

PROBUS NEWSLETTER

Information in this Newsletter is for Probus members only



FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 6th December

General Meeting

Gladesville Sporties Club - 10:00

Guest Speaker: Ray Rees

"Sydney Heritage Fleet"

Thursdays

Coffee Morning

Sunroom 10:00 am

Tuesday 6th December

Wine Appreciation

Returning in February

7th - 8th December

Hunter Valley Gardens

Friday 9th December

Exotic Lunch

See Page 2

Dean Letcher: 0439 736 006

Monday 12th December

Christmas Lunch

Gladesville Sporties

Friday 16th December

Book Club

Xmas Lunch

Returning in January

Tuesday 20th December

Movies

Returning in January

Wednesday 21st December

Scenic Dining

Returning in January



From the President



At last a real summer with sunny days and the brilliant jacaranda giving way to the Christmas Bush – or at least that’s how it was until the next rainstorm arrived.

The Wizards of Oz did even better than could be hoped in the World Cup (football) and the women did even better (League).

We live in a time of polarization and division (Brexit, Trump, Ukraine, cancel culture, Britney) but Christmas can be a time of realising what a mixture of origins, influences and opinions have gone to make up our society. Jesus was a Jew, he spoke Aramaic not Latin, Christmas marks the shortest day of the European year, the Mesopotamians in 1800 BC had a legend of the Flood, Aboriginal ‘firestick farming’ may save our bush...we take from everywhere.

And hopefully we give as freely as we take:

1 Remember to bring food and fun items for Community Care donations to the December meeting.

2 The Sydney Morning Herald has a weekly HELPDESK showing opportunities for volunteers of all ages and skills and the three below seem to offer the right locality and work for Probus Hunters Hill members. If any appeal to you then contact www.volunteering.com.au. You may well be helping yourself or people close to you or people you have never known.

See scanned document from SMH - Page 8

Down in our little corner of the world some are recovering from the excesses of Black Friday, not the bushfires, just the shopping day after "Thanksgiving", an American custom unknown here, as we prepare for our Probus Christmas lunch - probably roast turkey and cranberry sauce, yet another American introduction! It's all ghastly, like Halloween, guess from where?.

Dean

Hidden Talent

Congratulations go to Tony Saunders for his painting "Dan's Place" being accepted and exhibited at the Hunters Hill Art show on 12-13 November.

Tony is a man of many talents and obviously, art is one of those special talents he possesses.

Well done Tony.

Can anyone identify the scene ?



Jim

FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 3rd January

General Meeting
Gladesville Sporties - 10:00

Guest Speaker:
Prod Maria Fiatarone
"Brain v Brawn"

Thursdays

Coffee Morning
Sunroom 10:00 am

Tuesday 3rd January

Wine Appreciation
Returning in February

Friday 13th January

Exotic Lunch
TBA
Dean Letcher: 0439 736 006

Tuesday 16th January

Movies
TBA
Sandy Mower

Friday 20th January

Book Club
TBA
Margaret Timbs: 0438 063 620

Wednesday 25th January

Scenic Dining
TBA
Dean Letcher

Exotic Lunching

November Report

Twelve Probians bit back at Sri Lanka Bites restaurant in Glebe with the courageous being well-rewarded by their choice of the Cashew Nut Curry (sweetly nutty and not too hot) while Hill Station Chicken revived thoughts of the effete English Raj masters seeking cool refuge from the heat and everyone enjoyed the exotic thrill of the String Hoppers – lacy pancakes shaped to hold the flavoursome and not too hot curries.

We are inclined to forget that the hellishly hot curries were designed to flavour the large mounds of rice necessary for life and of which there was no alternative. This is the whole basis of Asian food just as pasta sauce was designed to help down the huge bowls of pasta necessary for work and life in the fields of Italy.

In any event, we rolled out well-satisfied and dreaming of equatorial days or daze.

