



The Probian

Probus Club of Perth

October 2025

President's Message



This message was written as we enjoyed Thanksgiving in the company of family and friends, and plenty of food within a secure and well-regulated community. We know that we are a blessed population and realize that together we must individually do what

we are able, to sustain our good fortune within this increasingly troubled world.

On a much lighter note, your Speakers' Committee has organized a splendid sequence of monthly speakers to inform and stimulate discussion. Finally, I am pleased to announce that Mark Kennedy has volunteered to assume the role of Secretary for the Management Committee, thus freeing Bill Michie to enjoy retirement after six years of excellent service.

George Braithwaite

November Meeting

Wednesday, November 5

10:00 AM

Perth Legion

Reminders

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

Book Exchange

Bring no more than FOUR books, take as many as you want.

This Month's Guest Speaker

Jeffrey Simpson, an award-winning Canadian Journalist, will speak to us on the topic:

"Donald J. Trump: What Has Given Rise to Him; Why His Impact is Durable and What It Means For Canada"

Membership

Thank you to all who have renewed your Probus Perth membership and paid your dues for 2025/26.

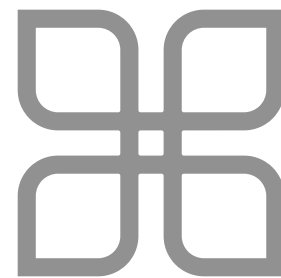
This year we have been able to keep our membership fees at \$35. We prefer you pay by e-transfer to finance@probusperth.ca.

According to our by-laws, if payment has not been received by the end of our November meeting (Nov. 5), your membership will be considered lapsed and your spot offered to the next person on the waiting list.

This past month, we had the pleasure of welcoming two new members to our Club: Joyce Fleming and Susan McGinn. Welcome!

Might I remind everyone that one must be a member to participate in the social activities, just as one must in order to attend our monthly meetings.

Mary Vandenhoff



George Braithwaite (R) welcomes new members Joya and Drew Halpenny, and Joyce Fleming. (L-R)

Personal Profile: Bob Peskett



Bob (don't call him Robert!) Peskett is an 85-year-old example of the positive effects of making good life choices.

This former chartered accountant, and former owner of the Code Felt Company, proved that following his doctor's suggestion to make a lifestyle change at age 33 made a huge difference - that change allowed him to introduce himself at our September meeting as a hale and hearty senior.

Not only did he give up his smoking habit, he also began a healthy diet and exercise program to support his long distance running - competing in many marathons. He ran his last full marathon at age 73. He then moved on to half-marathon challenges. Though the number of competitors at his level had dwindled, at age 82 he was still at the finish line, and still managing to finish in the middle of that smaller

pack. What an amazing accomplishment!

As a devoted family man, husband to Leis, father of four, grandfather of ten, and soon to be great-grandfather, he has certainly set a fine lifestyle example for the next generation of Pesketts.

A Perthite since 1967, Bob has also been given ample opportunity to be actively involved in a myriad of community concerns. From the Chamber of Commerce to the Knights of Columbus, from the Stingrays to the Civitan and Lion's Clubs, and even organizing for the Perth Garlic Festival, his energies and talents have truly benefited this community in many positive ways.

And now, aren't we lucky to have him join us as a member of the Probus Club?

Wendy Kaufman

Our Speaker for November: Jeffrey Simpson

Jeffrey Simpson is Canada's most decorated journalist. For more than 40 years, he wrote for The Globe and Mail, 32 of those as national affairs columnist. He also appeared frequently on television and radio in English and French. He wrote seven books, one of which won the Governor-General's award, another the \$50,000 Donner Prize for the best book on public policy, entitled Chronic Condition: a comprehensive examination of the Canadian health-care system. He won the National Newspaper award twice, and the National Magazine award for column writing. He also won the Hyman Solomon Award for excellence in public policy journalism, the Arthur Kroeger Award for contributions to public discourse, and the Charles Lynch Award for excellence in political journalism.

