

Dan Aykroyd visits UNB (for a couple of minutes)

by Josh O'Kane

Word first hit UNB about Dan Aykroyd's December 8 visit when the Social Club first circulated posters for its 'Last Class Bash' event. Eventually, details of a provincial tour of bars and liquor stores were released, but very little about the Social Club stop was known.

There was some speculation that Aykroyd would head behind the bar and serve up some drinks, but those details were left mysterious as well.

It had also been known that Aykroyd would be heading to a bar on the north side of Fredericton to play with the Downtown Blues Band. When Aykroyd rolled up in his tour bus to the SUB shortly after midnight on the big night, there were less than two hours left until last call, leaving many to believe he had already come from the north side.

This was not the case, however; after a few moments of signing autographs and taking photos, the 'Soul Man' Dan Aykroyd gave a minute-and-a-half long speech touting students as the future of our great country.

After telling these students to try his new wine products and Patrón Tequila—in moderation, so they could drink them again another day—Aykroyd took off into the night to make his appointment with the Downtown Blues Band.

Matt Harris, Manager of the College Hill Social Club, says that though Aykroyd's visit was brief, he respects his busy schedule.

"Of course, I would have rather seen him in for the entire evening," says Harris. "To get him behind the bar and hang out would have been awesome, but we also recognize the fact that he's a busy individual with a lot of commitments, and we appreciate the fact that



Christian Haggood / The Brunswickan

Dan Aykroyd signs bottles of his wine the next day at the Prospect Street Alcool NB Liquor store.

he came in."

Harris says that many Social Club members approached him after Aykroyd's visit to express their enjoyment.

"He was friendly, he signed autographs—I had several customers come up to me saying that he had signed their [DVDs] exactly as they wanted."

Some students, however, believed that his stay was shorter than they would have liked.

"I was very excited to see Dan Aykroyd because I'm a big movie fan," says third-year Multimedia student Greg Melanson. "I was definitely expecting him to be there longer."

"I think it's reasonable that some people would be disappointed that they didn't have more of Mr. Aykroyd's time," says Harris. "But I think it's important we also recognize the fact that the guy has been on a zillion stops and is obviously very busy and has a lot of requirements on his time, so he has to spread himself around. I hope everyone enjoyed him being there and had a good time."

"And," says Harris, "there's rumour that he may be back in September."

Melanson says that he eventually understood that Aykroyd had previous

time commitments.

"I didn't know beforehand that he had to go off to the north side, so in retrospect, I think he gave us more than he needed to," explains Melanson.

Harris got wind of Aykroyd's December tour through the product representative he deals with.

"It was offered up to us, and we were asked if we would like to have him make an appearance. We said, 'It's Dan Aykroyd, of course.'"

There were no specifics given however, of what time on December 8 he would arrive, nor how long he would be staying.

Aykroyd was not the only familiar face to enter the Social Club that night. Premier Shawn Graham was first in line in his entourage. Harris says the Social Club is familiar territory for Graham.

"Shawn Graham is an old Social Clubber from the old days, so I wasn't surprised. Shawn went to UNB... He used to frequent the Club, and I kind of know Shawn, anyway. That was a good surprise. He was a good customer."

The Social Club's first event of the term is a launch of Pumphouse Blueberry Ale draught, on Thursday January 10.

One on one with Mansbridge

The Brunswickan's Tony von Richter sits down to talk with Peter Mansbridge about his life and career

by Tony von Richter

In nearly 20 years of hosting 'The National' on CBC, Peter Mansbridge has become one of Canada's most prominent and successful journalists, winning countless awards and being known across the world for his efforts.

Mansbridge began his career in a

ing, did a stint in Washington and one in London, and then in 1988 got offered the top job and that was that.

B: What are some of the best and worst aspects of your job? What about the long days?

M: Yeah, although that's never really bothered me, you know what it's like in this business that once you start doing it you just kind of expect it and you find yourself wanting to do it. It's crazy.

The best aspect is that it changes all the time, it doesn't get boring because you're meeting new people and you're dealing with new issues so you're always learning something. The worst aspect I guess probably is the time issue and the impact it has on the rest of your life.

So that can be something you have to monitor and be careful about. But really, I look back on my time and it's hard to complain about anything. I still kind of go 'They pay me for this!'

B: You didn't go to university and came right out of school to start work-

gone back to China since Mao was alive so I've seen a lot of change there. But Afghanistan and Iraq, both which I've been to since 9/11, are pretty heavy-duty places to go to, they've had a real impact on me.

B: So what would you say was the biggest story you've ever covered?

