



The **P**ROBIAN ~ *September 2014 Edition*
 ~ Editors: Max Wood & Colin Stephenson ~



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

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Apropos

The “lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer” have once more passed us by. The warm days of abundance are slipping away, but the insects will soon be gone and we will be surrounded by the glorious colours of autumn.

While West Africa struggles with Ebola, Ukraine and the Middle East are in turmoil, and so much more goes awry around the world by coincidence or design, we are fortunate to live in relative freedom, peace and harmony. We are indeed perhaps the most fortunate people in the world. Nonetheless, as we were reminded by our September speaker our fortunate position must not be taken for granted. If we remain complacent our position may be eroded away. Unlike our neighbors to the south, Canada still spends a lot less on the military than it spends on healthcare, but the cost of our involvement in NATO is rapidly spinning out of control. It’s time to let our representatives know that enough is enough. Our best defense is and always has been quiet diplomacy, not arms and aggression.

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

James Bissett on Lessons Learned from the Balkans

James (Joe) Bissett spoke with arresting compassion and concern about current events in Ukraine, where he believes the West is unnecessarily overstepping its authority and fomenting conflict. In particular, James believes that NATO has been diverted from its intended purpose and is in immediate need of reform to re-establish conformance with Article I of the NATO Treaty, which requires that NATO “*settle any international dispute in which they may be involved, by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered... and to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.*” James’ paper detailing his position on NATO can be downloaded from the Probus Website [by clicking here.](#)



Contrary to what is presented to us by our media, James contends that Vladimir Putin and the Russians are not to blame for the situation in Ukraine. Rather, the United States and NATO are responsible for instigating and perpetuating the conflict. In fact, we were informed that Crimea only became part of Ukraine when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev gave the peninsula to his native land in 1954. This hardly mattered until the Soviet Union broke up in 1991 and Crimea ended up as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in an independent Ukraine, even though by that time a majority of the population of Crimea was Russian, with a minority of Ukrainians and Crimean Tartars.

(Continued on Page 2)

Lessons.....continued

A March 2014 referendum on whether to join Russia reportedly had an official turnout of 83% and officially resulted in a 96.77% (Crimea) and 95.6% (Sevastopol) affirmative vote. The turnout was disputed by the Crimean Tartars and the referendum was condemned by the EU, the US, and the Ukrainian government as violating Ukraine's constitution and international law. Nonetheless, James believes there is no reason to doubt the veracity of the referendum. He further believes that Ukraine and Russia are interdependent economically and culturally and Ukraine cannot survive without Russia.

James said it was the NATO's bombing of Serbia in 1999 without UN Security Council authority and in violation of its own Article 1 that alarmed the Russians and caused them to distrust NATO's intentions. When in the same month NATO admitted Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO these suspicions seemed to be confirmed. He expressed concern that since the dissolution of the Soviet Union NATO has lost purpose, but could not be dismantled because of the potential impact on the arms-based US economy. Consequently, in 1996 president Clinton initiated the *NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act*, which resulted in the encirclement of Western Russia by new NATO members. James fears that this is driving Russia into a stronger alliance with China, which may well have unknown consequences for everyone in the Western world. Thank you, James, for this insightful presentation from behind the scenes that only your knowledge and extensive experience could provide. We are truly appreciative of your courage and conviction.

New Members



New members Jean Kelly & Max Wood welcomed by Jim Gilmour & Don McDiarmid

Personal Profile ~ Jean Crowley

On the management team since 2009, Probus President Jean Crowley needs no introduction, but it was delightful to hear her recount a bit about her early life in her diffident style which is much admired.



Jean, one of eight children, was born in St.

George Lake, 5 kilometers south of Sharbot Lake on Highway 38. Her mother was an aboriginal and her father was from Belfast, Ireland. In St. George Lake there were six houses and a school. The school was right next to Jean's house, so her mother could keep a close eye on her children at all times, even when they were in school! Jean's mother and the first four children were on their own for four years while her father was overseas during the war. After her father returned from the war, the other four children came along. When Jean was starting the fifth grade her family moved to Sharbot Lake, a much larger village with a population of 500.

