



# The Probian

## January 2020 edition

Probus Club of Perth

### *A New Year reflection.*

*In this increasingly polarized world, where people seem to go out of their way to conjure up differentiating causes around which to rally, it is all the more rewarding to find a haven of peace and fellowship.*

*Our club membership boasts a huge diversity of backgrounds and, no doubt, beliefs and opinions. Nonetheless, we manage to bring together retirees from many medical disciplines, politicians, educators, researchers, engineers, business executives, diplomats, military officers, small business owners, pilots, lawyers and many more, at about twenty peaceful, informative and highly enjoyable meetings and special events each year.*

*I look forward to this continuing in 2020 and beyond and would like to thank every member of the club for making this possible. Everyone plays their part.*

*Rob Leonard*

*Editor*

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### **February Presentation:**

Many members will remember local author and historian John McKenty from his May 2018 "Stewart Park Festival" presentation to the club.

Born in Peterborough and with over 30 years of education experience, John retired as high school principle in 2004. For the last 10 years he has chaired the Stewart Park Festival organisation and was awarded the Perth Medal in 2018 for his contributions to the community.

John's latest book, "The life and times of Joe Perkins" will form the basis of his February presentation.

Through many interviews with Perkins family members and others from the community, including many Probians, John has brought together many stories of this fascinating and controversial local character.

This will surely be a presentation not to be missed!

*Lunch after the February 05th meeting will be at Mex & Co.55 Gore St. East*

## Coming events:

### January 25<sup>th</sup>

#### **Robbie Burns Dinner Dance**

To be held at the Legion.

Cocktails at 6pm, programme at 6.45pm and

**Prime Rib** dinner at 7pm.

*Tickets at \$30 available from Mary.*

### February 12<sup>th</sup>

Tour of Lanark Lifestyles retirement community, at 240 Gore Street East. Meet at 1pm.

*Sign up at the February 05<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

### February 27<sup>th</sup>

#### **Dinner Theatre**

Dinner at Fiddleheads at 5pm, followed by Studio Theatre's presentation of

**"Marion Bridge"**.

*Tickets will be on sale at the February 05<sup>th</sup> meeting, at \$17 each.*

### April 23<sup>rd</sup>

Save the date.

A dinner theatre is being arranged.

### May

A coach trip into Ottawa to tour the temporary Senate and Commons facilities on Parliament Hill is in the planning stages, with a possible date of Friday May 22<sup>nd</sup>

*More details to follow.*

### May 27<sup>th</sup>

Hosted by Probus Club of Cornwall and area, **"Spring Fling 2020"** will be at the Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Avenue, Cornwall.

*More details to follow.*

### June 03<sup>rd</sup>

Our final meeting before the summer break will be held at **The Opinicon** resort at Chaffeys Lock on the Rideau Canal.

*More details to follow.*

### June 17<sup>th</sup>

Our annual trip to the 1000 Island Playhouse. This year the production is **"Back in '59"**.

Lunch will be at Muskie Jake's in the Gananoque Inn, walking distance from the theatre.

As the show will not finish until shortly before 5pm, individual dinner reservations at Riva or other restaurants are also feasible.

*Tickets to the theatre will be sold in the spring.*

### September.

An overnight trip is being investigated, with the Niagara Region and the Muskokas as possible destinations.

Both offer many diversions for our enjoyment, from wine tours and the Shaw Festival in Niagara to Steamboat tours and Harvest Festivals in the Muskokas.

*In order to gauge the level of interest for such a trip, club members' input will be sought through an on-line survey. Please be sure to help our Social Committee by making your voice heard.*

### December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mark the date for the **Christmas Party**, which will again be held at the Civitan Hall.

DJ, Simon Clark has already been booked for the event!

## Membership:



Club President, Liz Leonard, welcomes new members George Braithwaite and Sharon Carroll.

We have now reached our membership cap of 205 and have established a waiting list.



**The latest members of our “Over 90’s club”.**

John Hauraney, Keith Pollard and Walter Baker prepare to cut the Birthday Cake that was presented to them during lunch at the Legion, following the January 08<sup>th</sup> meeting. Congratulations gentlemen!

We are proud to say that the club now includes seven members who are over 90.

### **“Membership List:**

A membership list will be made available to help members stay in touch with one another. It will be located in a private, secure area of the website. The password you will need to access the list is contained in the email notification for this issue. Please note that the Membership List is protected by our [Privacy Policy.](#)”

## January Presentation:



### "Rideau Community Health Services"

Chief Executive Officer, Michelle Bellows outlined the goals, the challenges being faced and the services being provided by RCHS.

As a part of the Ontario Government push to change the way health services are delivered, RCHS has the goal of bringing quality health care to everyone within their area of coverage. Their Strategic Plan can be found here:

[http://rideauchs.ca/index.php?option=com\\_docman&view=download&alias=1487-2017-2022-rchs-strategic-plan&category\\_slug=public-1&Itemid=383](http://rideauchs.ca/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=1487-2017-2022-rchs-strategic-plan&category_slug=public-1&Itemid=383)

With the well-known shortage of primary care physicians comes the problem of "unattached" people in need of care. RCHS is actively working on a number of fronts in an effort to connect those those seeking medical care to the services they need.

