

THE NEWSLETTER



The PROBUS Club of Simcoe & District Meets second Tuesday of each month at St. James United Church hall

Christmas lunch

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017.
Royal Canadian Legion, 223 Nichol St., Waterford.
11:30 a.m., socializing; noon lunch;
entertainment by Dan Demeester.

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Review of Nov. 14, 2017, meeting:

President Murray Uren called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Brian Cook led us in our opening anthem. David Judd introduced his guest Peter Vaughan. Nestor Rosa introduced Roy Havens.

PROBUS business:

Christmas lunch: **President Murray** reminded members about our Christmas lunch. The

bar will not be open for this event.

Wellness: Gerald Sheppard offered condolences to Gus Takacs whose brother

William (Bela) Takacs died on Nov. 9.

Program: **Dan Pearson** has speakers lined up through March.

Special events: **Dick Pearson** is arranging a July tour of Bonnieheath Estate lavender

farm and winery.

Treasurer: Dave Montross reported a few members need to pay their \$35

dues for 2017-18. We are in good financial shape.

House: **Rick Middaugh** reported all is well.

Newsletter: **David Judd** said our newsletters will feature photos of new members.

Who-Am-I: **Gus Takacs** is working on speakers for January, February and March.

President Murray read a thank-you letter for our gift to the Alzheimer's Society in memory of Pat Robinson, wife of Al Robinson.

Guest speaker: Mike McDonnell

Mike McDonnell told us about some of the estimated 50,000 Canadians who fought in the American Civil War. Canada was not officially involved in the War Between the States (1861-1865) but many Canadians volunteered, including some from our area.

Mike, a retired police officer who lives in Waterford, has been fascinated with the Civil War since he was a boy. His hobbies include military history and photography.

Canadians mostly fought for the North or Union side in the Civil War. Twenty-nine were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Five Canadians were generals in the war — one general fought for the Southern Confederacy.

Canadians signed up for adventure or the enlistment money. Some fought to end slavery.

Most notable locally was **William Winer Cooke** from Mount Pleasant in Brant County. He was 17 when he signed up for the Union army, rising to the brevet (honorary) rank of lieutenant colonel.



Mike McDonnell



William Winer Cooke

Cooke rejoined the army after the war. He was adjutant to **Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer**. Cooke and Custer were among 272 men of the Seventh Cavalry killed at the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876. Cooke is buried in Hamilton.

Lieutenant Edward P. Doherty of Quebec and his men tracked and killed President Abraham Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth.

Private James Beach Moore served in a New Jersey unit but he didn't fire a shot before he returned to Canada in 1862 to become a minister. At his death in Waterford at age 89 in 1931, he was the oldest active Baptist preacher in Ontario and Ouebec.

Private Theodore Sharp (1837-1878) is buried in Waterford cemetery. He was wounded three times in one hour at the Battle of Gettysburg.

An estimated 400 to 750 women served in the Civil War disguised as male soldiers. **Private Sara Emma Edmonds**

from New Brunswick is perhaps the best known female soldier. When she became ill in 1863, she deserted the army to avoid being exposed as a woman. Twenty years later she managed to get a pension.

Dan Pearson introduced our speaker and Dick Pearson thanked him.

Who Am I: Bill Hoskins

Updated from February 2015.

Bill Hoskins comes from mainly English origin. His father **Alfred** and uncle **Bill** were British orphans. In 1911 the two brothers were sent to Canada as Home Children and placed on farms with good families in southern Ontario. His maternal family emigrated from England to Nova Scotia, where his mother **Florence** was born. Bill's parents were married in Brantford in 1928.

Bill was born at Norfolk General Hospital on April 4, 1929. His two brothers, **Don** and **Fred**, are both retired and live in Simcoe. Bill went to North and South Public Schools. He dropped out of high school at the end of Grade 11 and went to work at the Cities Service gas station at the corner of highways 3 and 24. From there, Bill went to Norfolk Motors where he became parts manager.



- **Linda** is a retired financial adviser with CIBC. Her husband **Bob Parker** passed away in 2014.
- **Wendy** is married to **Phil** and lives on a tree farm near Walsh. They have two adult sons. Wendy was a nurse at NGH for 34 years.
- Mark is married to **Heather**. They live in Oshawa and have two sons. Mark worked on a computer project to link all Ontario hospitals.
- **Becky** is married to **Dennis** in Ottawa. They have two sons. Becky is an associate registrar at Carlton University.
- Eric is a physician, Rhodes Scholar and former president of the charity War Child Canada. He was awarded the Pearson Peace Medal and is an officer of the Order of Canada. Eric is the MPP for St. Paul's in Toronto as well as Ontario Minister of Health. His wife is **Dr. Samantha Nutt**. She is now president of War Child Canada. They have one son.

Bill and Jean have eight male grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

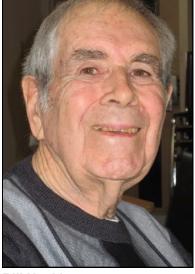
In 1950 **Verne Kneale** hired Bill as an apprentice insurance adjuster, his job for the next 40 years. In the insurance business, Bill became part owner with Mr. Kneale, then owner-manager. Bill's firm specialized in tobacco farm losses. Mr. Kneale passed away in 2012 at age 97.

Over the years, Bill has served in many volunteer positions with St. James United Church, Kinsmen, Rotary and other organizations. He was a board member and president of Norfolk General Hospital and president of the NGH Nursing Home.

Bill's favourite job was serving on the Haldimand-Norfolk police board and was Commissioner of Police for two years. The OPP took over from regional police during his last year. Bill says OPP policing is top notch but at a much higher cost.

Bill likes fishing, gardening, reading and cars. He and Jean like living in one of the Millpond condos.

Bill says it's an honour and privilege to belong to PROBUS. He likes its style, its lack of rules and he enjoys the fellowship. Thank you, Bill, for sharing your story.



Bill Hoskins