



Probis Club of Central Edmonton Newsletter

November 2020

Editor: Ken Hoffman

Website: www.probus-central-edmonton.com

Email: probis.cent.ed@gmail.com

November 17 - Presentation on "In Flanders Fields":

Bev Dietrich, the curator of Guelph Museums until her recent retirement. She was recently honoured with a lifetime achievement award from the Ontario Museums Association. She was responsible for research into John McCrae, for curating McCrae exhibits and for leading tours to Belgium and France focussing on his life.

John McCrae started his impressive life in Guelph during 1872. His family home is now McCrae Museum. He attended Guelph Collegiate, University of Toronto and the Ontario Agricultural College. He suffered typhoid fever and asthma before graduating in marine biology in 1894.

He conducted medical research on pathology, writing medical papers and textbooks, including "Principles of Pathology" in 1909. He served at a convalescent hospital for children, and at a maternity hospital. He lectured at the University of Vermont and served at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He studied medicine in London, Paris, Montreal-McGill and Toronto, becoming a Member of the Royal College of Physicians and a Bachelor of Medicine in 1910. He was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame in 1915.

His medical career ran in parallel to his military career. He attended the Royal Military College in Kingston 1893. He joined the Royal Canadian Artillery for the South Africa campaign in 1900, participating in three significant battles.

In 1914, he served as a medical officer in France. He took part in the Second Battle of Ypres, where he was responsible for a field dressing station using medical staff from McGill University. The deaths of two close friends inspired his world-famous poem, published later in the "Punch" magazine.

He was a prodigious writer, penning poems and short stories, so it is no surprise that he was a member of the Pen and Pencil Club.

Lt.-Col. John McCrae died of pneumonia and meningitis in 1918. He believed in the values of equality, justice, patient care, animal welfare, and the search for knowledge. He has been honoured on stamps, coins, and notes. Commemorative statues and plaques are found in



Guelph, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Ypres, where the museum is named “In Flanders Fields”.

Thoughts:

I am impressed with extent of research done. Like Rod Macleod who spoke about Sam Steele the research benefited from collections of letters. Who writes letters anymore? Will researchers look to social media? I am wonder what

historians will use.

November 24 - Presentation on “Considerations for a Basic Income”:

Lindsay M. Tedds spoke on basic income. She is Associate Professor and Scientific Director, Fiscal and Economic Policy School of Public Policy, University of Calgary. Also, she is a member of the panel studying the Basic income (BI) social safety net approach for British Columbia.

The members of the panel conducted a great deal of research and reviewed different implementations and papers on the subject. The presentation was based on what was learned with the limitation that Lindsay could not share any information not already in the public domain.

After setting out the background to the panel. BC interest in BI started in 2017 with the election of the minority NDP government. After discussing the background, she defined poverty in BC. It is based on the market basket measure. The poverty line was \$46,077 in 2018. As to what is a basic income? She stated the conceptualize basic income as a class of policy proposals:

- Basic income is not a single, uniform policy, but rather a range of policy proposals that share certain principles while also differing along key dimensions.

Based on research, she concluded that there are 4 basic principles simplicity, respect, economic security, and social inclusion. These 4 principles underpin the central principle of autonomy.

Next, she stated that there are 13 basic income design elements. Each with a range of options. Her main point is that as implementation options are selected for each element there must be policy trade offs. What are these elements? They are objective, sufficiency, exclusivity, universality, duration, uniformity, equivalence scale, beneficiary unit, frequency, conditionality, form, administration, and financing. Much of the remainder of the presentation focused on the elements. Some points I found interesting include:

- The program objective needs to be defined, in general objectives need to decide if the program is to reduce or eliminate poverty, respond to labour market transition, use social dividend.
- What is a sufficient income? There are already several programs that provide income are these abandoned.
- She pointed out that seniors benefit from a range of programs already and may not need a BI program.
- There will be complexity with defining who will benefit from BI. There will be a need to define based on age, residency versus citizenship, etc.
- How long can a beneficiary receive the BI?
- Is the receipt of benefits conditional on something like looking for work or income?
- She stated that, in her opinion, Canada does not have the administrative structures to implement a BI program.
- Finally, we heard government with need to make decisions on how to finance a program. Also, the cost of a program can vary widely depending on the design of the program.

This was a highly informative presentation. Key learnings included, there is great deal of detail to be decided on in any design and these decisions will be policy driven. Please check out the presentation using the link Yves sent out.