



The **P**ROBIAN ~ *January 2015 Edition*
 ~ Editors: Max Wood & Colin Stephenson ~



THE PROBUS CLUB OF PERTH
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 Probuss meets the first
 Wednesday of each month,
 Sept. to June.

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Apropos

Crude oil has dropped to under \$50US a barrel, which is giving us some relief at the pumps even though gas prices have not fallen proportionally. Surprise! Surprise! We are told that the plummeting price of crude is due to a world glut of crude oil because OPEC cannot agree on production quotas and the US has become the second biggest producer of crude in the world as a result of controversial “fracking” procedures that extract crude oil from shale deposits. While cheap oil is a good thing when it comes to filling up your tank, crude oil is now trading at prices far below the cost of production in parts of Canada. So as long as crude oil remains under \$80/barrel, much of the Canadian production will be uneconomical and will slowly dry up as we become increasingly dependent on foreign sources; jobs are lost and the trade balance tanks.



We now live in a virtual global village in which the source of goods is dictated by the lowest price, regardless, it seems, of how the goods are produced. Yet we are physically, emotionally and economically tied to our immediate community. Men like Grover Lightford and Dennis Staples remind us of the vital importance of those ties. We cannot control the evolution of the virtual global village, but we can remember the importance of our immediate community when we shop for goods and services. Doing so just may help keep our beautiful home here more vital and secure.

(Apropos reflects the views of the Editors but not necessarily those of the Club.)

The “Quiet Persistence” of Dennis Staples



Those who braved the wind and extreme cold of Wednesday morning on January 7 were rewarded with a warm, captivating and informative oral presentation by former Smiths Falls mayor Dennis Staples.

In 1984 Dennis was serving as president of the Smiths Falls minor hockey association when he received a letter from the town of Smiths Falls about an arena payment that had been inadvertently overlooked. He was offended that he was sent an official letter instead of receiving a phone call asking for a new cheque, so he decided to confront the Town Treasurer with his complaint. The Treasurer was not in that day so confrontation was avoided, but Dennis decided then and there that he would run for council because he did not believe the citizens of Smiths Falls should be treated the way he had been treated in that instance.

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Dennis Staples.....continued

He ran a low budget campaign for councilor without financial backing, posters or campaign buttons. He recalls that his wife was running a store at the time and when a customer asked her where Dennis's campaign buttons were she crunched a staple out of her stapler and handed it to him. Dennis was there at the time and the customer looked at him quizzically remarking that it was only a staple. Dennis responded with his quick wit that his slogan was engraved in microscopic letters on the staple, and it read: "Stick with Staples". That one interaction got him a lot of free media attention and he was elected.

After 3 terms on council Dennis decided to run for mayor so he could get more involved in the issues affecting Smiths Falls. He was elected on his first attempt and held 9 consecutive terms as mayor. His 29 years in municipal politics were certainly not without challenges that would have made a lesser man throw up his hands in resignation. Smiths Falls was beset by many significant setbacks, including the closure of the Rideau Regional Centre, the Hershey Chocolate factory, the CPR train station, Stanley Tools and Zellers. In total more than 1,700 jobs were lost. But Dennis did not get depressed, he got to work to save those buildings and find ways to redevelop them. At the same time he worked with the provincial and federal governments and citizens groups to fund the construction of a new Seniors Activity Building, sewage treatment plant, water treatment plant, municipal arena and hospital expansion and redevelopment. There were many setbacks, but Dennis applied what he describes as "quiet persistence" to prevail and see each project to completion.

Meanwhile, Dennis bought the CPR train station from CPR for \$1.00 and worked with community groups to redevelop it into a community theatre, the Station Theatre. Joe Gallipeau, a residential housing developer in Smiths Falls, bought the 141-hectare Rideau Regional Centre site after a two-year wait. Gallipeau is working to develop it into an active senior retirement facility. The Stanley Tool building was bought by Metroland Media who created about 100 new jobs. The Zellers store was bought by Target, Smiths Falls being the only small Canadian town that Target has invested in. And the Hershey Chocolate factory was recently bought by Tweed, a licensed medical marijuana grower that has invested millions in the plant and has high hopes of creating many jobs there.

Dennis believes that his concentration on infrastructure development and refurbishment has instilled a new business confidence in Smiths Falls that has attracted, and will continue to attract, new investment. There are currently almost 1,000 new housing units under construction there, which bodes well for the future of the community.


Dennis says that he is "not a politician" and that certainly appears to be true. It was a good thing that Smiths Falls *stuck with Staples*. If only there were fewer politicians and more willing to serve like Dennis.

[\(To read related Perth Courier article ~ click here\)](#)



Ernie Trischuk thanking Dennis Staples

Management Team Notes

- A membership list is made available on an annual basis to help members stay in touch with one another. The latest list is now available in a secure area of our website and attached to the paper version. The username and password which you will need to access the list are contained in the email notification for this edition. Please note that the Membership List is protected by our [Privacy Policy](#). 
- Mary is seeking a volunteer to help with the organization of special events to replace Ted Glugosh, who is retiring ~ many thanks Ted.
- Jim Gilmour is looking for someone who would be interested in running for Vice-President next year. Please contact Jim at 613-259-2592.

