



THE PROBUS CLUB OF PERTH

P. O. Box 20131,
Perth, Ontario
K7H 3M6

www.probusperth.ca

Probus meets the first
Wednesday of each month,
Sept. to June.

President

Bill Kennedy
613-207-0037

[email](#)

Past President

Jean Crowley
613-267-3306

[email](#)

Vice President

Richard Thomson
613-466-0557

Secretary

David Allcock
613-706-3562

Treasurer

Don Sherwin
613-264-0759

Program

David Farquharson
613-267-2231

[email](#)

Gardner Church
613-267-1842

Brian O'Connor
613-264-9187

Derek Cooke
613-279-1217

Valerie Stephenson-Gray
613-326-0757

Special Events

Mary Kilgour
613-264-0024

Gail Read
613-464-3063

Membership

Don McDiarmid
613-264-8590

Newsletter Editors

Colin Stephenson
613-264-2609

Max Wood
613-464-1172

Webmaster

Colin Stephenson
613-264-2609

[email](#)

Apropos

We are in the throes of winter, our dollar is in the tank and inflation is rising yet again. Still we are most fortunate to be experiencing a beautiful and mild winter, one of the nicest ones we have seen in years. And even though it is not an ideal time for snow birding, there are so many enjoyable things to do here at this time of year. For outdoor types, there is skating, snowshoeing and cross country or downhill skiing. It is amazing how warm -10 can feel when you are properly dressed and burning a few calories on your favorite outdoor activity. Although our dollar may be worth a whole lot less in foreign countries it is still at par here at home, which makes it the perfect time for dinner out at a local restaurant; getting out to a winter festival; a weekend getaway to someplace nearby that you have not visited for too long, or never visited at all; a day at a local spa, a stroll through a local gallery, or gift shop, or any place else that holds your interest. You will enjoy it, local business will certainly appreciate it and be nourished by it, and our privileged life in this fabulous community will be further sustained.

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

Kevin Gray on the French and Indian War and the Battle of the Plains of Abraham



Dressed in an historically accurate uniform of a British Grenadier of the 1750's, replete with bayonette, sword and brass grenade fuse box, Kevin Gray, owner of the Gallery on Gore, captivated us with an oral account of the French and Indian War and the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

As recounted by Kevin, by 1750 both the French and English had substantial holdings in North America but pursued radically different philosophies respecting how they exploited the "New World". The French, with only about 50,000 people scattered along the St. Lawrence, Great Lakes, and down the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, asserted control through their Indian allies and were chiefly interested in the fur trade. The English, with about 1,000,000 people along the Atlantic seaboard, were mainly interested in displacing the Indians, settling the land, farming and commercializing the natural resources.

Continued on Page 2

Battle of the Plains of Abraham.....continued

The English appetite for land and trade with the Indians was pushing the frontier westward, but the French presence stood in their way. Feeling the pressure of English colonial expansion, in 1753 the French started building forts in the Ohio Valley to assert their territorial claims. Fearing a loss of valuable opportunity and room for expansion, the Virginia colony sent 21-year old Major George Washington and a handful of volunteers to order the French to withdraw and cease their fort construction. Washington was greeted cordially when he reached Fort LeBouef and was invited in for dinner, but his demand that the French leave the Ohio Valley was respectfully declined. A year later Major Washington returned to the area and ambushed a French scouting party, killing the commander and most of the party. That ambush is said to be the spark that ignited the war.

Over the next three years the British suffered a number of significant losses in North America, mostly due to lack of organization and inexperience with Indian fighting techniques, but by 1757 the French forces in North America were becoming poorly supplied because France was concentrating its forces against Prussia and its allies on the European front of the war.

After a reorganization of British command in North America, in 1758 a major assault was launched by the British against the Fortress of Louisbourg, a French stronghold at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. The British fleet outnumbered the Louisbourg French squadron 5 to 1, and partly due to a competent land attack orchestrated by brigadier James Wolfe, Louisbourg fell to the British on July 29, 1758.