Jeffrey has taught as an adjunct professor at the Queen's University Institute of Policy Studies and the University of Ottawa law school. In 1993-1994, he was awarded a Knight Foundation Scholarship at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. He is now an emeritus senior fellow at the University of Ottawa Graduate School of Policy and International Affairs.



He was a member of the executive committee of that university's board of governors for nine years, having also served on the Queen's University board for six years.

He served as vice-chair of the City of Ottawa library board and was awarded the William Watkinson award for outstanding contributions to the Canadian library community by the Canadian Library Association.

Jeffrey was a juror for the Charles Taylor Prize for non-fiction books in 2008; the \$75,000 Cundill History Prize in 2011, 2012, 2017 and 2018; the Gelber Prize for the best book on contemporary international affairs in 2019; and the Flood-Baer prize for health policy in 2013. In 2020, he delivered the prestigious Manion Lecture in Ottawa which was watched virtually by more than 4,500 public servants across Canada. He is the Canadian chair of the Trilateral Commission.

Today Jeffrey will speak on the topic of
***"Donald J. Trump: What has given
Rise to him; Why his Impact is
durable; and what it means for
Canada."***



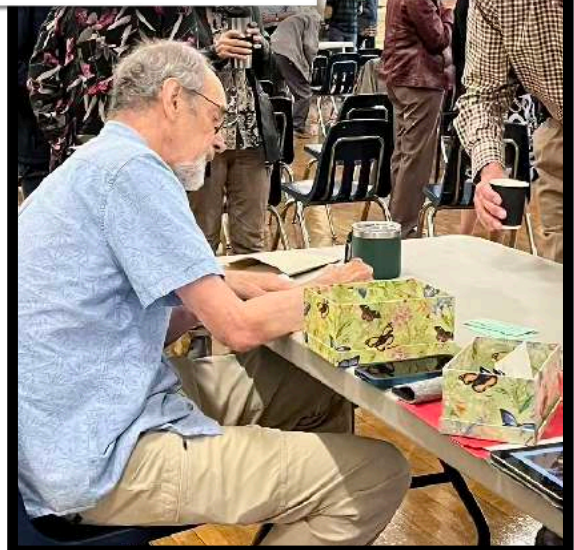
Above, Lynn and Remy Poulin, our Coffee Crew volunteers!

Members in Action



Left, President George Braithwaite welcomes Harry Nasmith, our newest Over-90 Club member.

Below, our tireless Social Committee offers numerous social



Above, Tony Thompson receives this year's membership renewals.

Our October Speaker: Pauline Witzke

Extraordinary Events Cause Global Warming



A fascinating, yet disturbing presentation.

geologist, Pauline was able to tell us the stories of earth's long distant past as recorded in rock layers - layers that have been rigorously studied with decades of exacting scientific research. The global warming shown in those ancient rock layers was caused by more massive volcanic activity than what we see today: from forest fires and burning coal seams ignited by the volcanic activity, and by the release of the potent methane hydrates in melting permafrost.

A rapt Probus audience listened intently to geologist Pauline Witzke's passionate **Climate Change** talk, which drove home the urgency of dealing with climate change ramifications and pin-pointed the seriousness of the situation our planet is facing.

Many of our concerns in life are slotted into a human, not a geological, timeline. The two are vastly different in scale: our time on earth being but a mere blip compared to the millions of years that preceded our existence.

Using her forty-plus years of knowledge and expertise as an environmental

See Climate Change, next page...

...*Climate Change, cont'd.*

The radical difference between what caused those long-past cataclysmic events and our situation today is that ***the CO2 levels now being measured in the earth's atmosphere are generated predominantly from humans burning fossil fuels.*** This burning is releasing the millions of years of stored carbon sequestered in those fuels at an alarming speed. We are on the precipice of matching the high atmospheric levels of CO2 concentration that caused massive extinctions several times in the earth's long distant past.

With the warming of our planet by an insulating atmospheric blanket of carbon dioxide, comes more frequent occurrences of extreme weather. The Gulf Stream that currently moderates climates in countries such as Scotland, is being disrupted to the extent that it is expected to collapse by the end of the century. Ocean warming continues to increase at a severe rate, producing massive algae blooms and reducing oxygen levels - levels that are necessary for sustaining ocean life. Offshoots of these dramatic changes will be food supply issues, rising numbers of climate refugees, and catastrophically higher sea levels.

