**Bill Koleszar**

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| Bill Koleszar presented his Who Am I presentation at April’s meeting. To break the ice, Bill started his talk with an amusing story about an ambidextrous golfer who sometimes golfed left-handed and at other times right-handed. The answer to this puzzle delighted the members. Bill’s background is Hungarian. Bill’s parents were married in 1925. His father came to Canada in 1930 with the intention of working for a few years and then returning to Hungary. As 1930 was the beginning of the Depression this plan didn’t quite work out as | E:\2013 12 Probus booklet Photos\Koleszar, Bill.tif |

expected. Instead, Bill’s mother and older brother joined his dad in Canada in 1934 and they settled in the Tillsonburg area where the family worked in tobacco. In 1945, the family bought their own farm.

Bill received his early schooling in a number of one-roomed schools. The family moved around a lot, so Bill ending up attending five schools in eight years. He completed his formal education at Annandale High School in Tillsonburg. After that Bill returned to the family farm where he worked for the next six or seven years. During this time Bill married and had a son, but the marriage only lasted about four years.

About this time Bill applied to and was accepted by the OPP. There was only one problem: the OPP had a minimum weight requirement of 160 lbs and Bill weighed only 148. This lack of poundage put his police career temporarily on hold.

About a year later the OPP contacted him again and, for whatever reason, the weight requirement was no longer an issue. He trained two weeks in Toronto and then was assigned to a detachment in Essex. For the next few weeks Bill traveled with a more seasoned officer and after that, when he received his uniform, he was on his own. Unlike today, policing was largely self-taught.

Bill stayed with the OPP for a little under two years and then took a job with the Green Giant canning plant in Tecumseh. During his time in Essex County, Bill met Patricia, his present wife. They were married in October 1966 and two years later they bought the family farm from Bill’s parents. Farming can be a tough business - after two wet years and one broken leg, Bill and Patricia decided that they should sell the farm and try something new.

Bill found work at Timberjack, but after three years he was laid off. Several times, in quick succession, he was called back and laid off again. One time when Bill was back at Timberjack, General Motors were hiring employees for their large operation that was just starting up in Woodstock. Bill told his foreman, Alex Keeping, that he had a dental appointment on the day of General Motor’s job fair. When Bill arrived at Timberjack later that day, Alex asked him how the dental appointment had gone. Figuring Alex had already guessed where he had been Bill replied, “There sure were a lot people ahead of me with dental appointments.”

Bill was hired by GM and continued to work there for nearly 27 years. They were good years and Bill is especially grateful to GM for providing his two sons with summer employment while they went to university. Both his sons are married: his older son has two daughters, six and three years old, while his younger son has a six month old baby daughter. Bill looks on his three granddaughters as the most important accomplishments of his life.

Bill’s other interests include stamp collecting, photography, golfing, curling, hunting and fishing. Bill has been a Legion member for over 25 years. For 10 years Bill was active in Cubs and Scouts. His trip to the Canadian Scouting Jamboree held at the Bow River Valley in Alberta stands out as a highlight of his scouting experience: a two week extravaganza with 30,000 participants.