

PROBUS NEWSLETTER

Information in this newsletter is for Probus members only

September

General Meeting

Tuesday 7th September
Gladesville Sporties Club

9:30

Guest Speaker

Harry Kimble - Silk Road

Thursdays

Coffee Morning - The Sunroom

Thursday 9th September

Scenic Roaming
TBA - Rick Collins

Friday 10th September

Exotic Lunch - Little Sicily
194 Marion St, Leichhardt
Dean: 9816 5357

Monday 13th September

Sausage Sizzle
Venue TBA

Wednesday 15th September

Scenic Lunch
Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron
Kirribilli
Dean: 9816 5357

Friday 17th September

Book Club
Hunters Hill Museum 14:00
Book TBA

Tuesday 21st September

Movies - TBA
Sandy Mower

Tuesday 21st September

President's Lunch

Wednesday 22nd September

Technical Outing
Royal Navy Museum
David Lorsch

Friday 24th September

Art Group - TBA
Margaret Timbs

Saturday 30th October

Sydney Welsh Choir
Rescheduled from July

From the President

I hope you are all well, safe and as happy as one can be living under the current Covid restrictions.

We are now into the 8th week of the lockdown, and I am sure, that if you are feeling like I am, you are sick of it. Unfortunately, we have what we have, and we must not let this get us down. When will we see some relief from the restrictions? Who knows? We need to find ways to spend our time and see this through.

For me and my family we go for walks each day, do some work around the house and home schooling seems to make the day go quickly. I particularly look forward to the walk each day and enjoy it a lot when I come across several friends, some from Probus, when we stop and have a quick chat.

I particularly like the article written by Dean Letcher, included in this Newsletter (page 5), which suggests some walks to take.

Regarding Club business, we held a PMC meeting on 5th August on Zoom. We covered a lot of ground and I am pleased to advise that we have accepted 6 applications for membership to join our Club. I am so looking forward to our next member meeting, whenever we will be allowed to hold one, when we will be inducting 2 applications previously approved, making 8 new members.

Unfortunately, regarding our August activities, all have been cancelled. A decision will be made towards the end of August as to what we will be doing regarding the next Member meeting, President's Lunch, Sausage Sizzle, and other activities, due to be held in September.

We aim to publish our Newsletter bi-monthly for the duration of the lockdown. To this end, I encourage you to send Mike, articles on how you are spending your time during this lockdown. I am sure other members would love to hear and relate to this.

In closing, please try and keep safe and well during these difficult times, keep in touch with each other and if you have not yet had your vaccination, I would encourage you to consider having the jab if you are able as soon as you can.

Jim

The Use of the Name Probus in our Family - Gordon Sanson

In my search for an account of my mother's family history, I was sent some old papers dated 1929, to do with an earlier researcher who had drafted a book on our early family.

These papers told me our family came from a town out of Rouen, Normandy, France, "de Preaux" the owner of the castle in that town called Eudo dePreaux who was the right-hand man for William the Conqueror. Over fifty family members were leaders in his army, winning the Battle of Hasting and then going on too many administrative rolls including that of producing the Doomsday Book. William gave the family land known as Chagford in Devon in 1080 and descendants still live there.

It's amazing how the families that ventured into the New Worlds, Canada, America and Australia came from the same family tree. In England it became Prous or Prouse and later Prowse.

I also noted that any member of the family that entered Church service changed their surname to the Latin variation Probus. These were mostly Bishops and Archbishops. But that was the name I found our family history in Family Search under "A Celebration of the deeds and daring of the descendants of Osbert Probus. c 1080" Osbert was an Archbishop and the son of Eudo de Preaux

So I have been kept busy throughout Covid putting this information into our Australian Family Tree published in 1992 that was from 1760.

Gordon Sanson

Member Article

I'm pleased to note that my comments on the last page of the August Newsletter weren't totally ignored. Within about one hour of issuing it I received the following response, including photos, from Diane Drew in the UK (wondered why I hadn't seen her for a while).

Sure beats what we've all been doing the last couple of months.

Ed

Dear Mike, You asked for any interesting lockdown activities.

Last June my partner and myself applied for Border Force clearance to attend to our 57 foot "canal boat" in the UK. This was granted and we left Sydney on Singapore Airlines on June 24th. (no quarantine required for us).

After carrying out repairs (7 new batteries) for a week we are now cruising the canals here. We started at Nantwich and are now on the Thames near Oxford. We find canal cruising the best holiday one could have. We moor each night in some quaint village and walk for a few kilometers around the pretty often stone houses. We often eat at a local village pub and soak up the atmosphere. No masks and no sign of COVID here, maybe the big cities have it, life seems pretty normal here.

