



# The Probian

Probans Club of Perth

Our 30th Anniversary Year!

February 2026

## President's Message



**A**s I write this epistle (26 Feb), it seems Spring is trying to ease our frustrations with winter's grip; its sunny, warmish, snow is turning to slush, and sap has begun to flow.

Meanwhile, half a world away, war has come to many parts of the middle east. Iran is retaliating to the US and Israeli air strikes. Watch and be concerned about the inevitable collateral damage.

Much closer to home, our project to replace Colin Stephenson's role as webmaster is complete. The new website is live thanks to Maggie Foot and Doug Porter, with the indispensable expertise of Brent Eades, a web designer. For example, you will have already received notifications from our Social Events and Speaker Teams regarding items of interest. If you have suggestions that incorporate additional features, consider contacting the website using the web address [info@probansperth](mailto:info@probansperth).

*George Braithwaite*

## March Meeting

Wednesday, March 4  
10:00 AM

## Reminders

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

## Book Exchange

Bring no more than FOUR books, take as

## This Month's Guest Speaker

### Noelle Reeve

Noelle Reeve is the Tay Valley Land Use Planner

## This Month's Member Profile

No speaker this month.

## Membership



**Thank you, Mary!!**

**Mary Vandenhoff** really looks after our Probus membership. This month, she went above and beyond, distributing Vials of Life to those in attendance.

The vials are a combined program of Cartridge Community Support, the County of Lanark, and United Way, East Ontario.

By filling out the forms with your personal medical information, placing the vial in your fridge, placing the magnet on the fridge door (to signal the vial is in the fridge) and then placing the magnet on your front door, anyone will be able to access your information should you have a medical emergency.

## Speakers' Corner

STATUS	DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
Completed	2025 Sept 3	Dr. David Philipp	How Angling Is Reshaping Ontario's Bass Population
Completed	2025 Oct 1	Pauline Witzke	Extraordinary Events Cause Global Warming
Completed	2025 Nov 5	Jeffrey Simpson	Globe & Mail Journalist - Donald Trump
Completed	2025 Dec 3	Allison Margot Smith	Two Rideau Canal-Related Documentary Films
Completed	2026 Jan 7	Victoria Gibb-Carsley	Perth & District Community Foundation
Completed	2026 Feb 4	Brandy Lockhart	Parks Canada Underwater Archeologist
Confirmed	2026 Mar 4	Noelle Reeve	Tay Valley Planner - Land Use Planning
Confirmed	2026 Apr 1	Roy MacSkimming	Roy's Research on Sir John A. MacDonald
Confirmed	2026 May 6	Gaston Barbon	What a Diplomat Really Does...
Confirmed	2026 Jun 3	Peter Katz	Singer/Motivational Speaker

## **Our Speaker for March: Noelle Reeve MCIP, RPP**



During her 16 years as Manager of the Tay Valley Township Planning and Building Department, Tay Valley received recognition for its leadership in lake water quality protection from the Rideau Valley and Mississippi Valley Conservation Authorities; promotion of rural affordable housing from TV Ontario; creation of a Climate Change Action Plan from Climate Network Lanark; and for its Age Friendly Community Plan by the province of Ontario.

Noelle's 33-year portfolio includes work as a Planner for the Regional District of Matsqui in B.C.; Policy Analyst, Environment, for the B.C. Ministry of Government Services; and as Vice President of PlanSmartNJ working on the Statewide Smart Growth Economy Project, the Watershed Plan for the Central Delaware Tributaries, the US1 Regional Smart Growth Strategy, and equity work with Isles, Trenton, New Jersey and the Central Jersey Regional Equity Coalition. Noelle received her MSc from the School of Community and Regional Planning, UBC and her Hons. BSc in Geography and Biology from Trent University.

## Personal Profile: Kay Rogers

In her introduction, Kay reflected on her early experiences, the gifts of family and friends, the richness of life in Lanark County and the value of community.

2007 was a significant year for Kay. A baby boomer, born in Ottawa, she graduated from the paid labour force after an eclectic career with non-governmental organizations, universities, and the federal public service and she and her partner, Cathy Cameron, moved to Lanark County. The decision was easy: Cathy had lived and worked in the area; Kay was familiar with the area and liked it; they both wanted to retire on water near a small town not too far from Ottawa; they wanted their home to be a place where family and friends would visit. They found that place on the shore of Pike Lake.

