



MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Information in this
Newsletter is for
Probud members only

FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 3rd January

General Meeting

Gladesville Sporties Club - 10:00

Guest Speaker:

Prof Maria Fiatarone

"Brain v Brawn"

Is There a need to Choose?

Thursdays

Coffee Morning

Sunroom 10:00 am

Monday 9th January

Golf

North Ryde

Jim: 0412 090 400

Wine Appreciation

Returning 7th February

Exotic Lunch

Returning 10th February

Dean Letcher: 0439 736 006

Tuesday 16th January

Movies

TBA

Sandy Mower

Friday 20th January

Book Club

Book of Your Choice

Margaret Timbs: 0438 063 620

Scenic Dining

Returning 22nd February

TBA

Dean Letcher

Art Group

Reconvenes 24th February

From the President

Happy or perhaps HAPPIER New Year should be the wish.

After 3 years of Covid life seems to be returning to, could it be true?, normal. But this "normal" includes Meghan and Harry, Ukraine, climate change, China and inflation.

Mind you, there are always disruptions in life. In fact, that's what life IS. As I said at the Christmas Lunch, 80 years ago in 1942, Australia had real existential peril with Nazis occupying all of Europe, Singapore falling, Darwin bombed, whooping cough, diphtheria, no penicillin and the Holocaust.

Still, my parents had sufficient instinct or optimism to beget me and a lot of you members too.

Maybe "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger" is right or maybe we underestimate the challenges of the past. Which we overcame and will do so in the future.

HAPPIEST NEW YEAR!

Two reminders:

- * Annual fees of \$80 are due and payable from the 1st January.
- * If you wish to nominate for a position on the Management Committee, your nomination paperwork needs to be submitted to our Secretary, Margaret Bowman, on or before the meeting on 7th February

Dean

Hidden Talent

Again, well done Tony.

Jim posed the question last month, "Can anyone identify the scene?"

Not sure if any of you got it correct but this may help.



Mike

Hunter Valley / Christmas Lights Outing 7/8 December

Eight members from our club joined up with various North Shore Probus Clubs for our excursion to the Hunter Valley Gardens and Christmas Lights. We were all picked up from our homes and transported to Telegraph Road, Pymble where we met our coach.

Our driver, Peter, took the old Pacific Highway instead of the freeway, a much more interesting route. Our first stop was at Wollombi Village for morning tea. There we were entertained by a herd of calves, they were given fresh grass from our side of the fence. You know the saying "the grass is always greener".



Our lunch was in Hunter Valley Gardens Village Park. Red and white wine along with fresh salad rolls and meat rolls, tea and coffee being the order of the day..

We then made our way to Tamburlaine Organic Wines for a spot of tasting, followed by a trip to the Cheese Factory for sampling. After a short rest it was time for our 2 course Christmas Dinner with all the trimmings.

It was then time to see the lights and what a spectacular show it was too. Much too difficult to describe here. After a good walk around "oohing" and "aahing" it was time to go back to our accommodation for a well-earned sleep.



After a delicious breakfast it was time to go back to the actual gardens to have a look around and indulge in some retail therapy, if that was your choice. Peter then drove us around the eastern shoreline of Lake Macquarie followed by lunch at Belmont Sailing Club.

It was then time for our journey home and taken back to our homes.



A most enjoyable couple of days.



Barbara Banner

Christmas Lunch - 12th December

A successful Christmas lunch was again held at Sporties. Members were offered a free drink on arrival. Our President Dean welcomed each and everyone of us and lunch got underway.

Following entree, Jim, along with his trusty helpers Ashlyn and Fay, organised a game "Who am I." Five members each, with a name on their forehead, had to guess who they were by asking the audience "Yes" "No" questions. The end result was Barbara Enright successfully guessing "Shane Warne." Congratulations Barbara.

Main Course followed by Trivia conducted by Mike. No team had the complete 12 correct answers but, ultimately Kevin Marnie and his table took out the top prize on a count back. It was then decided to have a "sing-off" for second place - no prize though.

