



## Flashback to our October Meeting

**Greeter:** Linda Stoltz

**Guest Speaker** *Lillian Kluka*

Introduced by Beverly Montegue; Thanked by Peggy Rutherford.

Lillian Kluka, a Great Lakes captain. She was raised on a Blenheim-area farm and didn't realize she was

causing a stir on the waters of the Great Lakes when she registered to become a commercial sailing apprentice in a program offered through Georgian College in 1974.



Lillian Kluka said she wasn't sure what she wanted to do when she left high school. One thing that caught her eye was a small pamphlet from Georgian that proclaimed You Can Be a Sailor.

Her family drove her to Owen Sound where she was to board a freighter for a six-month stint. The college program combined time on the water with time in class, and at the start of the program there were 58 males and just two females.

She related some of the adventures she had during a 25-year career with the merchant marine. She experienced a lot of resistance during her career because she was a woman, but she gives credit to the family-owned N.M. Paterson and Sons Ltd. of Thunder Bay, that took her on when she was an apprentice. She worked her way up through the officers' ranks and, as

is often the case in a career, happened to be in the right place at the right time when she first served as a captain. It was on a trip to the Arctic and when the ship's captain became incapacitated, she, as chief officer, took over the duties and performed so well that she held onto the position for good.

She was the first woman captain to sail the Great Lakes, which provide many challenges. Among the toughest challenges, she says, is Sarnia, where the current is strong, and the channel is shallow and narrow. It was while heading toward Sarnia that she had one of her most memorable incidents. She was called out of bed

early on a Sunday morning and told they had to shut down the engine because of trouble. But the anchors didn't hold and the current forced the bow of the ship onto the Port Huron side, where the ship damaged a jogging trail, tore out a park bench and destroyed a garbage can. The ship itself suffered only minor damage.

The Port Huron newspaper's headline read: "Woman driver hits Thomas Edison Inn."

### A Glance at... On-Going Probian Affairs

- **Visitors:** members are to call Joan or Kathy if they wish to bring a guest.
- **Cheer & Visiting:** Keep Marg DeBrusk informed of ill or bereaved members 519-621-6816.
- **Bridge:** Call Joyce Hall 519-621-9626
- **Euchre:** Stasia MacLeod 519-624-6924
- **Book Club:** 4th Thursday of each month. Contact Marg Johnstone at margjjj@gmail.com or 519- 249-1641
- **"Sharps & Flats":** meet the 1st Wednesday of each month for lunch at Galt View Restaurant Marg DeBrusk is the director - 519-621-6816.
- **Walking:** Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Call Merrily Walker at 620-0296 for walk location.
- **JITA:** Just in Time Activities Contact Diane Day if you would like to join small groups on local outings.

### Reminder:

Peggy Rutherford of the Special Events Committee requests members to bring \$10 for the Christmas Luncheon to the November 11th meeting. The Luncheon will be held on December 9th at The Cambridge Hotel & Conference Centre.

Probus Riverside now has an email address:  
CambridgeRiversideProbus170@gmail.com