Even with dramatic changes in our burning of fossil fuels, it would still take 50 years to reverse the damage already done. Actually making those necessary changes is very difficult in the current political climate. Additionally, grass roots efforts are needed to educate those around, us since our technology currently hasn't caught up to the reality of what's needed to deal with this crisis. Though countries like China are making rapid changes with renewable forms of energy, we can't engineer ourselves out of danger.

If we are to avoid crossing the tipping point that will put all life on earth at risk, ***we must stop burning the fossil fuels*** that produce three-quarters of today's greenhouse gases ***and do so within the next 10-25 years.*** We must each change our own lifestyle to reduce our carbon footprint. ***Our life choices really do matter.*** We need to educate as many others as we possibly can about what we now know, and we need to lobby those in power to make the necessary changes. Should you wish further reinforcement of this information, you can easily access an episode called ***The Last Time the Globe Warmed*** on the PBS website program, ***Eons.***

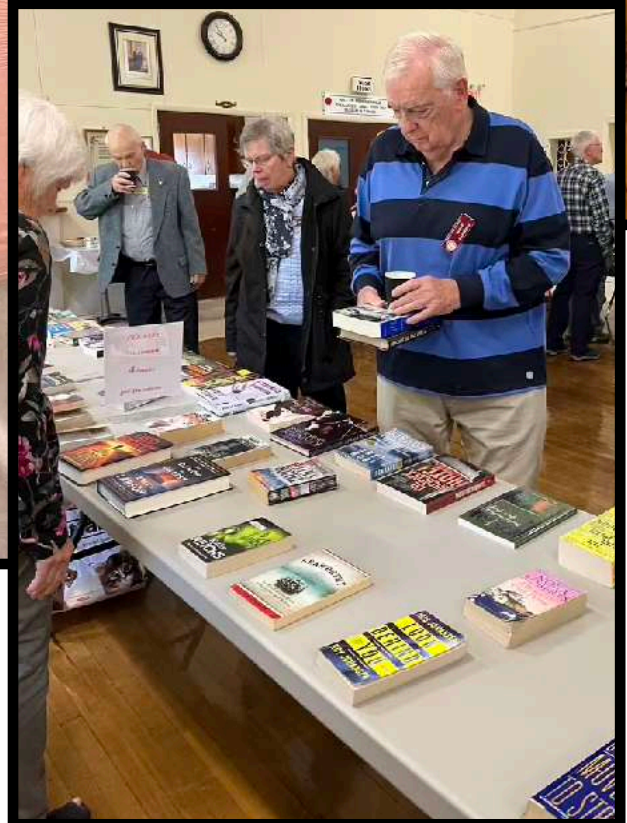
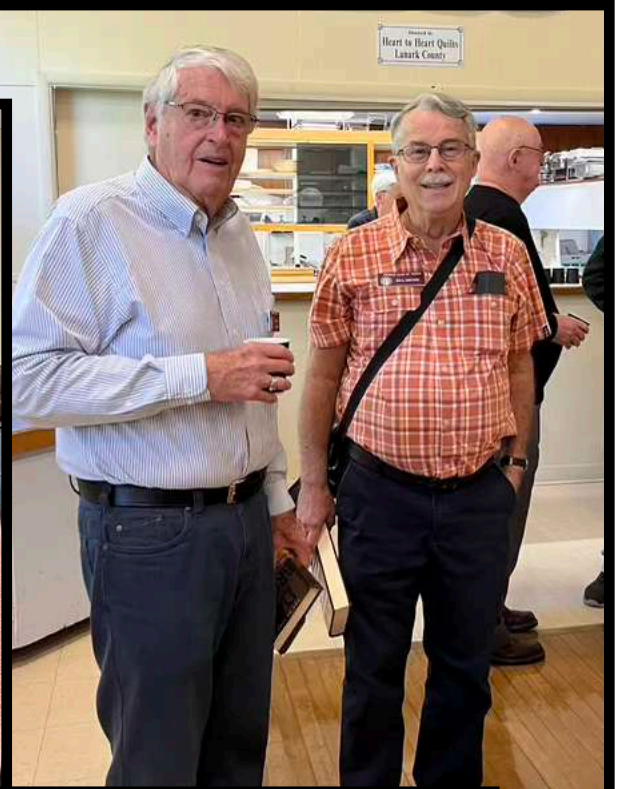
A quote from an audience member succinctly summed up Pauline's message:

"We have met the enemy and he is us."

