

Shorelines

NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF NORTH SHORE VANCOUVER

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www.probus-northshorevancouver.ca

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Mike McMahon
604-926-1088

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Special Events:

Colin Ritson
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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, October 5th

with speaker

Dr. André Gerolymatos, Chair of Hellenic Studies at SFU

“The War Within the War: The Sunni Shia Conflict, Terrorism, The Refugee Crisis and the Impact on the EU Countries”

Dr. André Gerolymatos is one of the most dynamic and interesting speakers we have had address our Club. We are delighted to welcome him back for an unprecedented tenth time. As such, and as an Honorary Member of our Club, he hardly needs any introduction.

In addition to numerous books and articles, he has written extensively on conflicts in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and he has lectured on those subjects at Harvard and Stanford Universities.

He is an internationally recognized authority on Middle East affairs, specializing in military and diplomatic history and has published articles and books on these subjects. The great value in his presentations is his ability to provide clear and concise analyses of the current problems in the “hot spots” of the region and its constantly changing dynamics.

Western intervention has created unnatural state boundaries in the Middle East, which has been a contributing factor to the current crisis. The formation of multi-ethnic and multi-religious states only survived as long as the Western Powers directly dominated the region. The creation of ISIS is a byproduct of both the Sunni-Shia conflict as well as the inherent instability of the Middle East states.

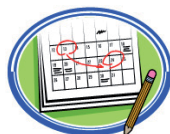
Parking at Capilano Golf and Country Club (CGCC)

The summer golf season at Capilano is still in full swing therefore the upper lot will remain reserved for CGCC members only. The lower lot is for non-member parking. A shuttle service will be available. Handicapped spots may be used by those qualified.

PROBUS members may park in the upper lot beginning with the November meeting and throughout the winter months.



Mark Your Calendars with these Important Dates



Next Meeting at the Capilano Golf and Country Club

- Monday, November 9th, 2015.
- Membership Renewals, *see page 2 for more details...*

President's Notes



Dr. Reid's presentation, a conversation with a friend and an article in the Vancouver Sun on 15 September triggered this note on voting. Voting is the one chance most Canadians get to send a message to our politicians. It is a privilege and a responsibility that is often unused. Dr. Reid and the Sun article discussed the estimated voter turnout by age group. The Sun article estimated that the voter turnout for the age groups from 18 to 24 and those 25 to 34 was 38.8% and 45.1% respectively. The best voter turnout was in the age group 65 to 74 at 75.1%. In the age group 75 years and over the voter turnout dropped to 60.3%.

Dr. Reid's excellent presentation to us on 14 September, reminded me that although we may have complaints and whine about our government and what it does or doesn't do and how it does things, the fact remains that collectively we are able to change our government peacefully. A short time ago I had a conversation with an acquaintance who recently visited the Middle East. We discussed forms of government and agreed that the worst form of government was a dictatorship except for a non-sectarian dictatorship which was the absolute worst.

All of this got me thinking that we Canadians don't know how lucky we are to live in a democracy. Our democracy is not perfect. We have our Mike Duffys and we have those who argue that our present system of electing members of Parliament, (i.e. first past the post), is not a fair election process and some form of proportional representation would be fair and would be preferable. I am not arguing in favor of one or the other – simply recognizing that such differences do exist in a democracy.

But what I am saying is that governments in Canada change without the violence which may accompany changes in governments in some countries (e.g. Syria). In some countries any opposition to the government in power attracts the wrath of that government. Government power is used to stifle and even jail opposition politicians or journalists. As well, elections are corrupted by ballot box stuffing, voting place intimidation and other undemocratic tactics.

My conclusion is that these are all good reasons to get out and vote in the coming federal election. If you don't vote your criticism of the result will carry little weight.

Mike McMahon

Contact - president@probus-northshorevancouver.ca

New Member Welcomed and Introduced at September Meeting



Ron Milne (*member since September 2015*) grew up in Vancouver and has lived in West Vancouver for 40 years. He attended the University of British Columbia and the Royal Academy of Music in London, United Kingdom. He was employed as a musician with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra where he played the violin. Ron enjoys following the Stock Market, volunteering at the SPCA, hiking, following current affairs and reading.

Final Notice for 2015-2016 Membership Renewals

If a member fails to pay the renewal fee of \$60 by **October 15th**, the space will be filled by a new member.
Please mail ASAP or bring your payment with your renewal form to the October meeting if you have yet to renew.

September Meeting Greeters



Greeters Alistair Duncan and Don Leier

Last Month Speaker - Dr. Angus Reid, Chairman, Angus Reid Institute

Note: View Speaker presentations, when available, on our website at:
<http://www.probus-northshorevancouver.ca/speakers.htm>



Speaker Dr. Angus Reid is thanked by President Mike McMahon with a bowl hand crafted by a PROBUS member.

Issues and Expectations - The 2015 Election

With a long background in public polling, Dr. Angus Reid gave a fascinating analysis of the personalities and dynamics of the period leading up to the Oct. 19th federal election. He backed up his thoughts with an abundance of charts and data. Historically, the average point spread has been up to 18% between parties. In this election it is 3%, so any party could win, but not likely by a large spread. It is too close to call at this time.

The Conservative Party has made a number of strategic errors. Reid believes Harper chose to fight a long election with the hope that given enough time, both Trudeau and Mulcair would make mistakes that could damage their chances of success. This has turned out not to be the case; in fact the opposite has happened.

Successful parties tend to fight a new election in the way they won the previous one. Negative advertising worked last time against Ignatieff, but the “just not ready” line against Trudeau has helped Trudeau and damaged Harper. Many Canadians think Trudeau is ready as he has won his riding twice and is still in the fight.

The NDP win in Alberta has undermined traditional support for the Conservatives, and is a great boon for the NDP, as many people see that the sky has not fallen yet. Added to the NDP strength in Quebec, Canadians view this as a significant political change.

Harper’s two strongest suits were foreign affairs and the economy. Oil revenues have collapsed, manufacturing is leaving Central Canada and the dollar has fallen. While a \$1.9 billion budgetary surplus has been achieved, Reid does not think this will be significant to voters. Half of all voters feel financially threatened, and what they want most

is financial security. Little else matters without that.

Harper has made an effort to appear strong on the world stage: standing up against Putin, fighting ISIS, supporting Israel etc. This apple cart has been over turned by the refugee crisis and how his government has handled it. The political discourse is “off message”.

The Conservatives cannot fight one particular problem – they have been in power since 2006. Canadians, by a ratio of 2:1 want a change.

Pollsters look for momentum, and Thomas Mulcair has the most right now, followed by Trudeau. Mulcair has managed to develop an aura of respectability and charisma. Harper knew his popularity was slipping, but still felt he could win by micro-targeting the electorate based on the excellent polling of their supporters. The Conservatives know where not to waste their time and money.

Reid also believes this is very much a have versus have not election. The young, poor and unemployed have more faith in the NDP, while the financially secure prefer Harper. This particularly applies to older home owners in the big cities.

Much, much more was said in Angus Reid’s talk, but he concluded with the idea that while Harper’s government has an uphill battle, it may win with a minority. The next fascinating question is, what will the three other parties do about it? <http://angusreid.org/election-roundup/>, and angusreid.org.

Ken Bryden



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Editorial contributions and comments are welcomed
and may be sent by e-mail to :

linda@probus-northshorevancouver.ca

or by mail to:

PROBUS Club North Shore - Communications Chair
P.O. Box 92042, West Vancouver, BC, V7V 4X4

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