



WOMEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

Next meeting: **Tuesday, May 2nd, 2023**

9:30 a.m. - Arrival

Point Grey Golf Club

10:00 a.m. - Meeting

3350 S.W. Marine Drive

We wish to acknowledge that we meet on the unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Masks are optional but recommended

Speaker:

Sharon Davis

Topic:

**Philanthropy: Give
and Take**



My full circle journey from the corporate world to the non-profit sector and back to a hybrid of both.

Sharon will share with us her transition from the corporate world to the non-profit sector and back again. She'll discuss her perspective of changing face of giving, relating to both corporations and individuals, the effects of social media on philanthropy, and how non profits/charities are becoming savvier to help preserve and advance their cause. Sharon will talk about individual and family giving and how it can be used as an educational experience to create lasting legacies and how volunteering globally differs from volunteering locally.

Sharon Davis had a lengthy career in Investment Finance before shifting her focus to the non-profit sector. She focused on helping non-profits and charities scale by implementing best practices from both the for profit and non-profit sectors. In 2015 she identified the need for a more conscious and sustainable approach to philanthropy and formed Giving Well with her business partner Christina. Through Giving Well they work directly with businesses to assist them in finding their purpose and formulating sustainable partnerships, creating change in their respective communities and beyond.

Sharon believes strongly in giving back and in 2006 founded the local Vancouver Chapter of Room to Read, a leading global non-profit organization focused gender equality and education in low-income countries. The opportunity to participate and learn within a global organization has been personally rewarding and invaluable in terms of advancing her knowledge and developing global contacts. Sharon also volunteers her time for several local charities, festivals, and initiatives, and mentors young women with business start ups.

Women's PROBUS of Vancouver:

<https://probuswomen.com>

Contact us:

probuswomen@gmail.com

PROBUS Canada:

<https://probus.org>

PROBUS International:

<https://probusglobal.org>

APRIL SPEAKER

Cecelia Reekie

My Journey from Truth to Reconciliation

Cecelia told us the poignant story of being born to a fifteen-year-old, unwed mother whose Roman Catholic parents would not allow marriage to an Indigenous boy and demanded the child be put up for adoption. Cecelia was born in Prince Rupert in 1963 and adopted by a United Church minister and his wife, a teacher with whom she had a happy childhood. The family moved from Lax Kw'alaams to Port Simpson, Trail, Vancouver, and settled in Coquitlam.

At age 24 she married and moved to Aldergrove, and with the support of her adoptive parents, began a search for her birth parents. Cecelia discovered her birth mother had been looking for her for years and they reunited in Delta in 1988.

The same year her birth father, Cecil Paul, a member of the Haisla Nation from Kitmat Village was found through an aunt and he told Cecelia stories about his childhood; not a happy one as he was taken away from his parents and sent to a residential school.

These schools were established by John A. MacDonald's government and existed from the 1870's to 1996 to "educate the savages". Cecil was rescued from his first school by his father and they lived "on the land" until authorities returned him to the Alberni Residential School on Vancouver Island where he spent the next four years; a horrible experience.



At the age of fourteen and working on boats, he was introduced to alcohol but when he died in 2021 he has been 50 years sober and during those years was a prominent environmentalist protecting old growth forests in Northern BC.

Cecelia and her husband have two boys, one with special needs, and with the encouragement of her father shares his story as a cultural presenter working with students Grades 2-12. Another project she is involved with can be found at:

<https://www.mapleridgenews.com/news/video-215-crosses-go-up-in-b-c-community-to-remember-kamloops-residential-schoolchildren/>

She is a Trustee of the Langley School Board, the first and only indigenous person in this position, and takes great pride in being part of the Haisla Nation.

She took part in the 2015 Walk for Reconciliation in Ottawa.

Cecelia suggested these two books to learn more of her father's story:

1. Stories from the **MAGIC CANOE of Wa'xaid** by Cecil Paul as told to Briony Penn

2. **FOLLOWING THE GOOD RIVER**, The Life and Times of

Wa'xaid by Briony Penn with Cecil Paul

She ended her talk with - 'iks g'wáilas (goodbye/until we meet again)

JoAnne Perley-McField introduced Cecelia and Jane LePorte thanked her for telling us this thought-provoking and emotional story.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Vice President Meredyth Kezar presided, thanking greeters Isabelle Stroud and Sally Hatfield.

As April was our 20th Anniversary month you may be interested in this history – compiled by Meredyth.

There have been four Lifetime Members; all of whom did their work for many years. Robbie McKenzie, Founder; Helen Armstrong, Newsletter Editor and Secretary; Dorothy Joplin, Membership Services; and Audrey Wills, Speakers - Audrey joined us on April 11.

The Women's Probus Club of Vancouver was founded by Robbie McKenzie on April 14, 2003 at Point Grey Golf and Country Club. The first meeting was made up of members of Robbie's sorority, friends and the wives of the members of the Men's Probus Club.

The official Probus Canada site states that there were 43 charter members as of April 14, 2003. At the first meeting, it was proposed that in order to build the membership members could ask their friends if they would like to join. Initially, Robbie did everything from acting as President and Secretary to printing, photocopying and mailing the newsletter plus finding speakers, and even producing the first roster. The first newsletter was produced in May 2003. If a member did not receive her newsletter, Robbie's husband would go to Staples, photocopy an extra copy, and drive it to the member's home. They were both dedicated to making sure the Club would be a success and it certainly has been."

The first printing of the roster in August 2003 listed 67 members and as of April 2018, the Club had a membership of 293." One of the main reasons the Vancouver West Probus Club was begun in 2014 was both the existing Men's and Women's clubs were at capacity.

I loved what Margaret Perry told me. She initially didn't join the first year because she thought it was just another support group for a men's club but then realized this was not true. And it reminded me of how at my first Probus meeting I was so impressed to realize I was sitting by Marguerite Ford, a woman who was such a leader in Vancouver. I joined as others have done due to the excellence of the speakers and the stimulation.

Covid was hard on this group as we were no longer able to meet in person but Barbara Wynn and then Leslie Chang were able to pivot the club onto the zoom platform. Due to an excellent Speakers' Committee we were able to have speakers all the way from England. Estelle Jacobson did a great job with the website and Barbara Patterson kept our membership intact and due to not having in person meetings was able to give our members a break on membership fees.

Last year we were able to go back to in person meetings but the transition has not been easy. Due to new policies at Point Grey we no longer are able to serve coffee. Some members haven't been comfortable, or able to come back to in person meetings. We now currently have a membership of 165. We need all our members to help us move into the future.

Management Committee

Contacts:

Women's PROBUS members will find the *confidential* phone numbers and email addresses on the last page of their Newsletter. Please contact them if you have any questions.

Newsletter:

Contributions of stories, poems, jokes and brain teasers are welcome. Please send them to the Newsletter Editor any time you wish.

Update Your Contact

Information:

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? Please update your profile on the Club's website

<https://probuswomen.com>

Or email

womensprobus@gmail.com

AGM - July:

Our AGM is coming up & there are openings on the Management Committee. Please contact Past President **Leslie Chang** to volunteer and help your Club continue to thrive. She will give you a complete "position" description.