After dessert our raffle master extraordinaire Jim Judge drew the raffle of items generously donated by members. The main prize, a painting done and donated by Ann Juster, was won by Barbara Jago, well done Barbara.

At the completion of the raffle there was a lucky door prize won by Kathy O'Sullivan.

Thank you everyone who contributed their time to make this a very successful lunch.



Top Left - "Who Am I" contestants
 Top Right - Barbara, our winner, knew who she was
 Centre left - the "sing-off"
 Centre right - a table at random
 Bottom left - Lucky Door Prize search in action

Barbara Banner

Interest Groups Updates



The recently reformed Golf group played at North Ryde Golf Club on Tuesday 12th December. Four players teed off, Jim Likidis, Jim Macready, Tony Saunders and Mike Allum.

The group agreed that the course was a vast improvement on the initial venue and agreed to continue the next week. We currently have eight members that have expressed an interest in playing, new entrants Juliet Bishop and David Crouch, while Rick Collins and Ashlyn are returning to the Tee.

Something clearly occurred last week and, Mike (injured foot), Tony (Museum flood), Jim Macready (Covid) and Jim Likidis (health) all pulled the pin (no pun intended) for the next week's round.

On Monday, 19th Juliet, Ashlyn, Rick and David turned up to battle the course. Your editor has received nil feedback as to the performance, results or any other input on the proceedings. There was no truth in the rumour that Mike pulled out as he was concerned about losing to his good lady Ashlyn.





Our dedicated group of Probacchanalians, after their November meeting, decided to take a break until February. A sensible decision given there would be sufficient times available over the Xmas festivities to individually sample and taste such that a formal gathering wouldn't be necessary. Richard gave the group members licence to do their own research and reconvene in the New Year, February in fact.



No meeting in December but a lunch enjoyed by all. The January will be to discuss books of their personal choice.





Here is Josephine McBride scoring her first croquet hoop after only her third game. Naturally she was on the winning team.



Next is a photo of just some of our Probus members.

As you can see being a winner can be dangerous.





Unfortunately there was a distinct lack of interest in forming a Ukulele group.

Ed

2022 Member Survey Results

We recently asked the members of our club to participate in a survey and give the PMC feedback across a range of areas in relation to the running of the club.

There were 52 responses received and I would like to thank all the members that took the time to complete the survey. It was very much appreciated.

The following is a summary of the key findings.

Meetings

Q. Are you happy with the format of our meetings?

A. 73% of the members were satisfied or very satisfied. However, 27% were not and gave a poor or very poor rating.

We, the PMC consider the Poor rating of 27% very disappointing and hence discussed this at length at our last meeting.

The key points made by members were:

- * The meetings go for too long
- * An Agenda should be stated
- * Business part of the meeting goes for too long.

The main point made in the 27 responses was the length of the meeting.

The PMC considered this and discussed how we can speed up the process.

To this end, it was decided to meet with some the members and discuss what can take place to achieve this goal.

Speakers

Q. How much have you enjoyed the quality of the speakers we have arranged so far this year?

A. 53% of the members responded with a Poor to very Poor rating.

This is an area that the PMC already felt that improvement was needed, hence the feedback from members was not surprising. Our Speaker Officer is very aware of this and we believe that the quality of the speakers and topics in 2023 will show a huge improvement.

Activities.

Outings - feedback response was very good with day trips being most popular, multi day trips and overnight trips not being far behind in popularity with members.

Minor Activities- Most of these activities were rated high by members. Dog Walking, Botanical Gardens Fishing, Walking, Golf and Wine Appreciation not being overly popular with the majority.

However, in the case of Golf and Wine Appreciation are activities targeted at smaller groups and, to date, have a sufficient number of participants.

Member Involvement

Q. Are you interested in being involved with the management of the club by joining the Probosc Management Committee?

This was the most disappointing response received and a big concern for the ongoing success of the club with only one member expressing an interest in joining the management committee. It is hoped that with the new influx of members joining the club that this will change.

