



# THE NEWSLETTER

The PROBUS Club of Simcoe & District  
Meets second Tuesday of each month at St. James United Church hall



## MEETING NOTICE

**Tuesday, May 9, 2023**

**10 a.m., Muriel Bridge Room, St. James United Church, Simcoe.  
9:30 a.m., Book Exchange and Socializing.**

### Guest Speaker

**Historian Mike McDonnell,  
Railways of Waterford and Townsend.**

**Who Am I?**

**Frank Brock.**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

### Review of April 11, 2023, meeting:

Secretary **David Judd** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed 20 members and guest, **Terry Sheppard**. **Dan Pearson** led us in the singing of our National Anthem.

### PROBUS business:

Treasurer **Dave Montross** reported our club is in good financial shape. All 29 members have paid their dues.

**Gerald Sheppard** is lining up speakers.

In a show of hands, members said they would like the return of coffee service. **President Murray Uren** will discuss with **Rick Middaugh**.

Following our speaker, **David Judd** conducted a Norfolk County history quiz.

Example: Which Norfolk County town was once named Sovereign's Corners and later Fredericksburg? How did the town get its current name?

Answer: Delhi. The town was originally named for its founder, Frederick Sovereign.

In 1856, the railway came to town and the station needed a short name to put on its sign. Some British soldiers who had served in India suggested Delhi.

The name stuck with a local twist on how to pronounce it.

### **Guest Speaker: Brian Craig**

“We need more people like **Brian Craig**.” That’s how **Frank Brock** introduced our guest speaker. **Brian** has dedicated his life to sustaining the environment. Born in the Ottawa Valley, Brian was educated at the University of Waterloo, University of Western Ontario and York University.

He has taught at Glendale High School in Tillsonburg, and worked for Environment Canada, Parks Canada, Long Point World Biosphere, Long Point Eco Adventures and Waterloo University as an adjunct professor of Environment and Resource Studies.

“Is there a better place to live in the world than Simcoe, Port Dover or Norfolk County?” **Brian** asked. Norfolk can grow any crop and it has the Long Point World Biosphere Region to promote biodiversity, conservation and sustainable communities.

In 2005, a Millennium Ecosystem Assessment issued a sobering report on the health of the world’s ecosystem. Since then, some progress has been made but in many ways things have become worse. In one generation, since 1975, humans have changed the planet, doubling their population, gobbling up resources, killing off species and promoting climate change.

The good news is much ecosystem degradation can be reversed by 2050, especially if governments adopt local approaches.

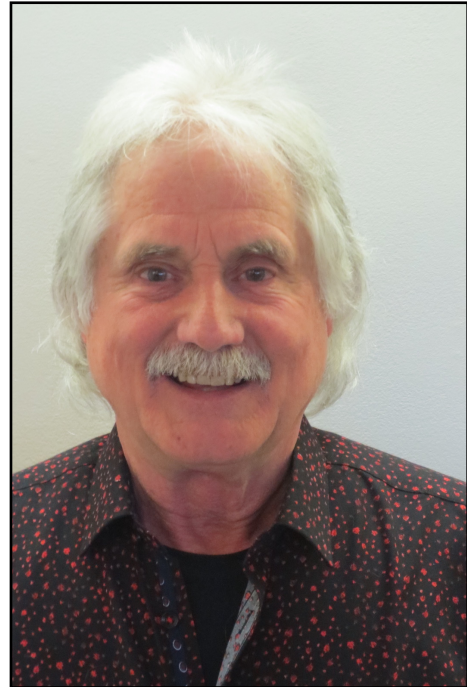
Norfolk County’s Official Plan is a good example. It focuses development in towns and hamlets and protects farmland. Unfortunately, Ontario’s current government is pushing for development at the expense of farmland, forests and wetlands.

It recently released a draft proposal that would allow each farm in the province to sever three lots, each of which could have a house.

At the same time, the province is undermining conservation authorities’ powers to protect wetlands and other natural heritage. Ontario is shifting responsibilities from conservation authorities to municipalities, which have no expertise. Meanwhile, the province is losing 319 acres of farmland a day.

“Use your voice,” **Brian** urged PROBUS members. “Think about what you want for your great, great grandchildren.” He added, “We can all make change.”

**Dave Montross** thanked **Brian**. Our club has made a donation to the Long Point World Biosphere Region.



**Brian Craig**

### **Who Am I: John Lotus**

**John Lotus** was born in St. Thomas in 1955 and moved to Simcoe at age 10. His father, **Meril**, worked for Bell Canada for 34 years, including one year in Saudi Arabia.

At age 11, **John** started working for **Ted Van Kessel** Water Wells on weekends and summers, sparking John's love of water well drilling. **John** also can witch water. He drilled wells and repaired pumps for 25 years until he could no longer take the heavy work. Next John worked 10 years for **Chuck Brimmer** at Norfolk Pool and Spas. Finally, he worked at **Gilbert and McEachern** repairing pumps and motors.

**John** married **Donna Proracki**. The couple have two daughters, **Becky** and **Amy**, and five grandchildren.

In 2019, **John** was inducted into the Norfolk County Sports Hall of Recognition. As a teenager, **John** fell in love with curling and became an ambassador for the sport for 45 years. He was a member of two provincial championship teams with the Simcoe Curling Club in 1982 and 1987.

When his playing career was over, **John** coached a team of visually impaired curlers who went on to win provincial and national championships. He also served as a guide for local golfer **Jim Simmons**, who won the Ontario Visually Impaired Senior Men's Golf Championship in 2011, 2013 and 2015.

**John** and **Donna** have travelled to 47 countries on seven continents.

Thank you, **John**, for telling us your story.



**John Lotus**

### **Just for laughs: the genius of comedian Steven Wright**

- I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize.
- 82.7 per cent of all statistics are made up on the spot.
- If everything seems to be going well, obviously you overlooked something.
- Hard work pays off in the future. Laziness pays off now.
- What happens if you get scared half to death twice?
- The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.
- How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?
- Half the people you know are below average.
- Eagles may soar but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.
- If your car could travel at the speed of light, would your headlights work?
- When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?
- My mechanic told me, "I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder."