

Shorelines

NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF NORTH SHORE VANCOUVER

December 2017

www.probus-northshorevancouver.ca

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Management Committee

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Speakers:

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604-990-7643

Special Events:

Gordon Cook
604-921-7393

2017 Christmas Luncheon

Monday, December 11th

11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

SOLD OUT

West Vancouver Yacht Club, 5854 Marine Drive

with lots of

Fun, Food, Fellowship, & Good Cheer

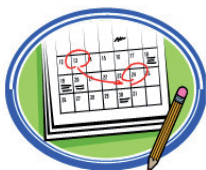
with special luncheon guest

Jackson Davies

Actor, award winning Film Writer and Producer



Mark Your Calendars with these Important Dates...



January 2018 Meeting at Capilano Golf and Country Club

- **Monday, January 8th** - Dennis Molnar, Historian, "Part 2"
- **Committee Members Recognition** - *details on page 2...*

President's Notes



With the early activity on the Holiday season, brought about by the “Black Friday” advertising, I am probably not the first to wish our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Even though I spent my entire career in the retail business, I still find it difficult to express those sentiments this far ahead of Christmas!

As we look ahead to the New Year, it is an appropriate time to remind ourselves of the purpose of PROBUS – to provide a forum for active retirees in fellowship, self-development and participation. The Probus mission is to enhance the membership experience and to further the development of the organization on a sustainable basis.

Thanks very much to all our meeting volunteers and committee members who make our regular meetings and special events an enjoyable experience for all members and guests. Through the year our speakers have presented thought-provoking and insightful presentations on a wide variety of local, national and international issues as well as a number of health-related topics. The year ahead promises more of the same.

All of our meetings in 2018 will be held at the Capilano Golf Club. It is somewhat more expensive than having an alternate summer venue, but your Management Committee was unable to find an alternate venue that provided the same experience. The additional cost is why membership dues increased this year. The increase comes after a decrease in dues several years ago and we are pleased to see the increase did not have an adverse impact on membership renewals. We are, however, always looking for new members, so we encourage you to bring guests and prospective members to our regular meetings.

Once again, please accept my very best wishes for a Merry Christmas surrounded by family and friends and good health and happiness for the New Year!

John Zaplatynsky

Contact - president@probus-northshorevancouver.ca



2017 -18 Committee Support Group

We are delighted to recognize our members who provide valued support and share in the workload of the chairs of the committees. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact the appropriate Chair.

Communications, Chaired by Darryl Stodalka

* Linda Metcalfe, Shorelines Publisher & Editor, Website

House, Chaired by Gary Sutherland

Membership, Chaired by Jeremy Marr

Speakers, Chaired by Michael Coady

* Tom Gunn

Special Events, Chaired by Gordon Cook

* John Elliott, John Pennefather, Jon Strom, John Walker,

Bridge and Golf, Chaired by Phil Boase

* Fraser Grant, Barry Heselgrave



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2018



New Members Introduced and Welcomed at November Meeting

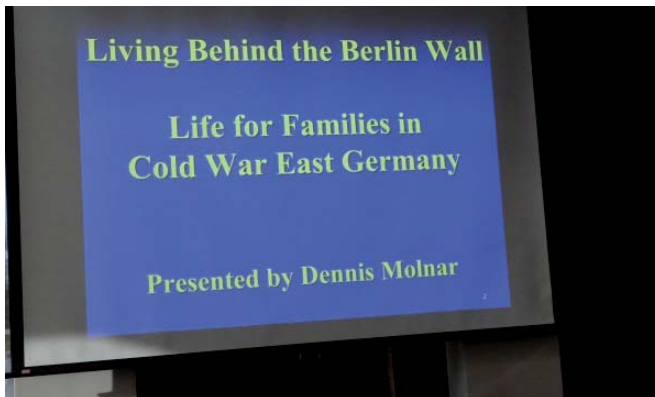


Neil Sharpham (*member since October 2017*) Neil was born and educated in Halifax, Nova Scotia and received a degree in Commerce at Dalhousie. That led to a career in Human Resources with the Federal government for 30 years, initially for a short time in Ottawa and then on to Vancouver. Then he established and continues to work with the Nova Retirement Planning Group providing help with lifestyle planning and finance. His other interests include tennis, bridge and pickleball.