The fall of Louisbourg opened the St. Lawrence to the British Navy and in 1759 two hundred vessels carrying 10,000 men under the command of 31-year old, now General, Wolfe set sail from Halifax and sailed up the St. Lawrence to Quebec City, where General Montcalm protected the French colony with 12,000 men entrenched along the high bluffs between the Montmorency River and Quebec City. Wolfe's arrival was unopposed, and Montcalm refused to leave his entrenchment to engage him despite Wolfe's destruction of local farms and villages in a failed attempt to draw Montcalm into battle.

On July 10, 1759 Wolfe set up camp on the eastern banks of the mouth of the Montmorency River and on July 31, 1759 he launched a poorly coordinated attack on the opposite shore of the Montmorency. This attack turned out to be a disaster for Wolfe. The ascent to the French troops was too steep and the French troops firing from above were well protected. However, total disaster was averted when a rain storm wet the gun powder of both sides and the battle prematurely ended before most of the British troops even arrived at the battle scene. Still the British lost over 200 men to gun shots while the French lost only a handful to British cannon fire.

All through August of 1759 Wolfe was bedridden with illness and his brigadiers went upriver to reconnoiter and pillage.

Nonetheless, in September when Wolfe had recovered enough to be up and about, he spied a narrow path ascending from the St. Lawrence to the Plains of Abraham, relatively flat ground west of Quebec City. In spite of being without the support of his brigadiers, he decided to attack Montcalm's forces, and on the night of September 12 he started ferrying his troops across the St. Lawrence under cover of darkness. An advance party scaled the path and overtook a guard post at the top, which opened the ascent to Wolfe's troops. By the morning of the 13th Wolfe had his troops arrayed across the Plains of Abraham, standing one arm's length apart and two deep in a straight line that stretched a mile. This, of course, cut Montcalm's supply line to Quebec City and he was forced to counter.

At 10 a.m. Montcalm, who had led several successful campaigns on the continent, organized a hasty attack using French infantry troops and Canadian militiamen rallied from the trenches. However, he made several tactical errors. Rather than disperse his troops as Wolfe had done, he led them in a close group. Rather than separate the infantry from the militiamen, he let them all advance together. And, rather than wait for close engagement where their muzzle loaded guns would have been effective, he let them begin firing at 100 yards from Wolfe's troops.

Wolfe, however, striding before his troops and oblivious to the French fusillade, refused to let his troops return fire until the enemy was within 40 paces.

As the French troops advanced the militiamen would fall to the ground to reload each time they fired, as they had learned to do from the Indians. This disoriented and confused the infantry soldiers and contributed to disorder. If a British soldier fell, there was another behind him so it appeared to the French troops as if their fire was ineffective. When the forefront of the French force was within 40 paces, Wolfe gave the order to fire. Each British gun was loaded with two 1 ¼ ounce lead balls. The accuracy of the British guns was poor, but at 40 yards it did not matter. While the gun smoke filled the air the British troops reloaded, and when the gun smoke cleared they fired their second volley. By 10:10 a.m. the battle was essentially over. Both Wolfe and Montcalm were fatally wounded, but Wolfe had broken French control of the gateway to the interior of North America.

To read a much more thorough and engaging historical fiction account of this period, pick up a copy of Kevin's novel "Where the River Narrows", available from Kevin for \$25.00 at the Gallery on Gore, 92 Gore Street. While you are there you also will see lots of beautiful art. Kevin's book is also available from Volumes Direct by clicking here (<http://www.volumesdirect.com/detail.aspx?ID=2161>).

Thank you, Kevin for this very interesting and informative presentation.

Personal Profile ~ Bill Michie

Bill Michie was born in Ottawa but his family moved to Windsor when he was 5 and to Don Mills in Toronto when he was 12. He spent the next 38 years in different locations within the Toronto area.

Bill became very interested in world affairs and student politics during high school and led activities like the Model UN and Mock Parliament, and was elected to be the first Chairperson of a North York Inter-Collegiate Student Council representing over 20 schools and 25,000 students. The North York Board even hired a part-time secretary to work for him, which is inconceivable today but was not unusual in the 1960's.