We are so lucky but our boat would not have lasted another year on hard stand at the Marina.



Our Boat



Many Farms



Many Bridges



Many Friendly Waves



Many, many, many Pubs

An American's Opinion of Australia

The following article was sent to me by Barbara Gardner, who in turn received it from a friend. We agree, it is worth sharing this with you, particularly in these less than ideal times.

Ed

* * * * *

David Mason is a Writer, a Professor, and a Poet Laureate from Colorado, USA

"There's a lot to admire about Australia, especially if you're a visiting American", says David Mason. "More often than you might expect, Australian friends patiently listening to me enthuse about their country have said, 'We need outsiders like you to remind us what we have'".

So here it is - a small presumptuous list of what one foreigner admires in Oz.'

Health care.

I know the controversies, but basic national health care is a gift. In America, medical expenses are a leading cause of bankruptcy. The drug companies dominate politics and advertising. Obama was being crucified for taking halting baby steps towards sanity. You can't turn on the telly without hours of drug advertisements - something I have never yet seen here. And your emphasis on prevention - making cigarettes less accessible, for one - is a model.

Food.

Yes, we have great food in America too, especially in the big cities. But your bread is less sweet, your lamb is cheaper, and your supermarket vegetables and fruits are fresher than ours. Too often in my country America, an apple is a ball of pulp as big as your face. The dainty Pink Lady apples of Oz are the juiciest I've had.

And don't get me started on coffee. In American small towns it tastes like water flavoured with burnt dirt but the smallest shop in the smallest town in Oz can make a first-rate latte. I love your ubiquitous bakeries, and your hot-cross buns. Shall I go on?

Language.

How do you do it? The rhyming slang and Aboriginal place names are like magic spells. Words that seem vaguely English yet also resemble an argot from another planet. I love the way institutional names get turned into diminutives - Vinnie's and Salvos (St Vincent De Paul & Salvation Army) - and absolutely nothing's sacred.

Everything is an opportunity for word games and everyone has a nickname. Lingo makes the world go round. It's the spontaneous wit of the people that tickles me most. Late one night at a barbie my new mate Suds remarked: "Nothing's the same since 24-7." (sic)

Amen to that.

Free-to-air TV.

In Oz, you buy a TV, plug it in and watch some of the best programming I've ever seen - uncensored. In America, you can't get diddly-squat without paying a cable or satellite company heavy fees. In Oz a few channels make it hard to choose. In America, you've got 400 channels and nothing to watch.

Small shops.

Outside the big cities in America corporations have nearly erased them. Identical malls with identical restaurants serving inferior food. Except for geography, it's hard to tell one American town from another. The "take-away" culture here in Australia is wonderful. The human encounters are real - people love to stir, and stories get told. The curries here are to die for. And you don't have to tip!

Free camping.

We used to have this too, and I guess it's still free when you backpack miles away from the roads. But I love the fact that in Oz everyone owns the shoreline and in many places you can pull up a camper van and stare at the sea for weeks. I love the "primitive" and independent camp-grounds, the life out-of-doors. The few idiots who leave their stobbies and rubbish behind in these pristine places ought to be transported in chains to the penal colonies.

Religion.

In America, it's everywhere - especially where it's not supposed to be, like politics. I imagine you have your Pharisees too, making a big public show of devotion, but I have yet to meet one here.

Roads.

Peak hour aside, I've found travel on your roads pure heaven. My country's "Freeways" are crowded, crumbling, insanely knotted with looping overpasses - it's like racing homicidal maniacs on fraying spaghetti! I've driven the Hume Highway without stress, and I love the Princes Highway when it's two lanes. Ninety minutes south of Bateman's Bay I was sorry to see one billboard for a McDonald's. It's blocking a lovely paddock view. Someone should remove the MacDonal'd's Billboard.

An American's Opinion of Australia

Real multiculturalism.

I know there are tensions, just like anywhere else, but I love the distinctiveness of your communities and the way you publicly acknowledge the Aboriginal past. Recently, too, I spent quality time with the Melbourne Greeks, and was gratified both by their devotion to their own great language and culture and their openness to an Afghan lunch.

Fewer guns.

You had Port Arthur in 1996 and got real in response. America replicates such massacres several times a year and nothing changes. Why? Our religion of individual rights makes the good of the community an impossible dream. Instead of "mateship" we have "It's mine and nobody else's".

We talk a great game about freedom, but too often live in fear.

There's more to say - your kaleidoscopic birds, your perfumed bush in springtime, your vast beaches.

These are just a few of the blessings that make Australia a rarity. Of course, it's not paradise - nowhere is - but I love it here.

No need to wave flags like the Americans, and add to the world's windiness.