Claus Wiig (*member since November 2017*) Claus was born in Bergen in Norway and attended a technical university in Germany. He came to Canada shortly after and has lived in West Vancouver for over 45 years. He pursued his engineering career as a power systems specialist with BC Hydro and then with H.A.Simons. He was a Vice President with ACTS, a local group dedicated to bringing clean drinking water to Ugandans. His interests include golf, cross country skiing, fishing, hunting, hiking and cycling.

Special thanks to photographer Darryl Stodalka



The Presentation Begins!



President John Zaplatynsky welcomes new members

Membership Christmas Drive

The renewals for the 2017/2018 year are all in and the numbers are down a little from last year. Perhaps the fee increase had a slight impact on the renewals. Whatever the case may be, we need fresh blood!

I am confident that every member knows one person who would be a good addition to the club; and I expect you are more likely to see them at this time of year. Would you please, at least, consider giving him an Application Form?

Our administrator, Linda Metcalfe, has attached the form to this *Shorelines* e-mail. It can also be downloaded from our website at <http://www.probus-northshorevancouver.ca/images/PDF/2017-18%20Membership%20Application%20Fillable%20Form.pdf>



Last Month Speaker - Dennis Molnar



President John Zaplatynsky thanks guest speaker Dennis Molnar with a bowl hand crafted by a member.

Our speaker this month was Dennis Molnar, who has appeared before our group several times. His presentations relate to the Second World War period, and this time he moved into the post-war period, discussing life behind the Berlin Wall. It was the first part of a two-part presentation, and the second will take place at our January meeting.

Most of our membership has little direct memory of these times. We were children for the most part, and our families were concerned with trying to resume normal lives, no matter where we lived.

Both Eastern and Western Germany were devastated. There was a threat of war continuing, and with memories of Nazi treatment of their conquered populations fresh in people's minds, it was said that no one would really care if Germany was turned into a nuclear wasteland.

West Berlin was an island of Western life in a sea of Soviet Style communism. As such it was a singular challenge to East German authorities.

The East German regime first decided to make West Berlin collapse, and when this did not work they tried to isolate it. What began as an attempt to starve the city into collapse with the closure of roads from the west ended with the building of the Wall. The isolationist policy, which grew in intensity, was to make sure that there was as little contact between East and West as possible and the government went about this with typical German efficiency.

Communism was imposed by force, and with greater intensity than the Nazis had used to impose their regime. Good jobs went only to party members, regardless of qualifications. All children had to join Young Pioneers and were taught to spy on their parents and neighbours. Church attendance was actively discouraged and churches were demolished. Stone and construction materials from Nazi government buildings were recycled into new government and Party buildings, not into housing or industrial construction.

There was to be no opposition at all to the communist Party. The penalties for any form of criticism, for example, not clapping long enough at public meetings, was to be punished by the East German Stasi with the efficiency for which Germans were notorious. It is an interesting side note that the East German Secret Police, like their Gestapo predecessors, did not practice physical torture. It had been decided in the 1930's that torture was not efficient, and the police chose to break their prisoners with psychological torment. It was deemed much better to have a prisoner make a public confession. They could then be executed, having confessed their guilt in a public trial.

Under the communist regime the Stasi made the Gestapo seem mild. There were at least eight times the number of secret police than under Hitler's regime and the country was rife with informers.

The ultimate weapon of compulsion was the Berlin Wall, and hopefully the US will not study its design for the Mexico Wall. Its construction diverted resources from housing and industry and ultimately contributed to broad resentment of the State. The Wall was not a simple construction: through the years it was enlarged, made deeper and wider, with secret kill zones to stop escapees. There was to be no escape, and no tolerance for individualism.

The reasons people gave when they fled East Berlin was not economic. People frequently said, "we were poor, but we were all poor together". The abiding reason was the oppressive nature of the regime; embodied in the Wall.

Stay tuned for Part Two in January.

Tom Gunn

A Little Humour

*Dear Santa, this year, all I want for
Christmas is a fat bank account
& a skinny body...
Let's try not to mix the two up
like you did last year.*

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<http://www.probus-northshorevancouver.ca/>

Editorial contributions and comments are welcomed
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For Information on PROBUS Clubs in Canada, visit
PROBUS Canada: <http://www.probus.org/canada.htm>