 450,000 soldiers, including 7,800 Canadians, versus 60,000 Boers. But the Boers were superior fighters — crack shots mounted on horseback with modern Mauser rifles. The British were easy targets as they marched on foot toward the Boer trenches.

The Canadians devised tactics to beat the Boers without being slaughtered. Canadian soldiers knew the plan and didn't have to wait for commands. Officers wore plain clothes so Boer marksmen couldn't pick them off.

At Paardeberg, on Feb. 18, 1900, Canadians rushed the Boer trenches, then dropped to the ground, to avoid Boer fire. This tactic gained some ground.

On Feb. 27, 500 Canadians snuck toward the Boer lines under cover of darkness and quietly dug trenches. In the morning, the Boers awoke to find the Canadians looking down on them from higher ground — 4,100 Boers surrendered.

The war cost 23,000 British dead and 6,000 Boers. Fifteen thousand Black people died. Twenty-eight thousand Boer civilians died in concentration camps.

Sadly, the British military learned nothing from the Boer War. In the First World War, they continued to send men “over the top” on foot in often futile attempts to capture trenches defended by machine guns.

South Africa became an independent country within the British empire in 1910.

Trevor said it's important to remember the sacrifices of Norfolk's soldiers in all of Canada's wars. “There are no winners in war,” he said.

Trevor's book is available for \$20 at any branch of the Norfolk Public Library. **David Judd** introduced Trevor and **Stuart Rusk** thanked him.



Trevor Delvaux

Who Am I: Gary White

Life is a blast for **Gary White**. From a young age, Gary has been fascinated by explosives. As a boy, he played with firecrackers. Later on, he got into amateur rocketry. Now in retirement he has helped set off the July 1 fireworks display in Port Dover.

Gary was born 76 years ago in Simcoe. In 1948, his family moved to Brown Street on Brant Hill in Port Dover. He went to Port Dover Public School and Simcoe High School. In 1962, he moved to Preston and worked at Canada Sandpaper in Plattsville. He later worked as an engineering technologist at Electrohome for 13 years.

In 1963, he started his own electronics business. He ran his own store in Hespeler from 1975 until 10 years ago. Today Gary continues to repair electronics. In March 2018, Gary and his wife, **Beverley**, a retired nurse, moved to Port Dover. Their daughter, **Holly**, is a graphic artist in Guelph.

Gary has a pyrotechnician supervisor’s card. He set off his own fireworks displays for many years. Last July 1 he helped with Port Dover’s fireworks display.

Gary will talk to us about his fireworks hobby in October.

Thank you, Gary, for telling us your story. Welcome to PROBUS!



Gary White

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Meet our new member: Tom Christiansen

Tom Christiansen is a retired mining engineer.

He and his wife, **Billie**, live in Simcoe.

Tom is known for wearing his trademark hat.

Clarence Hurtubise sponsored Tom’s membership.

Please welcome Tom to PROBUS!