December Details

"MAMAK" is a Malaysian restaurant at 1-5 Railway Street Chatswood adjacent to the station and bus stop. This food is a blend, like the population, of Indian, Indonesian and Chinese so Nasi Lemak includes peanuts, egg, sweet chilli sauce, rice and tiny dried fish.

The Chicken sticks come in a rich Satay sauce and the ROJAK is a salad including coconut, cooling cucumber, the odd chilli and yes, more peanuts. There are more flavours to be explored in one meal than the English ever dreamed of.

We will be ordering and paying individually but sharing dishes around which is the traditional way and makes a lot of sense with the intense tastes. BYO \$4 screwage per drinker or a range of refreshingly icy teas and coffees. Estimate about \$30.

Noon on Friday 9 December, street parking possible but scanty, parking station nearby and signposted.

Scenic Lunching

November Report

A down-market name for an up-market site, The Old Coal Loader sounds like an industrial monster where the grim Satanic mills grind out fumes and dust.

Not so! North Sydney Council and a grateful Commonwealth have spent big to expose the sculpted sandstone and shadowed tunnels of this relic of coal-fired shipping. Not surprisingly for a place to load ships with coal for their world travels, there is a great view of the Western Harbour and the soft green of the North Shore.



Only 6 Probians this time but calamari, Greek lamb, roasted mushrooms and salad all slipped down lubricated by a Jones red altho complicated by the bountiful Adair chips.

Good intake and good outlook

NO SCENIC LUNCHING DECEMBER – 21/12 IS TOO CLOSE TO YOU KNOW WHAT.

Dean

November Guest Speaker: Deb Wallace

At our November meeting, we were very fortunate in having the well-known police officer and ardent Parramatta Eels fan, Deb Wallace as our speaker. She joined the NSW Police Force in 1983 and on graduation was immediately assigned to the toughest police office in Sydney - Blacktown. While working there she was asked to help with investigating the murder of Anita Cobby, by re-enacting her last movements. She was the same height and shape as her and wore her clothing for the job. Police often use this method in the hope of triggering someone's memory of the victim thus providing extra clues.

Afterwards she was invited to join the Detective branch of the force which she eagerly did. Over the years she became commander of various specialist parts of it including the South Est Asian Crime Squad, the Middle Eastern Organised Crime Squad and Strike Force Raptor. So successful was her method in breaking the crime gangs in the latter operation, that it became the Gold Standard for other countries to which she was often invited to explain it.

In these roles Deb was no longer required to wear a uniform and always presented (to bikies as to Probos) as an extremely glamorous, surprisingly young woman.

Heading Strike Force Raptor's 50 police, Deb, took on the Hells Angels and various other outlaw motorcycle gangs. The basic approach was to enforce existing but rarely used legislation covering liquor licensing, consorting, public disorder and anti-rioting - anything that was suitable to bring charges against the gang members. At a later stage the introduction of undercover agents to infiltrate the gangs also helped. By 2017, although they were still around, the gangs had been brought significantly under control.

After retiring from the police force Deb has taken a further step in her career as presenter of true crime TV series *Million Dollar Murders*. She confided in us that she thoroughly enjoyed this new job!

Deb remains passionate about her former career and gave us details of her ongoing concern about the impact of drugs on society. She figured as we were all in the grandparent age group, we should have enough knowledge about them to understand and be able to talk sensibly and knowledgeably about the topic with our grandchildren.

Deb said when she started in the police the major drug used was heroin. It arrived here from Burma where it was grown, via processing in China. She added it was a natural drug and a nervous-system depressant, not a stimulant. It can make the user almost, or, in overdose, comatose. In a short time, users become physically addicted to it. Although used at all levels of society, it was particularly popular among those from lower socioeconomic groups, who perhaps felt there was no hope for themselves in the future.



