

PROBUS NEWSLETTER

Information in this newsletter is for Probus members only

DIARY

GENERAL MEETINGS

9:30 am at The Hunters Hill Club
12 Madeline St Hunters Hill

Thursday

Dinner at the Hunters Hill Club

6pm in the week of the General Meeting

Tuesday 6th August

Guest Speaker

Rae McIntock will present an overview of Sydney Living Museums and its 12 properties and museums, including Elizabeth Bay House, The Mint, Hyde Park Barracks Museum and many more

Thursday 8th August

Walking Group

Darling Harbour to Circular Quay
See details on page 3
Contact Rick Collins
0411 023 473

Wednesday 14th August

Archibald Prize Exhibition

Art Gallery of NSW 14:00
Meet in the foyer 1:45pm

1 Hour Guided tour

Cost \$20

Names and money to Anne Day

Friday, 16th August

Book Club

Hunters Hill Museum - 14:00

Book for the month is "Sarah's Key" by Tatania de Rodney

Afternoon Tea - Kay Holt

Christmas in July - Bathurst

Early Sunday 28th July saw an intrepid band of travellers rugged up to face the cold and journey to Bathurst where it was to be even colder. Sadly, a couple of cancellations at the last minute due to health issues reduced our numbers to 39.

We set off heading up the M2 in jovial spirits and were due to stop for a comfort stop and morning tea break near Windsor. Alarmingly, Peter our jovial driver announced a lack of air in the bus. Not the atmospheric kind rather that which was needed to open the doors, lower and raise his seat, not to mention assist breaking and steering.

Despite comments to the contrary he decided to stop and investigate. Shortly thereafter he advised us he would need to order a replacement bus as his was now undriveable. He decided to set up for morning tea where we were, in the shadow of a magnificent Shell service station. As luck would have it another On-Course bus driver, enroute for the Blue Mountains came along, stopped and after some discussions with Peter, corrected the problem and had us road worthy again hence, off we set. Next stop, Mount Tomah for a quick "leg-stretch" look in the reception area then off to Bathurst.



We stopped for lunch at the Church Bar and Wood fired Pizza. Church Bar sits on Ribbon Gang Lane which was named after the infamous 'Ribbon Gang.'



In 1830, ten members of the Ribbon Gang were hanged on charges of murder, bush ranging and horse thieving.



It stands as the largest public execution in Bathurst's history.

Church Bar is housed in the old Anglican Church School House and continues to wow visitors with its grandeur.

After lunch we picked up a local tour guide and had a scenic drive around the Bathurst area. It was amazing how much local history there is to the city.



Christmas in July - Bathurst (cont)

Bathurst, a country town in the Central Tablelands, about 200 kilometres west-northwest of Sydney, is the oldest inland settlement in Australia and had a population of 38,000. It is often referred to as the Gold Country as it was the site of the first gold discovery and where the first gold rush occurred in Australia. Today education, tourism and manufacturing drive the economy. The internationally known racetrack Mount Panorama is a landmark of the city. Bathurst has a historic city centre with many ornate buildings remaining from the gold rush period of the mid to late 19th century.

Later in the afternoon we adjourned to the magnificent Rydges hotel overlooking the Mount Panorama circuit.



A few racing enthusiasts repaired to the National Motor Racing Museum and immersed themselves in history.

After freshening up we met in the lobby for the short trip to Abercrombie House.

James Horne Stewart, the son of William Stewart built Abercrombie House in about 1870. It was then called "The Mount" and took eight years to construct. James lived there until his death in 1920 when he was 95 years of age. He was born in 1825 in Edinburgh, Scotland and came with his family to Australia at the age of ten in 1835. In 1855 he married the daughter of the Rev. William Boyce, a very prominent clergyman. The couple had five children, three sons and two daughters. Over the years James had many tenant farmers and several newspaper articles mentioned his kindness as a landlord. In times of drought he cut the rents by half so that the families did not endure undue hardship.



When James died in 1920 his son Athol took over the management of the property. Athol was born at Abercrombie House in 1867. He married Frances McDougall in 1905. On the death of his wife in 1927, Athol shut the house down and moved to Sydney. The house remained empty and gradually fell into decline.