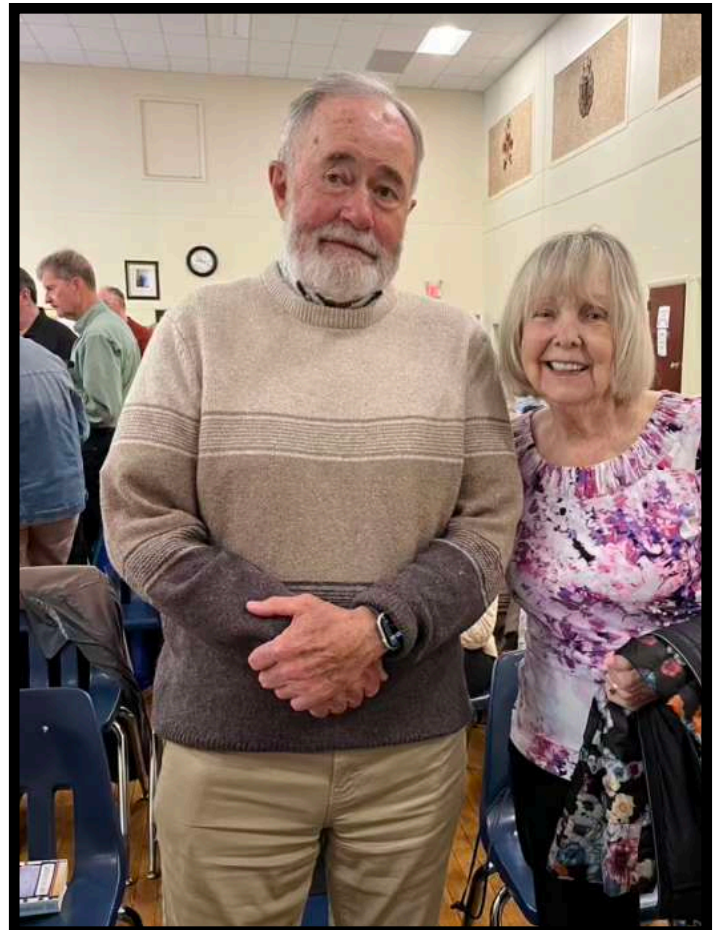
We thank Pauline for her eye-opening presentation, and for donating her well earned honorarium to our local organization for change, Climate Change Network.

Wendy Kaufman

Coffee Break



... More Coffee Break



Probus Speakers for the 2025-2026 Season

Date	Speaker	Topic
2025 Sept 3	Dr. David Philipp	How recreational Angling is reshaping Ontario's bass population
2025 Oct 1	Pauline Witzke	Extraordinary events cause global warming
2025 Nov 5	Jeffery Simpson	Globe & Mail Journalist. Topic to be decided.
2025 Dec 3	Allison Margot Smith	Rideau Lakes film review & commentary
2026 Jan 7	2026 CEO -TBC	Perth Community Foundation
2026 Feb 4	Brandy Lockhart	Parks Ca. Underwater Archeologist
2026 Mar 4	Noelle Reeve	Tay Valley Planner - Land Use Planning Update
2026 Apr 1	Roy MacSkimming	Roy's research on Sir John A. MacDonald
2026 May 6	Gaston Barbon	What a diplomat really does...
2026 Jun 3	Peter Katz	TBC: To be Confirmed



Perth Probus Management Team 2025 - 2026



President: George Braithwaite

Vice President: Maggie Foot

Past President: Mary Kilgour

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

Director at Large: David Brady
(Assisting Graeme Rutledge)

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:

www.probusperth.ca/board.htm