After high school, Bill attended Glendon College in Toronto, majoring in History and Political Science with a minor in Economics. At Glendon he served as a student member of the Faculty Council. He completed a Masters degree at Carleton University, planning to pursue a career as a university professor. Although he was offered admission to doctoral programs at Carleton and the University of Toronto, Bill decided to enroll in a Bachelor of Education program and became a high school teacher in North York instead.

Within weeks of starting his first teaching job, the teachers started a strike that lasted until mid-January. Although Bill later served one term as Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation Branch President, he became thoroughly frustrated with the conflict between the roles of professional teacher and union member. However, he loved teaching Canadian Government and Law to his class of Grade 9 Basic-level students, and avows that he learned as much from his students as they learned from him.

As a result of declining enrolment and union policy, Bill was bumped from his teaching position when a more senior teacher was laid off. Although he managed to find a position at another school, he began taking night courses at York University to obtain a Business Management certification. In his new school Bill taught Economics but would have been forced to teach accounting the following year, so he left teaching in 1981 to pursue a career in Human Resources.

Bill was hired by Johnson Controls as a Personnel Officer, focussing on employee training and on-campus recruitment. His teaching experience facilitated the transition and he also worked on certification in Human Resources Management through a program at the University of Toronto, followed by a certification in Employee Benefits at Humber College.

In 1988 Bill left to take a position as Human Resources Manager at FCI Canada, a manufacturer of electrical and

electronic connectors based in the Toronto area. While at FCI he also served on the executive of the Scarborough and Markham HR Associations, and on a Training Advisory Committee for Centennial College. In 2001, he was promoted to Director of HR for FCI's Electrical Division, responsible for headquarters staff, sales staff and employees at five manufacturing plants in the US, Canada and Mexico. His promotion required a move to New Hampshire, where he and his wife bought a country home just west of Concord. However, the 9-11 tragedy happened three weeks after they arrived in Concord, and over the next couple of years the cultural environment of the United States changed for the worse. Bill and his wife were "aliens" in the US, and it never felt like home to them. Furthermore, FCI's business was suffering from offshore competition, and Bill began spending much of his time in Toluca, Mexico, to transfer some major operations there. By 2006, Bill began to explore opportunities back in Canada and soon found a position as Manager of HR for DRS Technologies in Carleton Place. By the end of the year, they had sold their house in New Hampshire and moved back home to the Ottawa Valley where they now live in Drummond North Elmsley.

Bill worked full-time at DRS until late in 2013, when he combined part-time work with partial retirement, and continues to work three days a month.

Thank you, Bill. It is great to have you in Probus!

Personal Profile ~ Rob Leonard

Rob Leonard was born in Reading, England, in 1940. Shortly after his birth, his mother became ill and his father was inducted into the British army, so Rob was cared for by various relatives until his father's return in 1944 when they moved to the town of Weston-Super-Mare on the coast in Somerset.

After a year of high school, Rob transferred to technical college to pursue his interest in everything mechanical. Following three years of technical college he moved on to a 5 year engineering apprenticeship at the Electronic Development division of EMI. During the first four years as an apprentice, he spent one day a week working on academic credentials and four days a week getting practical experience in one of EMI's shops or departments, doing a six month rotation in each. The fifth year he was required to specialize in the area that most interested him, and Rob chose to specialize in the design office where he continued to work as a draftsman after completing his apprenticeship in 1961.



Rob Leonard.....continued

Two years later he married Liz, who is Welsh and refers to their union as a “mixed marriage”. In June of 1964 they decided to immigrate to Canada and settled in the West Island of Montreal, where Rob immediately found a job as a draftsman with Central Dynamics in Pointe Claire. The next year a fellow EMI apprentice and his wife decided to make the same move and when his friend found a better paying job at CAE in St. Laurent, Rob left Central Dynamics and moved to CAE working on aircraft flight simulators.

After about 18 months at CAE, Rob was asked to join the engineering department at Air Canada where he worked on the installation of flight data recorders, which were being made mandatory on all commercial planes. Once the work on flight data recorders was completed, Rob became involved in aircraft interiors. Three years later he left the engineering department and joined In-Flight Service, where he worked on galleys and food service equipment. Shortly thereafter Rob received the first of a number of promotions that led to responsibility for almost everything that a passenger experienced onboard an Air Canada plane. He held that responsibility for the next 20 years. He also served as the aircraft interior specialist on the team responsible for selecting new aircraft for the Air Canada fleet.