The house was bought from James Stewart's great grandson in late 1968 by Rex Morgan AM, MBE, and Mary Morgan. Rex is a widely noted and three times nationally honoured educationalist. A condition of the sale was that the name of the house be changed resulting in Morgan's selection of 'Abercrombie House'. This was a reference both to the shire of that name in which the property was situated and to General Sir Ralph Abercrombie, under whom William Stewart had served in the 1790s in the

West Indies. The Morgans embarked on a complete restoration of the house and property. In 1969 they commenced a programme of public heritage tours of the house which has continued today.

Christmas in July - Bathurst (cont)

FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 3rd September

Guest Speaker

Clive Small talking about
"The Dark Side"

Wednesday 18th September

Sausage Sizzle

Peter Kelly / Jim Likidis
Details TBA

Tuesday 24th September

Opal Outing - Reserve Bank Tour

Meet outside bank, 65 Martin
Place 9:45am
Barbara Gardner

Wednesday 9th October
**Norman Lindsay Gallery / High
Tea at the Carrington**

\$110 pp incl Morning tea, admis-
sion, guided tour, lunch coffee
and bus transportation

Thursday 24th October
Opal Outing

Ferry to Manly for Lunch
Ann Juster

Monday 4th November
Good Old Days Concert

Proms Concert
11:00am Sydney Town Hall
Barbara Banner - cost \$45

Tuesday 12th November
General Meeting

Delayed due to Melbourne Cup

Tuesday 19th November
Flower Power - Mona Vale

TBA Bambi Michael

Wednesday 27th November
Sea Food BBQ

Christopher Morgan, the son of the owner, told us that his father, Rex and his wife came to Bathurst from Sydney in 1968 with their three children, in search of a weekend retreat. They were looking for a weekender and ended up with this - a 50 room mansion. Rex still owns the property, and Christopher is the property manager. Christopher said growing up with his two other siblings in Abercrombie House was a magical experience.

The family has spent the last 40-odd years working to restore the house and make it accessible to the public through tours and events. Rex had always envisaged it becoming a great cultural centre, and it's only the last few years that it's really become that. Christopher says he's privileged to be able to live in the historic residence, and provide his children with a similar experience to his own.



Christmas in July - Bathurst (cont)

After a fascinating introduction to the house from Christopher and a chance to wander around and take it all in, it was time to adjourn to the Ballroom and settle in for dinner. During the feast we were entertained by a duo, with an astonishing background that I won't go into, singing a range of Christmas carols and related songs from yesteryear.



The next morning after breakfast (can you believe that) we checked out and set off for Mayfield Gardens, a botanical garden situated in Oberon. The garden is one of the world's largest privately owned cool climate gardens, lying within a 2,000-hectare agricultural area.

Developed by botanist Garrick Hawkins, Mayfield has been inspired by the gardens of Europe, which features vast greenery vistas, an avenue of trees, dazzling seasonal colours and ornamental flowering. It is made up of two main garden areas, Mayfield Garden and the Hawkins' Family Private Garden.



This wasn't the best time of year to see the gardens in all their splendour but I can imagine many of us will be making our way back there come October, November.

From the President

I have had a number of enquiries about the proposed \$5 booking fee to be charged for major outings and events.

With our current fixed costs of about \$7,000 per annum and membership fees amounting to about \$5,000 annually it is fairly apparent that we do not have a great surplus of funds with which to cover optional expenses or cover increase in our fixed costs. Items like the PSPL Capitation fees, the charge from the Hunters Hill Club for the use of the premises and so on are beyond our control and we would be negligent in our responsibilities if we didn't cater for cost increases.

We have a moderate source of income from Jim Judge's monthly raffle but insufficient to cover unexpected costs. Ideally, we would like to have a surplus equivalent to one year's subscriptions in reserve.

A modest "booking fee" is one way of slightly increasing our revenue and one I imagine our membership would understand. Simple activities such as Opal outings, visits to Art Gallery and so on would not attract the booking fee but events such as the trip to Bathurst, the various large lunches, multi-day outings would.

Last year we increased the annual membership fee from \$45 to \$50, increasing our income by \$500, given a membership pegged at 100. I suspect we will be putting a more substantial increase proposal to the membership later this year.