M: 9/11. Not because other stories haven't had a greater impact on the world but because that one happened in front of the cameras. There was no doubt about what happened. I was on air for 44 hours straight so it's hard to forget those kind of days, but it really is separate from almost every other big story I've ever covered, it's in an area of its own.

B: With technology rapidly changing obviously social networking, digital media, those types of things being very big, what do you see as the future of the news business?

M: The citizen journalist is having a huge impact on professional journalism



Special to The Brunswickan

Peter Mansbridge, host of CBC's 'The National', was the keynote speaker for the CIBC UNB Business Plan Competition.

manner straight out of a Hollywood movie as he was discovered by a CBC radio employee announcing flight information at the airport in Churchill, Manitoba and after being offered a job began his broadcasting career the very next day.

Just prior to the winter break, Mansbridge served as the keynote speaker of the CIBC UNB Business Plan Competition where we managed to sit down with him for a few minutes and conduct the following interview.

B: Why did you decide to get into journalism?

M: I found very quickly that I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed the concept of broadcasting, initially it was radio, but I loved telling stories. As you know, if you can successfully tell stories enough to make people interested than you've got a good head start on the business and it's all about telling relevant stories.

B: So how did you get from a small station in Churchill, Manitoba to being anchor of The National?

M: It does seem a little odd doesn't it? I can tell you that when I was in Churchill I had a dream that wound up in the chair I'm in now. I never shared that with anybody at the time 'cause they'd all think I was crazy. I was in Churchill for three years. I started a newscast, at first it was only a few minutes long, but by the end it was half an hour, every day. I did an open-line show there as well.

There was no TV in Churchill so there was never a question of moving to television, but after three years of telling stories from the north, that had an impact on Southern Canada I was offered a job in Winnipeg, in radio with CBC Winnipeg. So I moved to Winnipeg, within a year I was doing television, and then I started anchoring television specials like election nights and things like that. I continued to make a name for myself and was offered a job in 1975 as the national correspondent for The National in Saskatchewan.

I was there for a year and then moved to the parliamentary bureau in Ottawa and was the correspondent there for five years. After that I moved to Toronto and did sort of half-anchoring half report-

ing, so what do you think the role of the student press is in Canada?

M: It's an important one. It's not only a formative part of journalism. The two things that consistently over this whole time I've seen research and surveys into what's on Canadians' minds it's health care and education, consistently more important than anything else. And, where is the great education in journalism that's going on outside of university press? There isn't a lot, which isn't a good thing. All of us are usually trying to find ways to do a better job in that field but for the most part those are just excuses on our part. But, there is no excuse for university press not to be actively covering their beat, and aggressively covering it. Then it performs a function far beyond the university crowd.

B: You've said that your favourite interviews are regular people caught up in extraordinary events, but out of all the 'famous' people you've interviewed who was your favourite?

M: There really are a mix of them. Clinton was a fascinating interview to do, and I'm no Clinton fan, but I really enjoyed talking to him because he really could talk about anything and he was easy to talk to. If you had a basic understanding of stories he was quite willing to get into it, so Clinton was fun.

Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys, which was a band that was a big deal in my life as a kid. He's one of the great songwriters of the last half-century but is a total nutcase. Interviewing him was an incredible joy.

The Aga Khan I found fascinating to talk to at a time of tension between eastern and western religions. There's really kind of a mix. Bill Gates, Peter Monk, the kind of people who started out basically with nothing and became extremely successful and kind of effected the way all of us live. It's hard not to be interested in talking to people like that.

B: Obviously you've been all over the world, reporting The National from the rooftops of other countries. Which country was the most interesting?

M: Well, China and India simply because of their size and the impact they've had on the changing world, are constantly fascinating to me and I've

and there's good and bad to that, and I think the challenge for us is to try and marry the two in a such a way that it's going to produce more useful information for news consumers.

But, you know, things are changing so rapidly, for me it's not about what it was like 40 years ago when I started, it's what it was like ten years ago compared to today. I couldn't have imagined ten years ago that we'd be able to do things we're doing now, who knows what it will be like five or ten years from now, it's mind-boggling the rate of change.

B: Okay so to finish off how about some quick word associations?

Let's start with Steven Harper.

M: Very crafty politician.

B: Ron McLean.

M: Quickest ad-libber I've ever seen.

B: Brian Mulroney.

M: The story that keeps on giving.

B: Jean Chrétien.

M: He's the same as Harper, a very crafty politician, but in a different kind of way. At the core of it, the same. Very smart in terms of politics, what to say, what to do, at a particular time. Didn't always work, and leadership is defined not by how you handle the ordinary, it's how you handle the extraordinary. In both cases they've found out what that means. [Laughs]

B: George W. Bush.