Addicts stole to pay for it and there a was high incidence of break and entering, bag snatching, and holding up service stations. In 1995 it was readily available at Kings Cross for \$50 a shot. This changed when the press leaked that a street deal in Cabramatta was only \$25. As could be expected the distribution centre and associated crime changed from the Cross to Cabramatta.

In 1998-9 there was a drought in Burma resulting in soaring prices in Sydney. Interestingly, price had a huge impact on demand here in Australia: as a proxy measure, the number of free needles handed out in Cabramatta was reduced from 40,000 to 6,000 in the period. Addicts looking for alternatives couldn't afford to switch to cocaine, and many were sold other things cut with a large amount of other powder of unknown origin, even grout from brick buildings.

By 2003, offshore organised crime gangs started to pursue new avenues to grow their drug businesses in Australia. With unemployment low and falling, the 18-35 age group in Australia had plenty of disposable income. Amphetamines and their derivatives, coming out of the Netherlands badged as "party drugs", were the new way to profit from Australian youth.

Not to be outdone, local outlaw motorcycle gangs saw an opportunity to keep that money in Australia. And so, a booming local industry was born, with quite horrifying results. Amphetamines, and in particular methamphetamines, could be synthesised locally. In their purest form, the drug is known as "ice" or "crystal meth". Precursor drugs for its manufacture include pseudoephedrine, a medication many of us sinus-sufferers know as Sudafed and various legally available cough and cold medicines. A close relative chemical is MDMA or "ecstasy", which, although also a stimulant like amphetamines, is also an hallucinogen. The greatest threat posed is by the highest purity form of methamphetamine, "ice". Relatively cheap and highly available in both cities and regional areas across NSW, methamphetamines are highly psychologically addictive, cause psychosis in addicts and have created a spike in crime.

Deb's opinion on the best way to combat drugs is by education, optional treatment, and strong punishment for suppliers. Deb concluded with a range of nuanced comments that reflect the complexity of the drugs issue. For instance, in one aside Deb added that she saw medical cannabis as a blessing which works for a lot of sufferers and is prescribed by doctors to address a range of complex medical needs.

She sees a zero-tolerance approach to drugs, as espoused by some politicians, as ineffective. On the other hand, she is very sceptical of the usefulness of the 'pill testing' proposed as a harm-minimisation measure at large events. In her view only those who think their own pills might be unsafe have them checked. Meanwhile there remain a large percentage of attendees who don't believe their drugs could possibly contain anything that is unsafe. As a result harm is not minimised, but the pills gain a false veneer of safety.

Deborah Webb

2022 Sausage Sizzle

After a few false starts our annual Sausage Sizzle was held successfully on Friday 25th November, with 35 attendees.

As rescheduling the previously postponed Sizzle caused a conflict in dates, Margaret Timbs kindly sacrificed the November meeting of the Book Club.

I think everyone would agree it was a very pleasant afternoon. Our chefs Mike Regnis, Jim Likidis ably assisted and supervised by David Lorschy cooked sausages and onions to perfection.

I would like to thank everyone who brought along all sorts of delicious nibbles, cheeses, biscuits, dips etc. Not to mention rolls and superb desserts.



Sausage Sizzle (cont)



Probacchanalians (aka Wine Appreciation Group)



On 8 November at “ The Cellar “ the Probacchanalians researched wines coaxed from the “Rhine Riesling “ grape and entered a world of blithe spir- its, ethereal bouquets and rapturous tastes, each appreciator reaching the zenith of their application—

The Facilitator

Riesling (the tasting)

- this lovely region of the Rheingau is spoken of with ecstasy by the Germans and one of their writers calls it “a piece of heaven that has fallen upon the earth”

With apologies to Washington Irving 1820

Our next WAG (wine appreciation group), in the New Year may savour the joys of the bubbly!

In vino veritas

Richard

New Interest Group

One of the many suggestions submitted in the recent member survey conducted was to commence a music group.

To this end, the idea I have come up is to start a Ukulele music group. I am certain that very few of us would know how to play a ukulele. I definitely have no idea.

