



THE NEWSLETTER

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



Christmas lunch

**Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021,
Hi-Way Restaurant, 63 Queensway West, Simcoe.
11:30 a.m., socializing; noon lunch.
Members and guests welcome!**

**Everyone must have proof of double vaccination;
Wear masks to the table.**

Order individual meals from the menu.

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Review of Nov. 9, 2021, meeting:

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed 15 members to our first in-person meeting since March 2020. Members sat in chairs socially distant. President Murray led the singing of O Canada followed by a moment of silence for Remembrance Day.

PROBUS business:

Wellness: **Dick Pearson** will have surgery for a hip problem.

Finances: **Treasurer Dave Montross** said our finances are in good shape, starting the 2021-22 year with \$700 in the bank. Annual membership dues of \$45 are due.

Constitution: **President Murray** said PROBUS CANADA has asked clubs to update their constitutions. Our members will consider a revised constitution next year.

Members each gave updates on how they have fared through the COVID-19 pandemic. We heard from **Nestor Rosa, Bernd Mueller, Cal McDougall, Zeke Gulabsingh, Rick Middaugh, Gerald Sheppard, Dan Pearson, Tom Vandertuin, Don Lounsbury, Mike Kitchen, Clarence Hurtubise, Lawrence DePoorter, Dave Montross, Murray Uren and David Judd.**



Norfolk General Hospital opens on May 21, 1925. The carillon tower opens on June 17, 1925.

Remembrance Day talk: David Judd

One hundred years ago, Simcoe was discussing how best to pay tribute to the sacrifice of the 261 Norfolk men and one woman who gave their lives in the First World War. Two projects were talked about. One was to build a hospital. The Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 and subsequent years had shown the need for a hospital. The second idea was to build a stone carillon tower to display plaques with the names of the fallen and serve as a focal point for Remembrance Day ceremonies. Both ideas were good and, in the end, Simcoe built both of them.

Norfolk General Hospital opened at the top of Robinson Street on May 21, 1925. The carillon tower, officially known as Norfolk's War Memorial, opened less than a month later on June 17.

William Innes, owner of the Canadian Cannery, donated the land for the hospital. The high school board donated the land for the carillon tower. The board's chairman had lost a son at Vimy Ridge.

David's father, Harry Judd, was in charge of collecting the names for the plaque honouring Norfolk's dead in the Second World War — 159





Minnie Simcoe

it Minnie Simcoe and made the doll its mascot. Minnie was a good luck charm. She rode safely on at least 18 bombing missions. In January 1945, Minnie was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and retired from service.

The squadron flew 2,585 sorties between 1943 and 1945, dropping 14,000 tons of bombs. It lost 72 aircraft and nearly 490 aircrew — 313 killed, 54 missing, 104 taken prisoner, 18 lost but returned safe and 14 non-operational personnel killed.

The 431 Squadron was disbanded in September 1945. In August 1977, it was re-formed as the Canadian Forces Air Demonstration Team — the famous Snowbirds. The Snowbirds continue the squadron's connection with Simcoe.

soldiers, airmen and sailors. Recently, a non-profit committee has written a book profiling these men. The 460-page book entitled Norfolk Remembers the Second World War 1939-1945 will be published soon — hopefully in time for Christmas — at a price of \$50. You can order a copy at any branch of Norfolk Public Library or by emailing norfolkremembers@gmail.com.

In January 1944, Simcoe “adopted” 431 Iroquois Bomber Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force. The squadron's motto in Iroquois was “Warriors of the Air.” Over 18 months, people in the town sent the squadron \$1,800 in comforts, such as cigarettes and chewing gum. In return, the squadron named a Halifax bomber “Simcoe Warrior.” Later, a Lancaster bomber was given that name.

One woman, probably a member of the IODE (Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire) made a corn husk doll for the squadron. The squadron called



Halifax bomber is christened Simcoe Warrior.