As one does, Kay reflects on her life from time to time. She is a proud Canadian. Her friends have enriched her life. Her parents gave her a love of reading, a yen to travel and a sense of civic responsibility. After graduating from University, a two year assignment teaching English in a secondary school in rural Jamaica influenced her growing commitment to social justice.



In the 1970's she started wilderness canoeing. Her first trip was on the Missinaibi River, a Canadian Heritage River that flows from the height of land near Chapleau to James Bay. She was hooked. While every trip was special, one stands out. In July 1988 she spent three weeks with a group paddling the Hanbury and Thelon Rivers from Muskox Lake in the NWT to the western end of Baker Lake in what is now Nunavut. Counting 88 muskoxen, the shaggy survivors of the Ice Age, and witnessing 10,000 caribou in one of the last great migrations left on the planet made a lasting impression.

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*...Kay Rogers, cont'd*

Since moving to Pike Lake Cathy and Kay have become involved in the community. They are active members of the Pike Lake Association and the Perth Curling Club and Kay served on the Board of the Perth and District Community Foundation. In response to a comment by a member of the Association stewardship committee that "It would be great to know about the history of the lake", Kay committed to serve as editor of Voices of Pike Lake, an anthology with over 40 contributors, including the descendants of the families who settled around Pike Lake as well as cottagers. She was then invited to join the Tay Valley Township's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. A second book with over 60 contributors emerged: At Home in Tay Valley is for sale at The Book Nook, the Riverguild, the Perth Museum, and the Tay Valley Township municipal office. The proceeds from the sale of the book are directed to the Tay Valley History Scholarship which is awarded annually to a student graduating from either PDCI or St. John's.

We welcome Kay to our club and thank her for her contributions to our community.

*Submitted by Ann Munroe*

Break Time is Chat Time



## Our February Speaker: Brandy Lockhart

### Parks Canada Underwater Archeologist

An Underwater Archaeologist with the Parks Canada Underwater Archaeology Team (PCUAT), Brandy Lockhart transported us from the warm confines of the Perth Legion to the intriguing sites of shipwrecks hidden in the depths of eastern and northern Canadian waters. Drawing on her twenty years' experience with the team, she shared the types of work her team does, the equipment they use and the archeological sites they have explored and recorded.

On behalf of the people of Canada, Parks Canada protects and preserves nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage. While the title "Parks Canada" might first bring to mind national parks, or land-based historic sites or excavations, submerged indigenous sites and shipwrecks are integral to the study of human culture, behaviours, and beliefs,



Doing what you love

offering a more complete picture than land sites.

They serve as time capsules providing and conserving an entire picture of all that was lost.

For sixty years PCUAT has spent tens of thousands of hours surveying submerged sites. One technique involves doing shoreline surveys. For instance, divers and snorkelers look for artifacts along shorelines to find

remnants of human habitation - things like cooking utensils and hunting artifacts. Indigenous people often settled along shorelines which have since been submerged. These sites are often found in shallower water.

The team also explores shipwrecks in deep water, using platforms on Coast Guard ships as a base, allowing them to work twenty-four hours a day. The scuba and diving gear has become more sophisticated to include wet suits, air-and-water-sealed dry suits, and hot water suits.

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With equipment such as side screen sonar systems, multi-beam echo sounders, remotely operated vehicles, and even underwater recording with paper and pencil, they can produce three dimensional models of shipwrecks. More recent technologies such as drones equipped with cameras for underwater recording and photogrammetry, which takes thousands of pictures, augment the quality of research.

The PCUAT projects reveal the rich aquatic history of Canada. The detailed plans developed from the 1980 Red Bay, Labrador investigation of a submerged 1500's Spanish whaling ship were the catalyst for the building of a modern-day, full-scale model of that ship. This replica of this ship - originally built in Spain, and sailed to Red Bay, Labrador over 500 years ago - will be launched from Spain in the near future.



Wendy Kauffman thanks Brandy for her very interesting presentation. From her early introduction to diving in the St. Lawrence at age 12 to her experiences in a leadership research position, we were captivated by Brandy's curiosity, courage, determination, and passion to unlock the mysteries underneath our waters.