Hence, I have made enquiries and there is a Ukulele learning group where people can attend, take lessons and play in a group.

They meet each Thursday between 6-7 pm at the Holy Mary Parish Hall located in Mary St. Hunters Hill.

Lessons are free. The only requirement is, each for participant to bring their own ukulele. If, like me, you don't possess one you can purchase one from the guitar shop on Victoria Rd. for as little as \$30.

I think it will be a lot of fun learning and playing together as a Probus group.

I will quickly mention it at the December meeting, seeking a level of interest from the members.



Jim

Book Club



The Living Sea of Waking Dreams

By Richard Flanagan

A very sincere apology from your *Book Club* reviewer—didn't arise the date and so missed the meeting! I have read my preliminary review to Margaret advising her that I always interpolate the opinions of our members before going to press.

She confirmed that it seemed to encapsulate the members' views and suggested that I should present it to you, hopefully for your enjoyment!

Of death and dying—do we really need this stuff?

There are a number of parallel stories here, we have climate change extinctions, fires and their aftermath and the loss of wild-life like the parrot.

And there is a tenuous link between these deletions and the delusions of our lead actor whose body is disappearing by degrees and also her perception of the disappearances of anatomical bits and pieces of family and friends sometimes observed by others. A stretch of the imagination and not entertaining.

This sad family is progressively deleted by suicide, trauma and drugs and then there's the mother who just won't die, due to a common scenario of family dysfunction and a tug of war between members who use a compliant medical profession to prolong the living death of the mother—she's doing well "under the circumstances"—cold comfort!

The daughter purportedly wants her mother to die, but is then terrified that her mother's breathing might stop.

Death by a thousand cuts, this is a parody of end of life. You can't complain about the grammar—it just doesn't exist—a very annoying tactic

Don't waste your time reading this book, it's too close to home.

Perhaps we should offer the author palliative care.

Richard

Barbara's Thought for the Month

"Those who love deeply never grow old; they may die of old age but they die young."

*Benjamin Franklin - 1706-1770.
(Scientist, Publisher & Diplomat)*

From the Editor's Desk

A couple of housekeeping type things.

Our AGM will be held on March 7th. It is the time that the Committee positions are determined for the 2023/24 timeframe. Your current Committee would welcome your nominations for **any** of the positions, excluding President.

Speak to any of the current incumbents (listed below) to under-

From the Editor's Desk

stand what is required. If you feel you don't wish to be on the Committee but are interested in assisting in one of the roles, again, speak to the current incumbent.

The "perks" of any of the roles is simply knowing that you are contributing to the running of a very successful and long-standing Club.

Our Secretary, Margaret will have the appropriate nomination forms at the next series of meeting.

It's that time of year again when our thoughts turn toward "what I am going to get for Xmas" and "do I have to buy something in return?"

No, only joking.

It is that time though where I try to thank all of those amongst you that have helped make my job a lot easier by providing me with input for the Newsletter.

Not so long ago ago, in the midst of the Covid "thing", in fact some five injections ago, we published two Newsletters a month for several months.. In more recent times we've often published up to 7 pages and in May this year we hit 10 pages.

My point in all this is that whereas I put the Newsletter together it is you, the members that provide the content. Without you my job would be simple - no Newsletter.

You've got two choices. Keep the contributions coming or not.

All that's left for me to do is to wish all of you members and you families a save, happy and more importantly, healthy Xmas

Mike and Ashlyn

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

Committee

President	Dean Letcher	9816 5357
Vice President	David Lorsch	0428 247 708
Secretary	Margaret Bowman	0438 165 016
Treasurer	Jim Likidis	0412 090 400
Activities Convenor	Barbara Banner	0405 427 259
Speakers	Deborah Lohman	0404 865 621
Welfare Officer	Josephine McBride	9817 5632
Membership Officer	Kevin Manie	0412 349 270
Newsletter Ed / Comms	Mike Allum	0417 596 300