Most members responding expressed a willingness to assist from time to time.

Membership Age

This was calculated to be 78.3 years, however earlier members details do not include year of birth.

Your Management Committee will continue to focus on all the feedback from the survey and will brief the membership as and when changes to the overall program are recommended.

Once again, thank you for your participation.

Jim

December Exotic Lunch

Eight Probusers sampled exotic Malaysian treats at "MAMAK" Chatswood.

From satay chicken skewers to kambing, lamb curry, on through Nasi Lemak [peanuts, tofu, cucumber, rice, ikan bilis, don't ask, and egg.

The hit of the day was Rojak, optimistically described as a 'Malaysian salad' on the menu, emerging as a tall pyramid of goodies including a toffee-prawn wafer and praised by all who tried it.

Even more surprising was the bill which came in at \$18 per head! And no one went home hungry.

Both Exotic and Scenic lunches are on holidays in January.

To be continued in February.



Dean

Barbara's Thought for the Month

"As I've aged...I've become kinder to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend. I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging.

Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 am or if I sleep until noon? I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the sixties and seventies, and if I, at the same time wish to weep over a lost love... I will. I will walk the beach in a swimsuit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set. They, too, will get old.

I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten and I eventually remember the important things. Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet gets hit by a car? But broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turn grey, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore... I've even earned the right to be wrong.

So, to answer your question, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. And I shall eat dessert every single day (if I feel like it)."

Author: unknown

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 Contacts

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
Wine Appreciation	Richard Jones	ramjones@bigpond.net.au

Honorary Auditor Anthony Alexandrou

WEBSITE: www.huntershillprobus.org

SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET

The Museum that goes to Sea

Ray Rees was our December speaker. He led us through the history of the Sydney Heritage Fleet (SHF) from its origins in 1902 to today's collection of classic vessels which the fleet is bent of restoring and preserving.

In the early 1960s, the steam launch "*Lady Hopetoun*", built in 1902 for the Sydney Harbour Trust as a 'showcase vessel' for visiting dignitaries, was retired with an uncertain future. The small band of enthusiasts fought for her preservation and paid £300 to acquire her, and in doing so founded the Lady Hopetoun and Port Jackson marine steam museum for runner of the Sydney heritage fleet.

At the time of acquisition, the trust paid £4500 for the vessel which was constructed of Kerry planks Antique deck house. It was fitted with a triple expansion engine. Since building the ship has had four boilers fitted over the years and has carried a host of dignitaries, the most distinguished being the Duke of York (later King George the VI).



There are only five paid employees in the SHF. Volunteers provide most of the support necessary to maintain the fleet. The age of the volunteers range from 18 to 90 and provide expertise across the whole range of skills from office work to shipwrights. Volunteers learn different aspects of restoration and, as Rea remarked, the SHF is a mixed gender version of a "men's shed". There are over 400 volunteers of the Fleet's books.

Wharf 7 in Darling Harbour is the SHF's HQ and there that's where the documentation and information of the fleet is located.

Ray then led us through the some of the ships of the fleet and their histories.



The steam tug "*Waratah*", built in Sydney 1902, is one of the world's oldest operational coal-fired steam tugs. Before joining the fleet and providing her passengers with a glimpse of the age of steam as they cruise the harbour, Waratah hauled dredges and barges along the New South Wales Coast to keep harbours and river ports open. It was acquired in 1968 and requires a crew of 14 to sail her. It took five years to complete a full restoration and is now a regular feature on Sydney Harbour.

The ferry "*Kanangra*" saw service on Sydney Harbour through two world wars carrying passengers until the 1980s. She's the only one of a kind left and Kanangra will be the SHF's next big restoration. She was launched in 1912 and acquired by the SHF in 1987. She had to be dry docked at the time of acquisition and in April 2022 was floated out of the dock to the SHF dockyard in Roselle Bay.



