



PROBUS CLUB OF PORT PHILLIP Inc.

Associations Incorporation Act 1981 - Registered No A0029363K

NEWSLETTER

PROBUS CLUB OF PORT PHILLIP Inc.

Chartered on 25 March, 1986, Incorporated on 9 May, 1994

This Probussouthpacific Club meets at:

Kew Golf Club, 120 Belford Road, East Kew 3102

At 10:00 am, 2nd Tuesday in the Month (excepting January)

The Club can be contacted by email at : portphillipprobussouthpacific@gmail.com

The Club's web site details are: www.probussouthpacific.org/microsites/portphillipm

Issue 432

March, 2025

PRESIDENT

Mr P. Laver (Peter)

Tel: 9820 2985 Mob: 0417 396 049

E: plaver@ozemail.com.au

SECRETARY

Mr R. Smith (Russell)

Mob: 0417 190 040

E: rsmith@bersmith.com.au

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, 11th March, 2025

At **Kew Golf Club**, 120 Belford Rd, Kew East, 3102 (Melway Ref. 45 G1)

Coffee and Fellowship: 9:00 am Meeting commences: 10:00am

IMPORTANT DATES in March, 2025

Deadline for Lunch Bookings	5:00 pm	6 th March	page 4
Meeting	10:00 am	11 th March	page 3
AGM	10:40 am (approx.)		

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Club year ends with the Annual General Meeting on March 11 On reflection it has been an excellent twelve months, interesting meetings, outstanding speakers, well organised Visits, Getaways and C&C meetings. Membership is stable and the bank account healthy.

All this only happens through the hard work of our Committee, whose contributions are very gratefully acknowledged

It was comforting that at the Boroondara Council supported

Planning Meeting in February, there was a high degree of satisfaction evident with our current activities and several constructive suggestions were made as to what changes we should investigate. A report of this meeting is attached, together with an excellent review of our history prepared for the meeting by John Hodder and Mal Fleming.

As you would be aware from an email circulated on February 24, we had been planning a three day mini-Getaway in Bendigo late in March. Although the show of hands at the February meeting indicated a good level of support, responses have been disappointing. As we need a minimum number to ensure it is viable, regrettably a decision has been made to cancel the event. Apologies to those indicating they would like to attend.

Many thanks for your support (and forbearance) during the year. It has been a great experience.

Peter Laver

PROBUS CLUB OF PORT PHILLIP

PLANNING MEETING REPORT

The Club held an interactive Planning Meeting on Tuesday February 11, 2025 at Kew Golf Club attended by 53 members. The meeting was supported by a grant from the City of Boroondara, whose assistance is greatly appreciated.

The Planning Meeting consisted of three sessions, the Monthly Meeting, Activities and Membership Issues. Each was discussed simultaneously by seven table groups whose findings were then reported to a plenary session.

The overall conclusion of the Planning Meeting was that there is a high level of satisfaction with present arrangements, a concern about recruiting new, younger members, some interest in a modest expansion of activities and a few technical matters requiring attention.

For full Report see Pp 9 – 11

For a brief history of the Probus Club of Port Phillip see Pp 12 – 18

PLEASE NOTE – There were insufficient numbers of acceptances to make the planned mini-Getaway in Bendigo in late March viable. **All arrangements have therefore been cancelled.'**

SPEAKER FOR THE MARCH MEETING



Nick McKenzie – Investigative Journalist

WILL SPEAK ON

The CMFEU & Ben Roberts-Smith

A sixteen-time winner of the Walkley Award, Australia's highest journalism honour, & four-time Australian Journalist of the Year, Nick McKenzie is a leading Australian investigative journalist who works for The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald. Nick is also the most decorated reporter in the history of the Melbourne Press Club Quill Awards & has been awarded the prestigious Lowy Institute Award for best foreign affairs reporting. He's also presented major investigations for the ABC's Four Corners and 7:30, 60 Minutes and the Australian Financial Review.

With 20 years' experience, Nick's investigations span foreign affairs, defence & national security, corporate wrongdoing, politics, organised crime and corruption, the criminal justice system, and social affairs. His work has sparked many national and state inquiries, including Royal Commissions and parliamentary inquiries, prompted investigations in Australia, the US and Britain into corruption and led to significant legislative change.

