**John Cook**

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| John Cook was on the podium for this section of the meeting. He was born in Paisley, Scotland in 1943. His father's failing health prompted a move out of Scotland and they landed in Canada on Christmas Eve, 1947. (His father's health problems were subsequently solved by the invention of penicillin and he lived to age 83.)John hit a responsive chord with many in the audience when  |  |

he spoke of Woodstock as being a great place to grow up in, and the 1950s as a great decade to be a teenager ....free of the terrors of war, with stability and prosperity, and the morality of family values more in evidence than today. Good education withdedicated teachers and high standards were remembered and he noted that two Probians (Art Robar and John Harvey) were his teachers at WCI. Particular praise, for whatever character formation may have developed in him was given to the YMCA and its youth programs then, which were much more extensive than the simple exercise facilities we see today. The winter programs and the summer camp at Fisher's Glen were seen as wonderful resources for community youth development and he owes much to those who had the foresight to develop them. The community is seen to be much poorer for not having programs such as the Y used to have.

Many people who grew up with him think of John as a pharmacist as he spent many of his early years working for Standard Drug and apprenticing as a pharmacist there and at the hospital. However, he eventually took a degree in Economics and Business at WLU and went to work at Timberjack where he worked in many departments, becoming VP of Operations. In 1976 he left Timberjack to become the President of Champion Road Machinery in Goderich where he stayed until 1982 before leaving to do merger and acquisition work. In 1985 he joined the Ivy Group in London to turn around Dashwood Industries in Centralia and prepare it for sale. In 1987 it was sold to Trussjoist (now a division of Weyerhauser) where he stayed on until he retired for the first time.

After a year of (boring) retirement he started doing volunteer work for the Business Development Corporation giving management direction to businesses going through hard times. In 1997, he was asked to take a look at a family business, Bailey Metal Products and to mentor the generation that would take over the business. He retired again in 2004.

On returning to Woodstock he was approached in a store by an old acquaintance who spoke to him as if he had never been away. This is the 'sense of place' that he thinks is important about Woodstock. (*We think so too John. Thanks for an interesting talk*.)