After 25 years at Air Canada, Rob left to spend eight years helping airlines in Europe and Africa with their duty-free programs, as well as assisting Canadian border duty-free stores. He then returned to engineering and worked as Marketing Director for an aircraft maintenance company at Mirabel Airport until he retired in late 2002.

Since Rob and Liz both grew up by the sea, they always wanted to return to a life by the water. So once they had both retired, they set about looking for waterfront property. Their twins, Nick and Sarah, were both married and living in Ottawa, so they began property searching in Eastern Ontario and spent two years searching a wide area that extended as far from Ottawa as Gananoque and Calabogie until they finally found a small one bedroom house on the southeast shore of Mississippi Big Lake. They added a large extension to make the house fit their needs and have lived there happily ever since. They have now celebrated 52 happy years of “mixed marriage”, thoroughly enjoy Perth for its beauty and friendly people, and appreciate the wonderful hospital which has served them both.

Thank you, Rob, and welcome to Probus!

Lunch After February Meeting


To be held at the Golden Arrow Restaurant, 71 Foster Street, Perth



Quote for the Month

We cannot stop the winter or the summer from coming. We cannot stop the spring or the fall or make them other than they are. They are gifts from the universe that we cannot refuse. But we can choose what we will contribute to life when each arrives. - Gary Zukav

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](#). 
 - We are still searching for someone who would be willing to coordinate transportation for those members who would appreciate a ride to Probus meetings. Please contact any Management Team member if you are willing to take on this role.
 - We are searching for someone who would be willing to act as co-editor of the Probian and audio-visual resource for the monthly meetings to replace Colin Stephenson who has been involved for many years. Please contact Colin if you are interested.
-

Speakers' Corner

Our speaker on February 3rd will **Sturla Sigurjónsson**, Iceland's Ambassador to Canada, who will give an address entitled “Mutual Interests in the North: Iceland and Canada in the 21st Century,” about the shared political and economic interests of Iceland and Canada.

Ties between Canada and Iceland go back over a thousand years to Leif Eriksson's landing on the coast of Newfoundland. Today in Canada, there are almost 100,000 people with some Icelandic heritage.

Apart from these historic links, Canada and Iceland share a mutual interest in the development of the North, a key initiative of the federal government of Canada.”



Special Events

- **March 31** – Dinner at [Maximillian's](#), 99 Gore St. E, Perth, followed by “[Self Help](#)” at the Studio Theatre. Self Help is described as a “sensational rollicking farce” by Norm Foster and directed by David Parry. Details to come. Please sign up at the February meeting.
- **May 25** – Save the date for “[A Closer Walk With Patsy Cline](#)” at the 1000 Island Playhouse”. Gail Read has advised that she has made lunch arrangements at the [Riva Italian Restaurant](#), 45 King Street West Gananoque, at 12 noon. [Map](#). Participants will be able to order any item from the menu if our group is under 30ish in number. They do have a set gratuity of 18% which will be added to each bill and individual/couple bills are fine. She stresses that a 12 noon arrival time is important if we are to be at the theatre at 2 p.m. Further details to come, but you may sign up at the February meeting.
- **June 1** – Help celebrate our 20th Anniversary at a special meeting and luncheon at Timber Run. Stay tuned for details.



Dick Shaw our latest 90+ Club Inductee



At the January meeting, Dick Shaw was honoured by his induction into The Probus Perth 90+ Club. After a short biographical sketch, President Bill Kennedy presented him with a certificate welcoming him into the Club. Dick has been a member of Probus Perth since 1999 and is the 6th member of the club, which was started in January 2014.

New Members Welcomed



Geraldine Barr, Jean Fortier and Rick Stojak welcomed by President Bill Kennedy (L) and Don McDiarmid (R)

When Insults Had Class

"He had delusions of adequacy." - Walter Kerr

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." - Winston Churchill

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure." Clarence Darrow

Lunch at the Legion After January Meeting



Robbie Burns Dinner Dance
~ January 23rd at the Perth Legion

And as they say, a good time was had by all.

