



**THE PROBUS CLUB
OF PERTH**

P. O. Box 20131,
Perth, Ontario
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www.probusperth.ca
Probus meets the first
Wednesday of each month,
Sept. to June.

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Apropos.....

Looking down the list on the left, everyone will notice some new names. With a changed executive comes the opportunity to respond to recent ideas passed on by our membership. During the AGM, I overheard two people say that the outings and fellowship where the principal reasons they are members of Probus. Are speakers and the new members' personal histories crucial? Why are you a Probus member?

The cut off portion on the back page will be helpful to your management team in responding to the expectations you have. The demographics of our membership have changed over the years and we will be well served if a good majority take the time to send their opinions to your executive. We need to hear from you.

Wynne White's Experiences in Ethiopia



Wynne White

Not every speaker's introduction begins with the audience groaning! When David Farquarson mentioned Wynne's age, he was treated to some good-natured laughter and groans. He sketched out Wynne's background @ Queens, U of Ottawa & Carleton U followed by a teaching career in Ottawa and Smiths Falls. But it has been her "second career" as a member of Volunteer Services Overseas that captivated her audience

Wynne came with a wonderful series of pictures that captured the sense of this amazingly complex country. Churches dug into the rocks below the surface, a Stone Henge-like upright boulders remembering fallen warriors, thatched houses that get lower each year by being eaten away by termites, narrow canoes, shocking pictures of female genital mutilation, and pictures of one tribe where young men pass into adulthood by running over a small herd of buffalo – while the women "support" them by being whipped!

These and many other pictures of animals, birds, crocodiles, and many shots of the different tribes she visited, engaged us.

On memorable one, showed her grandson at 6'3" towering over three beautiful women who did not even come up to his shoulders! Wynne sketched out for us the religious and political composition of the country showing the differences between north and south and the capital, Addis Abbaba, and everywhere else. In a number of tribes, the women do all the work while the men drink and fight. In a male dominated society, older women visitors like Wynne are considered "honorary men" and thus relatively safe from harassment. The government is trying to develop universities and prevent many of the more gruesome tribal practices, but her presentation indicated how difficult it is to achieve modernity in tribal societies.

All-in-all, a fascinating exposure to present day Ethiopia.

Special Events



Probus Fall Colours Tour October 13, 2011

- **October 13, 2011** ~ Fall Colours in the Pontiac and the Ottawa Valley ~ the bus leaves the Legion at 7am ~ see [Summer edition for full details](#).
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- **Fall, 2011** ~ Local dinner theatre event perhaps – let us know if you'd like one.
- **December 8, 2011** ~ Annual Christmas dinner at Farrell Hall on 186 Gore St. East. Good friends, good drink, good food, good music and dancing ~ what could be more festive!

Management Team Notes



- The 2012 SPRING FLING will be upon us before we know it. The Probian will keep you informed as planning moves forward.

The 2011 AGM



The AGM was smooth, as usual. Our Treasurer reported that we ended up the year \$500 ahead of last year with a balance of \$2,596.26. Don McNaughton, our financial reviewer declared that all the books are in order.

The slate of Directors was approved and is printed on our “masthead” on the left side of the front page of the Probian. Bruce Gourley stood in for Mike Else who was away and he read Mike’s report on the year with an extensive list of thanks to many members who helped out in a variety of ways. Bruce, then handed the gavel over to our incoming President, Dan Murphy, who reminded us that we are responsible for the SPRING FLING this coming May, 2012.

Speakers' Corner



- **October 5** ~ Elizabeth Goldman, the new Head Librarian of the [Perth and District Union Library](#) will talk about her plans and ideas to make the library more community minded and lively.
- **November 3** ~ Major General (Ret'd) Clive Addy will offer a video presentation entitled “ “If I Should Fall” . He will respond to questions afterwards.



Your Opinions Matter

Send us your ideas to: Probus Perth, P. O. Box 20131, Perth, Ontario, K7H 3M6 or info@probusperth.ca

I would like to hear _____ speak on _____ at Probus.