(email: mike.allum@bigpond.com)

Useful Numbers

Book Club & Art Group	Margaret Timbs	0438 063 620
Exotic & Scenic Lunches	Dean Letcher	9816 5357
Movies	Sandy Mower	0478 630 620
Fishing	Peter Kelly	0411 696 583
Honorary Auditor	Anthony Alexandrou	

**Probus Club of
Hunters Hill
& District Inc**

PO BOX 1041
HUNTERS HILL NSW 2110



December Birthdays

Gordon Sanson	4
Suzanne Fischer	9
Judith Keller	11
Gayle Macready	19
David Lorsch	25

Editors Musings

- * If a mute child swears, does his mother wash his hands with soap?
- * What happens when you get scared half to death a second time?
- * Why is it considered necessary to nail down the lid of a coffin?
- * Why is the man who invests all your money, called a broker?
- * If you're in a vehicle going the speed of light, what happens when you turn on the headlights?
- * Have you ever imagined a world with no hypothetical situations?

The Green Thing

*I'm not sure if others of you get tired of being told by "youngsters", typically our grandchildren, we have to recycle and look after the planet etc etc.
I came across this a few days back and, using my Editors "licence", reprint it here for you.*

Ed

Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested to the much older lady that she should bring her own grocery bags, because plastic bags are not good for the environment.

The woman apologized to the young girl and explained, "We didn't have this 'green thing' back in my earlier days."

The young clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations."

The older lady said that she was right -- our generation didn't have the "green thing" in its day. The older lady went on to explain:

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled. But we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day.

Grocery stores bagged our groceries in brown paper bags that we reused for numerous things. Most memorable besides household garbage bags was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our school books. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided for our use by the school) was not defaced by our scribbings. Then we were able to personalize our books on the brown paper bags. But, too bad we didn't do the "green thing" back then.

We walked up stairs because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.

But she was right. We didn't have the "green thing" in our day.

Back then we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throw away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220 volts. Wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that young lady is right; we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day.

Back then we had one TV, or radio, in the house -- not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the state of Montana. In the kitchen we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she's right; we didn't have the "green thing" back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blade in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull.

But we didn't have the "green thing" back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service in the family's \$45,000 SUV or van, which cost what a whole house did before the "green thing." We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 23,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest burger joint.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the "green thing" back then?

Scan "From the President" (Page 1)

HELPDESK

BRAIN HEALTH STUDY

Organisation: NeuRA & UNSW

Location: online

Contact: mycoach@neura.edu.au

Have you noticed changes in your memory or thinking or have you had a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (MCI)? Our MyCoach research trial is testing the effectiveness of a healthy lifestyle intervention designed to support healthy brain ageing and reduce dementia risk. We currently only need female participants aged 75 years and older and male participants 65 years and older. A 12-week course plus follow up interviews.

The Skilled Volunteer Weekly Alert is an internet-based skills matching service. Donate your time and get experience if you have the following skills. See www

MASSAGE THERAPIST

Organisation: Sydney Local Health District

Location: Concord

Contact: jacqueline.martinez@

health.nsw.gov.au

Provide palliative care in a patient's home or in hospital and be part of a multi-disciplinary team of health professionals. You will offer massage to patients and if time permits to carers; maintain and clean the therapy equipment. You will not be asked to provide nursing care or intimate personal care. You will maintain contact with the co-ordinator and keep records of client visits.

GARDENERS

Organisation: Easy Care Gardening

Location: Ryde, Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai

Contact: cjensen@

easycaregardening.org.au

Work with an experienced team leader or co-ordinator to create low maintenance gardens for older people or people with a disability. No experience is necessary and different roles are available for all abilities. Roles include general gardening work such as weeding, pruning and mulching. Areas also include Hunters Hill, Carlingford, Beecroft, Cherrybrook. This is a valuable service allowing clients to live in their own homes for longer.