Quote for the Month

"It has been said that arguing against globalization is like arguing against the laws of gravity." ~**Kofi Annan**

Doctor Grover Lightford – 90+ Club Inductee



Grover receiving certificate from Jean

Dr. Grover Lightford amused and informed us with a brief review of his colourful life and illustrious career on a cold and blustery morning that was only made bearable by the brilliant sunshine. His humble and humour-loving nature were amply demonstrated as he feigned violin playing, followed by thumb twiddling, during his tongue-in-cheek introduction by Bruce Gourley to induct Dr. Lightford into the Probus over-90 club. Bruce described Dr. Lightford as a dentist with “soft hands” who would actually make voluntary house calls to needy patients.

Grover was born in 1924 in Brockville, though his family was rooted in Perth. His grandfather, Bert Lightford, was lured to Perth by owners of the Perth Shoe Company which needed reform and revitalization. Bert accomplished that task and left Perth in 1916, but left behind his son Norman who attended Perth Collegiate Institute and married a local farm girl after graduation. Norman worked for Laing Company in Brockville, which made evaporated and condensed milk until it was bought out by Nestlé. Nestlé moved the Lightfords to Toronto, but Norman tired of city life and moved his family back to Perth after 5 years in Toronto. Grover was reluctant to leave school and friends in Toronto and opposed his father’s decision to move back to Perth, but once they were settled here Grover fell in love with the area.

Grover attended public school in Perth and graduated from Perth Collegiate. He intended to join the Air Force, but he contracted nephritis and his dreams of becoming a fighter pilot were dashed, though he did learn to fly airplanes later in life. Since he could not serve in the military, Grover decided to follow his brother into dentistry and attended the University of Toronto to obtain his Doctor of Dentistry.

While at University of Toronto he was involved in the student parliament, wrote the lyrics for the annual student musical production and served as president of Sigma Chi fraternity in his senior year. Grover graduated in 1949 and set up his family dentistry practice in Perth. In 1954 he married Jean Moncrieff, a registered nurse. The Lightford’s had six children, twin daughters Susan and Anne followed by another daughter Lynn, a son Norman and two more daughters, Elizabeth and Mary. Unfortunately, Jean died during cardiac surgery in 1974 and Grover was left to raise the 6 children on his own while continuing his busy dental practice.

In 1987 Grover sold his dentistry practice to Dr. Kevin Orser, which permitted him to concentrate on the development of BurgessWood, a project that was rooted in his purchase of 209 acres on the shore of Otty Lake from Anna McLaren in 1969 and approval in 1983 by the Township of Grover’s plan to develop BurgessWood. His environmentally sound plan resulted in a development of 400 acres divided into 200 acres of residential lots and 200 acres of communal land that includes over 4,000 feet of Otty lake shoreline, founding a community that continues to thrive.

It is impractical to list all of Grover’s significant contributions to this community. However to mention a few, Grover served as: a founding member of Probus Perth; a member of the Board of Governors of the Ontario Dental Association; 10 years as a Trustee of the Perth School Board; president of the Perth Rotary Club; and, president of the Perth Curling Club. It is difficult to imagine the will and energy of a man with so many talents and such unselfish spirit. Thank you Grover for sharing a bit of information about your productive and inspiring life.



Grover “plays the fiddle” while Bruce waxes poetic



Mike Else with a (serious) chuckle



Bill Kennedy reciting the poem "Daddy's Girl" submitted by Gus Quattrocci

Special Future Events



- **January 24** - Robbie Burns Dinner & Dance Perth Legion. Dinner is prime rib. Tickets are \$25 and 36 people have signed up.
- **April 9** – Dinner / Theatre event – [Salvage Shop](#) at the Studio Theatre – tentative, details to come.
- **May 27** – Gananoque Playhouse to see "[CLOSER THAN EVER](#)" is an award-winning "how-to" manual for the middle aged – told entirely through song! – more details to follow.

Speakers' Corner



Our speaker on February 4th will be **Terrance Dickinson**, who will give a "Tour of the Universe". In this highly illustrated presentation, astronomy author Terence Dickinson reveals the grandeur of the universe as seen in his own celestial photography and in the magnificent images taken by the world's largest telescopes. The speaker is a member of the Order of Canada, editor of SkyNews, Canada's national astronomy magazine, the author of 15 astronomy books and is a former staff astronomer at the McLaughlin Planetarium of the Royal Ontario Museum. For a sneak preview check out [Nightwatch](#).

Lunch After February Meeting

To be held at the Michael's Restaurant
110 Gore Street, Perth



New members welcomed at the January meeting

(LtoR) Jean Crowley (President), Arlene Dickson, Stewart Sweet, Don McDiarmid (Membership Director)