Mike Allum

Book Club



“The Tailors Girl” by Fiona McIntosh. Some said “unbelievable” and there was some division as to happy or sad endings, but I’m delighted to report that on most issues there was consensus. We discussed the physical and psychological trauma of war, this being purportedly the story of a shell shocked veteran of World War One. It was argued as to why it was called “The Tailors Girl”. So it was suggested that this was not so much a post war love story but an expression of female emancipation, from being denied a career because you were female, being promised in matrimony to someone you didn’t love and of being forcefully ejected from a men’s club. Some of us were fascinated by the discussion of female fashions and wedding dresses from 1918 to the 1920s.

Well, our heroine went out and found herself a man until then a resident in a sanatorium and made her way despite some setbacks, in the fashion world.

Intertwined with this narrative is the heartbreaking tale of a wealthy aristocrat, a veteran returned from the trenches to civilian life, robbed of his status and his mind, rehabilitated to a new entity in a sanatorium, a shadow of his former self, wrestling with two lives, both his own but poles apart.

There are a number of convenient coincidences and fortuitous events, some sad, but overall the narrative is entertaining. Was the ending happy? We’ll tell you later.

Richard Jones

Walking Group



Circular Quay – Darling Harbour – Barangaroo – The Rocks - Circular Quay. Approximately 7 to 8 kilometers and easy walking for members and friends

Catching the 9.24 ferry at Valentia St. Woolwich arriving Circular Quay at 9.47. Ten catch the 10.05 ferry to Darling Harbour and walk around the Darling Harbour waterfront via Pyrmont Bridge past the Exhibition Centre, the waterfront restaurant area, then follow the King Street wharf walkway past the waterfront restaurants, the construction of the Crown Resort Casino and the new Barangaroo metro station. We then walk along the Walsh Bay waterfront around Barangaroo, under the Harbour Bridge at Dawes Point then walk along the waterfront and back to Circular Quay to catch the 1.45 ferry back to Woolwich arriving at 2.09pm. There are plenty of toilets all along the way.

The walk will not go ahead if raining. Contact Rick Collins 0411 023 473 if not sure. You are welcome to bring a friend or friends.

Rick Collins

Barbara’s Thought for the Month

Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind always.

Author unknown

Editor’s Musings

The Miss Universe pageant is fixed. All the winners are from Earth.

Time is what keeps everything from happening at once.

How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Burke and Wills “Dig Tree”

On Tues 21 May, Neville and Judy Davey, Josephine and myself set off from Adelaide on a nine- day eco-adventure to visit the historical ‘dig tree’ made famous by the 1861 Burke and Wills Expedition across Australia.

We travelled in two Toyota Land Cruisers (total eight passengers) with a company called ‘Spirit Safaris’.

We stayed at Wilpena Pound, Arkaroola and finally Innamincka, at the end of the Strzelecki Track.



From there we went on to see the ‘dig tree’ on the banks of Cooper Creek. Burke and Wills died closer to Innamincka and King was the only survivor of the party that travelled to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Later their bodies were taken to Melbourne for a monumental funeral in Melbourne Cemetery.

Our tour then proceeded to Marree and William Creek where, on a two-hour flight, we saw Lake Eyre full of water for the first time for many years. From here we went on to Coober Pedy where we slept in our under-ground Motel room. On the ninth day we travelled back to Adelaide, at last on a bitumen highway.

We would like to talk at length and share some wonderful photography with members at a future Probus Meeting.

Ross McBride

**PROBUS CLUB OF HUNTERS HILL AND DISTRICT
PO BOX 1041 HUNTERS HILL 2110**

President	-	Mike Allum	0417 596 300
Vice President		TBA	
Immediate Past President	-	Margaret Conley	9817 0123
Secretary	-	Carolyn Jolly	9437 6229
Treasurer	-	Judith Dunstan	9460 7164
Activities Convenor	-	Barbara Banner	9427 0102
Speakers	-	Carol Pelham	9808 5020
Welfare Officer	-	Ashlyn Allum	9816 3269
Membership Officer	-	Peter Kelly	0411 696 583
Committee	-	Garth Juster	9817 5434
Book Club Convenor	-	Joan Gai	9817 1301
Newsletter Editor	-	Mike Allum	0417 596 300
		(email: mike.allum@bigpond.com)	
Honorary Auditor	-	Bruce Luscombe	

Probus Club of Hunters Hill

PO BOX 1041
HUNTERS HILL NSW 2110



August Birthdays

Robyn Hogan	6
John Sorensen	14
Bronwyn Ellens	21
Bruce Hattersley	24
Mike Allum	29

SPARE A MINUTE

Minutes of the 483rd Meeting of Hunters Hill Probus Club at the Hunters Hill Club on Tuesday 2nd July at 9:30am

OPENING

Following the National Anthem, the President Mike Allum asked that all mobile phones be turned off and then welcomed visitors Robyn Beck, Beverley Sodbinow, Rose Zlomanczuk, Sally Rogers, Robyn Cole, Jo Week and Kerry Tuck. Faye Likidis was then presented with her Probus Member badge.