Value what you have in Australia and don't give it away!

AUSSIE CONCLUSION:

Nothing is perfect but we have much to be thankful for.

Education Corner

FOR THOSE THAT HAVE NEVER SEEN A CATFISH !!



Proposed New Activity - Gardens Group

I will be proposing at the next members meeting, whenever it may be, a new Probus small group activity, limited in numbers only by the number of members likely to be interested.

The idea is to go to a particular Botanical Garden in the Sydney area for a detailed look at its specialities, hopefully assisted by a talk from one of the staff and then to have a morning tea or lunch (or both) as required.

This will be a spring-summer activity initially and starting only when we are free of COVID restrictions.

Examples of some proposed locations are:

- * The Japanese Garden at Auburn – what makes a garden 'Japanese' rather than "Tropical" or "Chinese", is it the layout, choice of plants, methods of pruning etc? How do the Japanese enjoy a garden differently from our perspective?
- * Kuringai Wildflower Garden at St Ives – Why do these elegant orchids choose to grow out of barren sand stone rocks? Why are Australian shrubs flowering in winter? Why don't they do the decent European thing and lose their leaves in autumn?
- * Prof Waterhouse's Camellia garden at Pymble
- * The Chinese Garden in the city – a little manicured oasis with every stone carefully placed

More suggestions greeted warmly.

Dean

Walking is Good for You

Independent walking in the sundrenched winter harbourside.

- ◆ Tired of Nordic Noir?
- ◆ Bored by the Binge, Netflix, Stan and every other streaming site?
- ◆ Restless despite walking around the suburban block every day?

You may like to explore some nooks of Sydney you have never dreamed existed. You could even meet some other wrinklies [at a safe distance], enjoy a coffee in the sun [on your own].

Exchange a few words with familiar faces as you pass by and all within 10 km of your home while exercising for the good of New South Wales and your mental health. There are no Probus activities possible in lockdown but who knows who you might see at the same time and place!

Some possibilities could include:

- ◆ Callan Park – 50 acres of parkland and kilometres of harbour views. Down Victoria Road and turn right into Darling Street. About 150 metres along park in the free half hour spots and get coffee and pastries at one of two shops across the road. Then continue to the next lights and turn right into the old Callan Park, head for the imposing sandstone buildings but turn right and go down the hill for about 1.5 km to the harbour foreshore with ample parking and seats nearby. Walk east, walk west on the level with birds, trees and water and a wistful view of Romantic Rodd island. At 9.30 on a Tuesday morning, what could be healthier and nicer? [Not weekends – too crowded]
- ◆ Clarke’s Point – Along Woolwich Road, get a coffee at Ironwood Café and walk. EITHER park there and walk down through the Goat Paddock [across the road from the Woolwich Pier hotel], past the fascinating Woolwich Dock with luxury craft having barnacles taken off their aristocratic bottoms and then around the foreshore track or through the parklands and then back up to the car.

Or ALTERNATIVELY, drive down to the parking area near the Yacht Club and walk the reverse route perhaps stopping to collect a coffee from the Deckhouse takeawayBLISS. Especially about 9.30 on a fine Wednesday morning. You never know, others may have a similar idea.....

Further suggestions gratefully received

Dean

Editors Musings

Why do they call it “getting your dog fixed” if afterwards it doesn’t work anymore?

If an orange is orange, why isn’t a lime called a green or a lemon called a yellow?

If you rip a hole in a net, there are actually fewer holes in it than there were before.

Many animals probably need glasses, but nobody knows it.

Reprinted from Judith’s Residence Newsletter.

Sharing the love

There’s little in life that brings as much joy as connecting with a loved one.

Though Greater Sydney is in lockdown, we’re still creating connections in a number of ways, including virtual visits, window visits, and surprise gifts.

Last month, resident Judith spent some time catching up with her daughter from the safety of her balcony.



They can put us in “lockdown” but they can’t separate us

Barbara’s Thought for the mid-Month

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to loo fear in the face.

You are able to say to yourself - “I lived through this horror, I can take the next thing that comes along.”

You must do the things you think you cannot do.

Author: Eleanor Roosevelt

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

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WEBSITE: www.huntershillprobus.org

Submissions for the Newsletter

Here's a "starter kit", a "template" for you.

To the Editor,

During lockdown I (enter activity. **It was** (fun, boring, dangerous, busy, loud, hard work, pick those that apply or add your own).

I (am still doing it, am over it, am glad I did, wish I hadn't started it) **because** (complete as appropriate).

I **have** (attached photos, written a book about it, am contemplating making a movie, add others as applies).

Thank you for giving me the opportunity of sharing my experiences with my fellow members.

Signed