**Gerry Sokalski**

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| Gerry was born in Winnipeg, and therefore can withstand the coldest days. When his grandparents immigrated from the Ukraine and Poland, they were given land grants for farming, thus Gerry spent his early years north of Brandon in the communities of Angusville and Silver. His father worked as a head cook in lumber camps, requiring him to be away from his family. This was hard on the family so, in 1942, they moved to | E:\2013 12 Probus booklet Photos\Sokalski, Jerry.tif |

Toronto. His grandparents came with them and were able to look after Gerry, allowing his mother to work at Dominion Bridge making artillery shells, and his father to work at Canada Iron Foundry.

In his first year of high school he took a typing course, which served him well over the years with essays, reports and continuing now with computer keyboards. Hockey, baseball and football helped keep him on the straight and narrow. After high school, he completed the first year of Mechanical Engineering at University of Waterloo in 1961. He took a job rather than continue the course. Two years later he resumed his education and completed the course at Ryerson in 1965. After several more exams and a thesis, he received his Professional Engineer status. He has seen the tools of his trade change from slide rules and drafting boards to computers with CAD programs.

His work history started with a small Toronto company, Beckett Elevators, who were competing with Turnbull, Otis and White for high rise and office buildings.

When they moved to Woodstock, he found work with Timberland Ellicott as a designer and sales engineer for construction hoists and exterior building maintenance equipment, which consisted of an electric powered suspended platform that was lowered from the roofs of tall buildings to carry out window washing, glass replacement and other exterior maintenance. In 1977 he joined Emco in London, eventually becoming Manager of Plant Engineering & Maintenance. A victim of downsizing in 1985, he joined Babcock Wilcox in Galt as Senior Plant Engineer. He went from production processes with orders for 10,000 pieces in three weeks of parts weighing only ounces to manufacture of steam boilers and generators weighing up to 500 tons and requiring three years to manufacture. He retired last year after l6 years of just scratching the surface of the knowledge that goes into manufacturing their products.

He met Judy McFaddin at a friend’s wedding in 1962, and they were married 4 years later. He was glad her Scottish family would accept someone called Sokalski without reservation. Judy quickly learned how to spell her new name and mastered the knack of making cabbage rolls and porgies. They have two daughters and two grandsons.

Gerry enjoys travelling, gardening photography and spending time with his two grandsons.