By working with Health Care Connect, RCHS has been able to markedly reduce the list of people in need of primary care.

NCHS also encourages connection to Nurse Practitioners. With the exception of treating particularly difficult cases, where a consultation with a physician would be required, Nurse Practitioners are qualified to undertake all the services normally provided by a Family Physician.

Virtual Care, with a Registered Nurse on site and a doctor "on screen" is another means through which care is reaching those in need. However, currently there is some confusion in this area, as the Government has recently changed the rules concerning billing for Virtual Care.

The Ontario Government is encouraging the establishment of Ontario Health Teams, each of which would bring together many disciplines in one cohesive unit.

Among those working together are Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacists, Dentists, Therapists, Rehabilitation specialists, Community health workers and patient navigators.

To date, across Ontario 31 Health Teams have applied to the Government for accreditation and 24, including 2 in Ottawa, have been processed. Lack of clarity from the Government is causing some difficulties, in that geographic alignment is encouraged, whereas community alignment would seem to be a more effective approach.

RCHS continues to work on the establishment of Health Teams within their area of coverage.

The RCHS Perth facility at 40 Sunset Boulevard offers the following services.

Lung Health, Diabetes education, Dietitian, Foot Care, Denturist, Social worker and Community Support,

Thank you Michelle, for a really informative and entertaining presentation and good luck with your challenges. We'll all benefit from your successes.



## Personal profile: Gary Smith

Gary's introduction to his story was to squash the myth that Diplomats must come from a privileged upbringing and have "silver spoons" firmly embedded in their background.

Although born in the Brown's line area of Western Toronto in 1944, Gary spent his early years in Penetanguishene, living near his maternal grandparents.

Unable to find work there, Gary's father returned to Toronto, leaving his mother working hard at a number of jobs in order to support Gary and his sister Carol. In 1957 the siblings moved back to Toronto to live with their father in his mother's home.

Gary attended Earl Grey Senior public school near the Danforth for grades seven and eight, then went on to Riverdale Collegiate, despite a teacher's assessment that he was better suited to a more modest learning establishment!

Luckily, as a young boy Gary had an inquiring mind and so started to notice and take an interest in the wider world; checking an atlas to find locations of place names he found on cereal box mini license plates, thinking about the headlines on the newspapers he delivered by wagon or sleigh and pondering on the social norms which prevented his Catholic neighbours from playing with him.

A series of fortuitous events and a chance encounter furnished him with the valuable skills and experiences which later helped propel him out of a neighbourhood where his peers were all bent on breaking windows, stealing and heading for jail

All grade 9 and 10 boys at Riverdale were required to serve in the school cadet corps of the Queens Own Rifles. Through this, Gary became a proficient shot and was awarded Best Cadet one year. His reward was to be presented with.....an engraved silver spoon!

At age 16 he became a part time militia member of the Q.O.R. and then the Governor General's horse guards where he could ride.

Two particular summer jobs helped with Gary's future career.

The first was serving as a riding instructor at at Camp Wahonowin, near Orillia, where his mother had secured a job as a cook. It was there that Gary was first exposed to the notion that everyone expected to go to university, unlike his acquaintances on the Danforth!

The second was selling womens' shoes in Toronto, which taught the value of the art of Diplomacy as he convinced ladies to try the size which fit rather than the smaller size they desired.

1964 saw the government introduce student loans, enabling Gary to go to York University where he blossomed on a rich diet of politics, history and economics.

A chance meeting with the recruitment team looking for students to work at the Ontario pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal, led to the summer of a lifetime and to lasting friendships. The Expo 67 exposure to the world was also invaluable in his successful application to join External Affairs as a Foreign Service officer, a coveted and hard to obtain position.

1968 saw major life events!

- Graduation from a four year Honours program at York.
- The start of Gary's career with External Affairs.
- His marriage to the beautiful Laurielle Chabeaux, a primary school teacher, hot shot tennis player and the love of his life! (The Department of External Affairs pronounced the security approval of the marriage only one day before the wedding!)
- August 20th, 1968, on the Soviet Desk, Gary had his first diplomatic test of fire when the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia and Canada needed to respond!
- After a ten month, intense Russian language course for Gary and Laurielle, came a posting to the Canadian Embassy in Moscow. There they fought off the KGB, worked on cultural and sports exchanges (including the 1972 Hockey Summit Series) in an effort to increase mutual understanding and reduce the risk of war! (No pressure then! *L.L.*)
- Tatiana, their daughter was born that year, with Baby Eric following in 1976

Gary's further overseas assignments and experiences included:

- Canada's Representative to the NATO political committee in Brussels, dealing inter alia with the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan 1979.
- Number two at the Canadian Embassy in Israel during the war in Lebanon.
- Deputy high Commissioner in India during a period of terrorism associated with Sikh separatism.
- Germany as Minister at the Embassy when the Berlin Wall came down, East and West Germany united and we withdrew our substantial army and air force units, which had been in Germany for more than forty years.
- Indonesia as Ambassador, with the collapse of the Suharto regime, the associated rioting and bloodshed which led to the evacuation of Canadian citizens, including Gary's family, who were in harm's way. Gary also dealt with the small matter of the Bre-X gold scandal!