M: Too easy to criticize. I'm always weary ... he became the President of the United States, he can't be totally stupid, because if he is the people are even stupider than he is, right?

B: George Stroumboulopoulos.

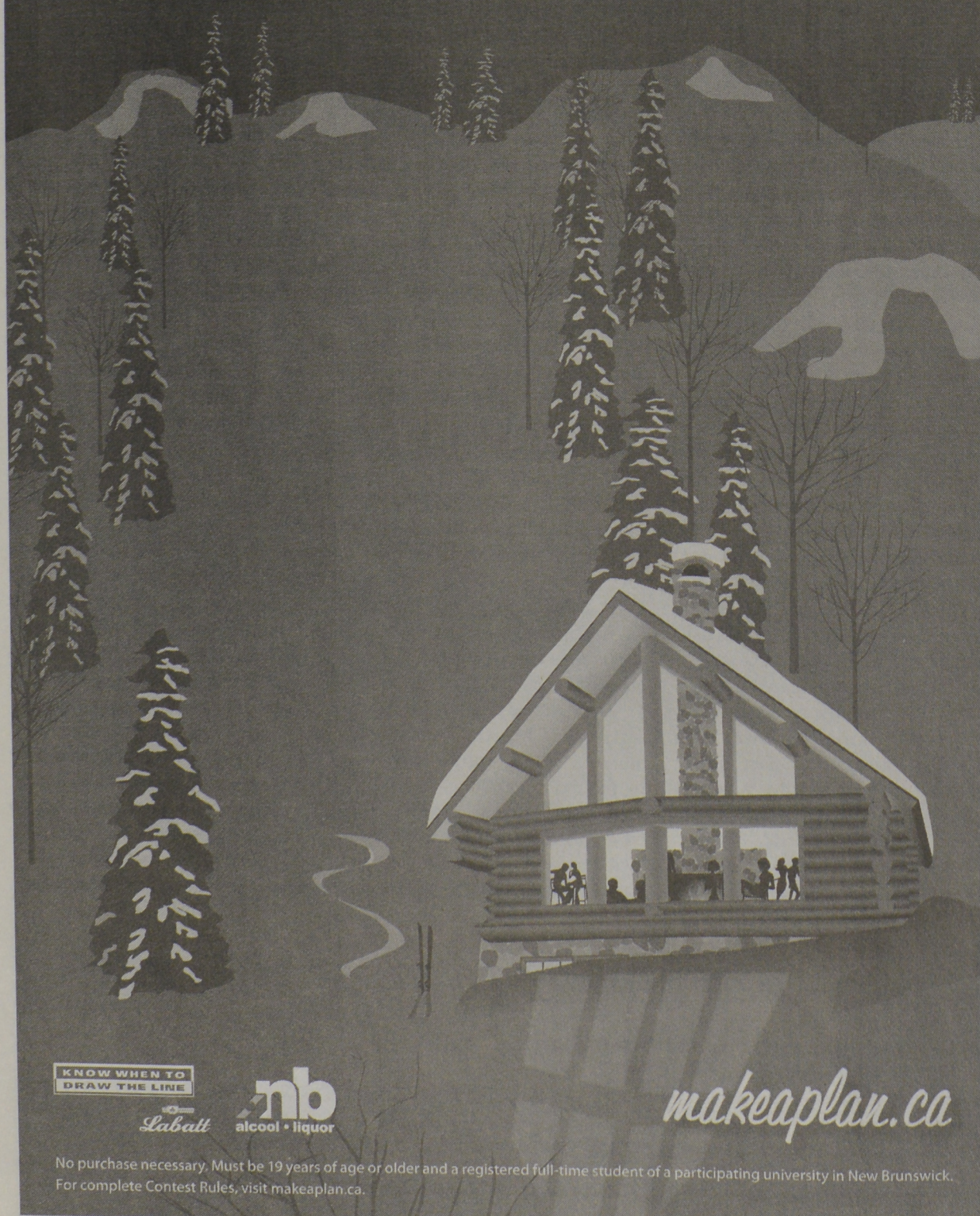
M: Whoever suggested that the CBC hire him is brilliant. It was me. [Laughs] No, George is the wave of the future for us, and is the best hire we've made in a long time. He's a very smart, very talented man. I think the opportunities are unlimited for him. It'll really come down to what he wants to do.

B: Last one, Lloyd Robertson.

M: Great guy. He's the first anchor I ever worked with. When I was in Churchill on radio he was a CBC radio anchor and was always being extremely kind and generous to me. He is an icon.

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