



# The Probian

Probans Club of Perth

February 2025

## President's Message

As I write this message, on February 13, the day is wet and grey. I look out, and Andre is moving snow ...again! But there is hope. A verse from my teaching days comes to mind:

"February is wet and grey.  
No one goes outside to play.  
But in the middle, one day shines:  
the day we send our Valentines!"

At this month's Probans Management meeting I was reminded how truly blessed we are to have such competent, caring volunteers offering their time and talents to our club.

- Mary Vandenhoff deals with new members, and keeps our Membership records straight.
- Gail Read and her team provide us with many Social Activity options, including lunch after our meetings (organized by Sue Brown.)
- John Byers and his competent Speakers' Team search out our entertaining and interesting speakers;
- and where would we be without our excellent A-V Team; Doug Porter and Ian MacWilliam?

Please take the time to thank these folk. We all feel good to hear someone tell us we're doing a great job. Sometimes we're not sure what others think of our contributions.

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## March Meeting

Wednesday, March 5th  
10:00 AM  
Perth Legion



## Reminders

Bring your own **coffee mug**; help the environment.

## Book Exchange:

Bring no more than 4 books; take as many as you want.

## This month's Guest Speaker:

**The Honourable Sandra Simpson,**  
a Federal Court Judge  
for twenty-nine years

**Perth Probus Management Team  
2024-25**

**President:** Mary Kilgour

**Vice-President:** George Braithwaite

**Past President:** Gail McAdam

**Treasurer:** Graeme Rutledge\*

**Secretary:** Bill Michie

**Speakers:** John Byers

**Membership:** Mary Vandenhoff

**Social Events:** Gail Read

**Probian Editor:** Yvonne Powell

**Webmaster:** Colin Stephenson

**Alt. Treasurer:** Tony Thompson\*

**Member-at-Large:** Maggie Foot

**...President's Message**

Richard Schooley, our guest speaker, certainly gave us a lot of valuable information, and a lot to think about. My first impression was that the Town of Perth wanted to annex us, the Townships. OH NO!

Richard presented the idea that if the Townships (Lanark Highlands, Tay Valley, and Drummond/North Elmsley) joined with the Town of Perth to create one dynamic area, we could all benefit more in our interactions with the Provincial Government.

March is coming, and with it, the promise of spring. I look forward to seeing you on the fifth!



The view from the podium.

### A Welcoming Duo!

Each month Ethel Russell and Bill Scott greet us with their welcoming smiles. Smiles never go out of style. Thanks!



### Our Speaker for March: The Honourable Sandra Simpson



Sandra was a Federal Court Judge for 29 years, rendering decisions in various provinces and territories across Canada. Prior to her federal appointment she practiced civil litigation in Toronto for 18 years. She learned her legal ropes at Queens and the University of Toronto law schools.

In 1993 she was appointed to the Federal Court and the Court Martial Court of Appeal. She later became a member of Canada's Competition Tribunal and served as its Chairperson for two terms. Sandra will speak about some of her more memorable cases and related retirement projects.

## Personal Profile - David Poole



To say that David Poole has come full circle from his early days on a farm south of Perth, to once again being a resident of Lanark County, ignores the many iterations his life has taken in the intervening years. The experience and knowledge gained at each curve of that life circle showed the benefits of following available career opportunities, and maximizing beneficial human connections. As he said, “maybe it was my early training with Sea Scouts and the Hardy Boys that was helpful in keeping things afloat” as he navigated life.

Circling east again to Ottawa with the Canada Council for the Arts as the computer age allowed new forms of art, David built not only a new home but an active life in Brooke Valley.

His skills in working as a team member as Head of the Media Arts section of the Canada Council not only resulted in its beneficial reorganization but also allowed initiatives supporting Indigenous media artists and advances in computer art.

Building on all of those years of skills has now taken David from administering MERA near his new Lanark home on Bennett Lake to being instrumental on the board of The Perth and District Community Foundation. This extremely successful group supporting organizations in all 4 West Lanark municipalities recently awarded over \$300 000 for a variety of local needs from the Hospice Hub to the purchase of search and rescue GPS equipment.

And we in Probus who are also members of this supportive Lanark community, can be part of David’s current work helping the Community Foundation’s ongoing initiatives with purchases of Raffle tickets or by attending the February 15 Mix and Mingle event being held at Codes Mill.

We are all very glad that David’s life circle has brought him back here once again.

*Submitted by Wendy Kaufman*



## February's Guest Speaker - Richard Schooley



Richard Schooley's informative, well-researched presentation, made to a rapt Probus audience, was not only a thought provoking eye-opener; but, also a very timely education in the realities of the inner workings of the greater Perth community in Lanark County.

Rather than being content to see "The Future of Us" rooted in past methodologies, Richard would like us to approach the challenges ahead with updated changes to counter current municipal inefficiencies.

Having four municipal bodies governing this area has led not only to an unbalanced usage of resources and funding, but also to a protectionist type of mentality held by each separate municipality. What Richard proposes is a far more productive system of cooperation.

Instrumental in moving ahead is to realize that the mere 6000 people of Perth should not be the main factor driving our future decision making. Rather, it should be the *combined* population of 26 000 that make up all of West Lanark County. Our lives within these communities rely on a myriad of shared resources and services.

Being so closely intertwined, future planning and development would be far more effective with Perth, Drummond-North Elmsley, Lanark Highlands and Tay Valley working collaboratively rather than in separate, well guarded “castles”. We should not fail to note our interdependency when it comes to dealing with all of our collective needs, regardless of the

sphere: be it social, economic, health, educational, or housing needs; supporting infrastructure; or dealing with climate-related concerns,

Richard’s statistical proof of the needs and services currently in place opened our eyes to current misplaced efforts and funding, enabling us to see where the County’s *real* needs actually lie. Supporting his ideas for change with a copious amount of reliable data, it became evident that none of the four municipalities of West Lanark is really sustainable on its own. As future growth is inevitable, we need to face those realities by sensibly growing together, not as separate units.

Instead of looking through a narrow lens, we need to focus instead on maximizing our *collective* potential. Within our combined communities there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise that can serve to spearhead ‘bottom up’ change using the cornerstones of healthcare, education, jobs and supporting infrastructure. Close at hand, Mississippi Mills provides a model for success in linking municipalities.

Perhaps it is time in “The Future of Us” to move in a similar direction.

*Submitted by Wendy Kaufman*



John Byers thanks Richard for his thought-provoking talk.

The Perth Probus Club meets  
at the Royal Canadian Legion,  
26 Beckwith Street, Perth,  
on the first Wednesday of the month,  
September through June.

President - Mary Kilgour

Further information on the club,  
and contact details  
for other members of the Management Team  
can be found at:

[www.probusperth.ca/board.htm](http://www.probusperth.ca/board.htm)

Newsletter Editor - Yvonne Powell