While in Ottawa as Director of Arms Control and Disarmament, Gary travelled to 16 countries with Pierre Elliott Trudeau as part of his 1983/84 International Peace Initiative.

1994 As Director-General for Asia, he helped organize the first Trade Team Canada visit to China led by PM Jean Chretien, with 9 Provincial Premiers and 400 Canadian Business persons.

1995/6 academic year, was sent as a Fellow to Harvard University's Centre for International Affairs, with a group of International diplomats and military officers to do research and assist students and professors.

1998 after 30 years service (20 of those abroad) Gary left the Foreign Service to become Vice President (Advancement) at York University.

Retirement in 2002 saw Gary and Laurielle build a home in Central Frontenac...soon he was elected to Municipal Government!

2005 produced a devastating stage 4 ovarian cancer diagnosis, together with the sentence of only 6 months to live. Laurielle's reaction was to emphasise their wonderful life together, and commence a miraculous and positive battle. She survived for more than ten years and between surgeries, chemo and radiation they were able to travel, play golf and spend time with Tatiana and their granddaughter Maya, making the most of their every day.

In 2013, a move into Perth, a town they loved for its "Goldilocks" qualities. Not too big etc.

Gary continues to be a board member of the Retired Ambassadors' Association in Ottawa, and has written chapters in two books of Diplomatic Stories, "Declassified" and "Not Mentioned in Dispatches". A contract for a full length book on living in Cold War Moscow and the '72 Summit Series has just been signed with a Canadian Publisher

We are glad that Gary also joined Probus and is still entertaining us with his delivery of the many engaging stories of his life and long career.

Thank you Gary!

Written by Liz Leonard

### **A call for website assistance:**

Our long-standing web-master, Colin Stephenson, is looking for any members with website maintenance experience who would like to help out with the club's website.

Initially all that is needed is a back-up, but eventually Colin would like to retire from the role and hand over the responsibility completely.

Please speak to Colin or any member of the Management Team if you feel that you'd like to help.

### **A Great Opportunity to Serve Probus Club of Perth:**

How about joining the dynamic Management Team of the Perth Probus Club for the fall of 2020!

The Perth Probus Club is vibrant, fun and successful with a strong management team of volunteers contributing significantly to this success. We are seeking an interested member who would consider joining the Management Team for 2020 as the Vice President.

This position assists the President and provides backup as needed. The time demands are minimal with approximately 6 bi-monthly management team meetings, going to 1 to 2 District meetings (1 day each) with the President, estimating monthly meeting attendance and other duties that may be assigned.

There is the expectation and hope that the VP will stand for President the following year and stay on the executive for the subsequent year as Past President. The Past President chairs the committee to recruit for the management team changes and provides advice and assistance to the President.

We hope you will give this serious consideration. Please contact Past President, Craig Greenwood, President Liz Leonard or any member of the Management Team if you have any questions and to express your interest!

### **Peter Craske**

We are saddened to note the passing of Peter Craske.

A member of our esteemed 90+ Club, Peter moved to Ottawa a few years ago but remained a member of Probus Perth, which he joined in 2002 and did not want to give up. Many will remember how Peter would bring his accordion on trips and generously play it for the enjoyment of those in attendance.

He will be sadly missed and our sympathies go out to his family.

## Notes:

### **Prospective members**

*Now that the club has reached its membership cap of 205, current members are asked to advise anyone interested in joining that, should they apply, their applications would be added to the waiting list.*

*A fillable membership application form is available on the club website.*

*The completed form can either be e-mailed or mailed to the club, but e-mailing is the recommended option.*

*Once the club receives the completed form the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list.*

### **Lapse of membership**

*Also related to the membership cap having been reached, any members planning to leave the area or who do not wish to continue with the club for any other reason, are asked to advise any member of the Management Team. This would allow their place to be taken by a prospective member from the waiting list.*

### **Special Event no-shows**

*Members who find they cannot attend a Special Event to which they have committed, are asked to be sure to advise Mary or Gail.*

*Also, note that tickets to special events will no longer be provided on a "pay later" basis.*

### **Name badges.**

*Please remember to bring your name badge to meetings.*

Edited by Rob Leonard

The Perth Probus Club meets at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, 26 Beckwith Street,  
Perth on the first Wednesday of the month, September through June.

President: Liz Leonard (613) 267-9638

Further information on the club and contact details for the other members of the  
Management Team can be found at: [www.probusperth.ca/board.htm](http://www.probusperth.ca/board.htm)