Mike then advised the Meeting that Gordon Sanson our Membership Officer was experiencing some health issues and would be taking a break from his role. Peter Kelly very kindly offered to fill in until such time as Gordon is well enough to return.

Mike also advised that, with the passing of the late Alan James, there is now a vacancy for a Life Membership. Outstanding long service nominees should be submitted to the Management Committee for consideration and if approved referred to next Meeting for confirmation by a special resolution to members. Any nominations are welcome prior to the next Meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A copy of the condensed Minutes are contained in the Newsletter was

Experiencing without Seeing

Margaret Conley introduced our guest speaker Nick Gleeson, who spoke on his book *The Many Ways of Seeing*.

Nick was sighted until the age of seven when an automatic supermarket door struck his head, causing a retinal detachment. His sight deteriorated over the next couple of weeks and his mother's face was the last image he saw before he went totally blind.

He was blessed with parents who were determined that he should be able to do things other boys could do. He took up blind cricket and athletics and by practice and perseverance made great improvements in his performance.

Nick's book is about his extreme adventures, including reaching the base camp at Everest and the top of Mt Kilimanjaro and says.



becoming a Paralympic athlete and skydiver.

There's also been three New York City Marathons, a race up the more than 1,500 stairs of the Empire State Building, a 90km ultra marathon in South Africa, a hiking and climbing trip through New Zealand and a trek across the Simpson Desert as well as completing a degree in literature.

In between all that Nick has found the time to have a career as a motivational speaker and become a published author.

While some may question how Nick has done all that with no vision, he doesn't think it's anything out of the ordinary. "For me, it's never been about demonstrating what I can or can't do. All the things I've done have been things I've wanted to experience myself," he

accepted.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Letter received for one nomination for Life Membership. Matter to be referred to Management Committee.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Carolyn Jolly reported the following correspondence received:

- i. Probus Public Liability Certificate of Currency received for year ending June 30 2020;
- ii. Dept. of Fair Trading confirming Public Officer and address;
- iii. Letter from Gladesville Probus thanking us for attendance at their Welsh Choir Concert;
- v. Letter from AON Insurance renewing Club Contents Policy.
- v. Letter received for Life Membership nomination.

TREASURER'S REPORT

\$10,804.96 As at May 1st 2019
Including Activities - \$8,500.83 YTD

WELFARE REPORT

Ashlyn Allum reported that reported that Greg Griffith was not well at the moment but is looking forward to coming back. Barbara Gardner is recovering from her shoulder surgery. Wendell Watt is much improved and she is now back driving. Lorraine Kongats has been in hospital but home now.

ACTIVITIES REPORT

Barbara Banner thanked Ashlyn Allum for looking after everything in her absence and reported that the trip to the Archibald Prize would be held on Wednesday, August 14th with money to be taken by Ann Day at next Meeting.

Ashlyn Allum reported that 42 people were attending the Christmas in July Abercrombie House outing and an email would be send out with exact timings to all attendees. Ross McBride confirmed the Sydney University tour, on behalf of the Ladies Club, and gave full itinerary.

WALKING GROUP

Rick Collins advised next Club walk would be the following Thursday, with details in Newsletter.

BOOK CLUB

Richard Jones confirmed the Book Club is on the 3rd Friday of each month at 2pm. This month's book would be *The Taylor Girl* by Fiona McIntosh. He hoped it would be a "better read" than last months!

RAFFLE

Jim Judge sold 335 raffle tickets. Winners were:

- 1. Jean Fong, 2. Peter Kelly, 3. Judith Love

Before the Meeting broke for morning tea to be followed by our Speaker for the month Nick Gleeson (a remarkable individual inviting us to explore a world without sight), Vincie Wahlquist took to the floor to thank everyone for their generosity in donating to the Hunters Hill's July Hardship Assistance.

ATTENDANCE

Present 69, Apologies 28, Visitors 6

A FULL COPY OF THE MINUTES MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE SECRETARY