Tobermory, with its exceptional water clarity, reveals numerous shipwrecks, unlike the Northwest Passage where the seasons are short and conditions challenging. 170 years after Franklin's tragic expedition, the *HMS Erebus* was found in 2014 and the *HMS Terror* two years later. Sable Island, renowned for its wild horses, is a flat sandbar 200 km off shore from Halifax. With over three hundred shipwrecks, it is known as the graveyard of the Atlantic. Research continues into the wreck of *The Swift* during the War of 1812.

From her early introduction to diving in the St. Lawrence at age 12 to her experiences in a leadership research position, we were captivated by Brandy's curiosity, courage, determination, and passion to unlock the mysteries underneath our waters.

## Our History: Probus Comes to Perth



The idea of creating a Probus Club in Perth came from Wilf Parry after he had heard of a successful club operating in Collingwood, Ontario. In 1995, he formed a group to explore the feasibility of organizing such a club in Perth. This group consisted of George Callan, David Crowley, Ed Danner, Ralph Fish, Frank Houghton, Grover Lightford, Gordon McKibbon, Bob McMahan, Wilf Parry and David Rapkins. To obtain an understanding of the structure and operation of Probus, Wilf and Ralph attended a few meetings of area clubs. It is to be noted that at this time there were 49 Probus clubs in Canada. After several exploratory meetings, the group agreed to form a Perth club. A letter soliciting interest was sent to a number of Perth and district residents.

Our first action was to approach The Rotary Club of Perth to sponsor our application and provide initial funding. With the support of Rotary, the structure was agreed upon and various responsibilities were assigned to founding members.

On **February 7, 1996, an inaugural meeting** was held at McMartin House in Perth. Approximately 70 men attended and the reaction to having a club in the Perth area was very positive. The group was addressed by the Honourable Judge John Matheson who spoke on Canada/Quebec Relations. On **April 3, 1996, the Club was officially constituted** with the election of officers to the first Management Team. (See list on following page....)

### Members of the First Probus Perth Management Team

President: Wilf Parry  
 Vice President: Grover Lightford  
 Secretary: Frank Houghton  
 Treasurer: George Callan  
 Rotary Liaison: Ralph Fish  
 Membership: Bob McMahon  
 Programme: David Crowley  
 Facilities: David Rapkins

The Rotary Club of Perth was requested to apply for official accreditation for our club. The Probus Club of Perth was duly registered as Club Number 64 in Canada. All persons who had joined the Club as of April became Charter Members. The May meeting saw the debut of a regular

segment of each program known as Personal Profiles, during which members introduce themselves by means of brief biographical sketches. In January 1998, Probus meetings moved from McMartin House to the Perth Public Library.



The **Founding Members** of our club (those who attended the inaugural meeting at McMartin House on February 7, 1996) are:

George Callan \* Dave Crowley \* Ed Danner \* Ralph Fish \*  
 Frank Houghton \* Grover Lightford \* Gordon McKibon,  
 Bob McMahon \* Wilf Parry \* David Rapkins.

More people joined during the year of 1996 immediately after the club was founded. Those people who joined in 1996 after the inaugural meeting became **Charter Members**: *Fred Lepine* is one of our male Charter Members, and *Chris Sherman* is one of our female Charter Members.

Others who joined in 1997/98, and are still enjoying our monthly meetings are:

*Michael and Sheila Hurren*  
*Helen Black*  
*Ute Van Oppein*  
*David Zimmerly*



**Perth Probus  
Management Team  
2025 - 2026**



**President:** George Braithwaite

**Vice President:** Maggie Foot

**Past President:** To be Announced

**Treasurer:** Graeme Rutledge

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

**Secretary:** Mark Kennedy

**Speakers' Committee:** John Byers

**Membership Coordinator:** Mary Vandenhoff

**Social/Special Events Chair:** Gail Read

**Webmaster:** Colin Stephenson

**Probian Editor:** Yvonne Powell

**Photographer:** Tony Thompson

The Perth Probus Club meets  
at the Royal Canadian Legion,  
26 Beckwith Street, Perth,  
on the first Wednesday of the month,  
September through May.  
Our June meeting is at an alternate location.

President - George Braithwaite

Further information on the club,  
and contact details for other members  
of the Management Team  
can be found at:  
[probusperth.ca](http://probusperth.ca)