The "*Boomerang*", a well-known Walter Reith designed schooner on the Harbour, was built in 1903 in Lavender Bay. She was purchased in 1987 by the Albert family and on-sold to the SHF. Her classic lines are well known by sailors of the Harbour.

The motor launch "*Harman*", built in 1943, is mere youth compared to some other vessels in the fleet but she has earned a place in Maritime history. Built for the Royal Australian Navy as the vessel representing the shore Establishment HMAS Harman, the launch subsequently worked at Cockatoo Island.

The "*Berrima*" is the fleet general work boat used to transfer workers and materials. In her early days she plied the waters of botany Bay. She is being upgraded to enable her to carry passengers on trips around Sydney harbour. She was built in 1954 in La Perouse. She is kept very busy.

The launch vessel "*Protex*", built in 1908 as an inner harbour launch operated by the Nicholson Company, was known as "soap boat"; her last name being a well-known Colgate Palmolive soap brand in its day. Originally named "*Waikara*", the Māori for "smooth water" the launch was used in Sydney to transport personnel from ships and waterfront sites. In an on-water incident, she collided with a sister ferry and sank but was refloated. She was a popular ferry in the Hawkesbury River, spending 10 years on the Brooklyn-Dangar Island

Probus Club of Hunters Hill & District Inc

PO BOX 1041
HUNTERS HILL NSW 2110



January Birthdays

Jill Regnis	2
Margaret Timbs	2
Barbara Jago	6
Ian Adair	6
Judith Love	9
Deborah Lohman	19
Bambi Michael	22
Joe Stockreiter	25
Leon Wilson	28

Editors Musings

- * Why isn't there mouse flavored cat food when there is fish flavored?
- * Can a stupid person be a smart-ass?
- * Why is it called lipstick if you can still move your lips
- * Why isn't phonetic spelled the way it sounds?
- * Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii?
- * If you tied buttered toast to the back of a cat and dropped it from a height ...what would happen?

run. She was acquired by the SHF in 1970.

The fleet's most ambitious project to date has been the 30-year restoration of the "James Craig". It was originally built as the Clan McCloud and carried a crew of 42.

She rounded Cape Horn 26 times. Salvaged as a rusting hulk abandoned in southern Tasmania, with the aid of detailed research, the ship was painstakingly restored largely by fleet volunteers to sail again as a 19th century barque. There were over 1000 holes in the hull which had to be plugged to get her refloated. She is the only barque which regularly carries paying passengers to sea. The James Craig takes the public on day cruises and charters around Sydney harbour and off the coast. It offers births on longer voyages to Newcastle, Melbourne, and Hobart. There are only three of the 19 century barques still sailing. James Craig provides its own volunteer crew with square rig Sailing training.



The fleet's current restoration project, "John Oxley", is nearing completion. Built in Scotland in 1927 for the Queensland government, she operated in a dual role as a navigation maintenance and survey ship for relief pilot duties. Although built for a specific purpose, the ship is of a similar design to the coastal steamers that worked along the coast of Australia carrying passengers and cargo. She was acquired by the SHF in 1970. The painstaking Restoration is a tribute to the ingenuity, resourcefulness, and remarkable engineering skill of the fleet volunteers. Rea pointed out that restoration has currently ceased due to a lack of funds and the SHF is attempting to address this problem.

Ray next turned our attention to how all this restoration and preservation occurs.

There are over 1000 members involved with the SHF. Not all are volunteers; but they are valued financial supporters. There are however 120 active volunteers who contribute 5000 personal hours per year. Most have the traditional shipbuilding/ restoration skills.

The Fleet survives through:

- * Heritage vessel cruises, charters, and admissions to SHF's facilities,
- * Corporate and private functions on board,
- * Weddings, particularly on the James Craig, where Rea related a very stoic story of an on-board wedding in challenging weather conditions that ended all well despite heaving decks etc, and
- * Sponsorships

In closing, Ray invited us to visit the Heritage Fleet at its site in Darling harbour and to learn more about its activities at www.shf.org.au.

Kevin Manie