



**RETIRED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)**

**Invites you to its meeting **June 14, 2017** at  
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT**

## **Stuart Gibson**

### **“Kurdistan and its Elusive Quest for Nationhood”**



The events of the past few years have changed the Iraqi landscape possibly forever and have simultaneously brought into question many geopolitical assumptions not only about Iraq but the Middle East and beyond. One crucial element in this unfolding drama is the autonomous region of Kurdistan in northern Iraq.

Kurdistan has been an unflinching ally of the United States for over 20 years. It is a pluralistic society embracing Kurds, Armenians, Turkmen, Yazidis, and Christians. Its capital Irbil is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world dating back to 6,000 BCE. Since the end of the first Gulf war it has been unwavering in reclaiming its heritage and cultural identity and erecting a viable political and economic social order as an independent region in Iraq. It has been transformed into a haven for those persecuted and disowned throughout the region and has also emerged as a key player in confronting the ISIS threat. Its turbulent relationship with the Baghdad government, its evolving relationship with Iran, Syria, and Turkey, and its longstanding aspirations for independence will be explained.

Stuart Gibson is an international consultant with over 20 years' experience working with cultural organizations and governments undergoing economic and political transition and post-conflict development. He has worked extensively in the countries of the former Soviet Union, Eastern and Central Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East. He is a UN senior international expert on museum management and organization, cultural policy, and the financing of culture. He is currently Secretary to the International Advisory Board of the State Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), a UNESCO advisor to the Uzbekistan Ministry of Culture on the development of museums and tourism, and advisor to the Kurdish Regional Government (Iraq) on museums and archaeology.

**Next Week: June 21st, Peter Sutton, Executive Director, Bruce Museum, “The Bruce, Present and Future”**

*The Greenwich Retired Men's Association offers a free program every Wednesday that is open to the public, both men and women; no reservations are required. Our social break starts at 10:40AM followed promptly by our speaker at 11:00AM. Programs are at the First Presbyterian Church, 1 West Putnam Avenue in Greenwich. For additional information see [www.greenwichrma.org](http://www.greenwichrma.org) or contact [info@greenwichrma.org](mailto:info@greenwichrma.org)*