At 16 Jean was encouraged to get a job so she worked a year for Bell Canada before getting a job with the bank. She filled many positions with the bank before she was transferred to Richmond as manager. During her first week as manager, the bank was robbed by armed men who were very professional and also robbed the Scotia Bank across the street while they were at it. She continued with the bank until she was eligible for her pension and retired. After a year off she went back to work, this time for Investors Group. She worked for Investors Group for another seven years before her final retirement to spend time with her grandchildren. She and David have five children and nine grandchildren, all of which are beautiful, intelligent, talented and athletic. Every year Probus arranges a party for Jean and David's wedding anniversary, known to others as the Probus Christmas Party.

Speakers' Corner

Our speaker on October 1st will be Paola de Rose, Director, Canada Centre for Mapping and Earth Observation, Natural Resources Canada. She will be talking about the Canadian approach to remote sensing - observing the Earth with sensors from high above its surface.

Special Future Events

- September 26 ~ Fall bus trip to Ottawa to go on the Ottawa River Cruise, Lunch at [“Buffet des Continent”](#) and visit to the Governor General’s Home. Cost is \$87 per person, with cheques payable to Probus Club of Perth before September 12. The bus leaves at 8:30 from the Factory parking lot, 40 Sunset Blvd. Perth ([Map](#)).
- October 9 ~ Dinner Theatre Event ~ Dinner at [Maximillians](#) at 5:30pm, followed by Studio Theatre Presentation [“Crimes of the Heart”](#). Theatre tickets are \$17 and people may sign up at the October 1st Probus meeting or by contacting Mary.
- December 5 ~ Christmas Dinner/ Dance. Lion’s Club Hall Perth, catered by Country Kitchen Catering. Social time starts at 6pm, followed by dinner, prizes, gifts and dancing.



AGM Notes

The AGM portion of the September meeting went

off as expected with the following conclusions:

- The financial report included in the Summer Probian was accepted and Don McNaughton was re-appointed as Financial Reviewer.
- The new slate of officers, as proposed in the Summer edition, was elected. The names of the new executive can be seen on the side-panel on page 1 of this issue.



New President Jean Crowley shares a chuckle with outgoing President Jim Gilmour over the missing gavel.

Management Team Notes

- Fees for 2013-14 are now due. Please fill out the renewal form attached to this edition and take it to the next meeting or send it together with your cheque to Probus Box 20131, Perth, Ont., K7H 3M6. The renewal form is also available on our website at www.probusperth.ca/membership.htm.
- We are looking for a volunteer who could look after the audio-visual requirements for our Probus Meetings. Duties include setting up the sound system and computer projector for each meeting. Please talk to Colin Stephenson for further information if you are interested in contributing in this way.
- We are interested in welcoming more new members into the club. If you know of people whom you think may be interested, please invite them to attend a meeting as your guest. You may also suggest they visit our website www.probusperth.ca to get a sense of what Probus is all about.



Lunch After October Meeting

To be held at Fiddleheads restaurant
53 Street, Perth

Thanks to Dennis



Dennis Dwyer is presented with a copy of the “Dwyer Editions” of the Probian by Colin Stephenson

Quote for the Month

“In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.” – US President Dwight D. Eisenhower



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM
SEPTEMBER - AUGUST

NAME(S)
(include all members)

ADDRESS
(Incl. postal code)

PHONE

EMAIL

CHEQUE

Membership fees are \$20 per person payable by Sept. meeting.
Amount enclosed: \$20 _____ or \$40 _____ *(if spouse is a member).*

Members are encouraged to renew by mail to avoid line-ups at the meeting.

[Click here for fillable version of this form](#)

Please type or print clearly, flagging any changes and return form and cheque to:

Probus Box 20131, Perth, Ont., K7H 3M6

Note: Your personal information will be protected in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

It's time to:



If you haven't already done so.