My principal reason I am a member of Probus is: _____

I suggest the following activity and will attend it: _____

Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Members Moving

Just like other groups, we're not alone in losing valued members through moving away as well as death. This summer we've learned that Orion and Sheila Clark are moving to Ottawa as is Peter Craske. John Gurney and his wife Pat are decamping to both Brighton, Ontario, and Florida. If we are able to get their normal mail and e-mail addresses we will pass them on to those of you who would like to write to them. We will not publish them in the PROBIAN but will give them out upon request.

Naturally, we want to wish them all good health and good fortune in their new homes and send along many thanks for their participation in our meeting and special events.

Lunch After Meetings

For many years some members, sometimes only five or six, and on other occasions up to 16 or so, have gathered at a local restaurant for lunch after the meeting. Generally we've tended to stick to one place for a year or so. This year we would like to try going to a different place each month. This way we can not only spread our business around in the community, but take into consideration that everyone does not like all restaurants equally. Mary Kilgour, has volunteered to make the reservation for us each month. For October, we'll be going to Fiddleheads on 5th October.

A Quote For The Month

"It has been said that a mind once stretched by a new idea can never return to its former shape"

WILLIAM SLOANE COFFIN, *The Courage to Love*, 1982,
Harper & Row

Joke Corner

Sometimes a highlight of a meeting is the joke told by the President at the beginning of our gathering. This last AGM, Bruce Gourley, pinch hitting for Mike Else told this story:

We often talk about our health care system in Canada and always are ready to hear stories about it. Well, one day, a friend of mine asked me what I thought about our system. I replied as follows:

"I think what happened to two friends of mine says it all. The first friend had a back pain and went to his GP after waiting for 12 weeks to get an appointment. He was then referred to a back specialist and did not get to see him for another seven months. Elective surgery was suggested and five months later performed in Kingston. At the end of 15 months his pain was cured. The other friend has occasionally severe stomach pains. Went to his local doctor one morning after four days of pain, was seen that afternoon by a surgeon and the operation scheduled for the next day. Mt friend had a tumour removed and has completely recovered.

Oh, I forgot to tell you that my second friend was my dog!"

John Gitten's Passing

A well known long-time member of Probus died this last September 9th and his memorial service was held @ Blair & Son's on the Wednesday the 14th. He was an active and popular member of not only Probus but other community organizations. He was particularly effective in the theatre and artistic arenas in Perth. His leadership and enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT ?

Often, the issue of “how can we help our community as members of Probus” is raised at coffee time, our after meeting luncheons, during events, or during dinner at the Christmas party. Equally often, the responses are ideas to raise money for worthy causes in Perth and area. During the next year, I would like to offer this space in the Probian to any member or groups of members to suggest initiatives to our members. We could then discuss the options presented later in the year. Your suggestions can be e-mailed to me at ddwyer@cogeco.ca .

Let me begin with a suggestion:

Today, more and more organizations are discovering that they must develop what they call their “core competency” in order to not only retain their present membership, but attract new participants. All sorts of volunteer organizations suffer today from dispersion of energy so that their main function becomes blurred in the minds of many of their members. This lack of focus most often results in declining membership. In attempting to define what that competency is, we should look at our members, who they are, what they have done, and how much of their energy is available for activities not involved in our principal function. In Probus, Perth, our monthly meeting, with a speaker and members’ personal profile is our main focus. Other activities devolve from that.

What do all our members have in common? What is our core competency? Is it experience?

We are mostly “retired” and come from an almost bewildering array of past experience in work, travel, and hobbies. Could this bank of experience be used in Perth. I believe it could. We could create a group of mentors to be offered to the graduating classes of our high schools and Algonquin College. Mentoring is now understood to be one of the most valuable ways that older generations can support and encourage youth in their search for not just decent jobs, but meaning in a confusing world.

Would you like to be a Probus Mentor to a youth in our area? Think about it. By offering this service to our community we will be able to both increase our visibility in Perth and make a meaningful contribution to the families in our area. A way to use our core competency --- experience. So the question is, are there enough Probians who have the interest and the time to devote to this kind of activity?

Dennis Dwyer, Editor.



The outgoing Management Team ~ July 2011