Nick has led ground breaking investigations into political corruption that have led to the resignation of state and federal MPs & has also exposed war crimes involving Australian special forces. He's conducted an unprecedented infiltration of Australia's neo-nazi movement, revealed a major corruption scandal within Australia's central bank, exposed organised crime in Australia's biggest casinos & revealed doping in elite sport. In addition, he works closely with whistleblowers & is an advocate for better laws to protect their critical role exposing corruption and wrongdoing. He's helped victims of sexual abuse in disability homes, soldiers with PTSD, and victims of human trafficking and police brutality to tell their stories to national audiences.

Nick has a Bachelor of Arts from RMIT, and a Masters in International Politics from the University of Melbourne.

For further information see **Margaret Hill** Ph 0448 948 548

marg.peter7@gmail.com

CATERING: 11TH MARCH MEETING



Meeting, Lunch & Tea/Coffee \$50pp.

Meeting & Tea/Coffee \$10

Tea/Coffee available pre and mid meeting.

Please contact me on **0408 314 709** or annestg2@gmail.com if you wish to attend lunch or just the meeting on 11th. Booking must be done no later than **5pm Thursday 6th March.**

Lunch Menu

*Cajun and Lemon crumbed white fish with minted pea puree, roast potatoes and broccolini.
and
Passionfruit and orange curd tartlet*

Payment arrangements:

Payments by direct credit to the club's bank preferred. For the December meeting payment must be cleared into the Club's account no later than **5pm THURSDAY 6th** and make sure your name is included on the transfer. Please **DO NOT** pay before the 1st of the month.

A/C name: "Probus Club of Port Phillip", BSB: 033 058, A/C NO 750921

If paying by cash or cheque, please place in an envelope clearly marked **Lunch** or **Tea/Coffee** and showing your name and those of your attendees. The correct amount must be tendered as no change is given. Envelopes to be prepared before arrival.

Everyone who has paid will be given a table number and can request one for a guest.

Anne St George - Catering Officer Ph 0408 314 709

annestg2@gmail.com

ALMONER

Members who wish to inform the Club of the illness of themselves or of others, please contact;

Ross Fardon telephone 03 9874 6838, or e-mail:- rossfardon@gmail.com

VISIT PROGRAM REPORT

BLUE LOTUS GARDENS ON February 18th



Our last visit for the Probus year was to the Blue Lotus Gardens. Thirteen of us were rewarded for the long drive by the ideal weather and the beautiful sights.

There were many ponds filled with the water lilies and lotuses. The latter were mostly white and shades of pink and on tall stems. We were surprised at the number of colours that were to be seen in the water lilies. The vivid yellows contrasted with the blues and deep reds to make a glorious display. All the ponds are set in gardens. The extraordinary huge Amazon lily pads and the strange Crocodile leaf ones were housed in covered ponds as were some of the Australian native water lilies. The hanging baskets of begonias in the plant nursery were another delight.

We all had a picnic lunch together and tried the lotus root chips that were a speciality of the cafe.

**Visits Co-ordinator Susan Harraway –
Ph 0447 941 963**

susanrlharraway@gmail.com

NEXT VISIT

The Heide Museum of Art at Bulleen - 18th March

The Heide Museum is a cultural treasure, blending art, architecture, and nature. Once a dairy farm, it became a creative hub in the 1930s under art patrons John and Sunday Reed, fostering Australia's modernist movement. Today, Heide spans three unique buildings—historic Heide I, modernist Heide II, and contemporary Heide III—set within 15 acres of stunning gardens and sculpture parkland. The museum showcases Australian art from modernism to today, with rotating exhibitions. Visitors can explore heritage-listed trees, sculptures, and a kitchen garden, making Heide a must-visit for art and nature lovers alike.

We have organised a guided tour of the historic Heide 1 Building at 10:15am. This will be followed by free entry to the gallery. Cost of the tour is \$30:00 per person. Lunch will be at the Kitchen if you so choose, which is alongside the main gallery. It will commence at 12:30pm and comprise platters of assorted rolls, scones, cream and jam, coffee and tea for the price of \$25:00 per person.

It is suggested that we all meet Rod and Gail in the car park where you will be given your pass. ***We should meet at 10:00am.*** Please allow extra travel time for all the traffic works related to the new tunnel.

The signup sheet is on the front desk. Please indicate if you are going and if you will have lunch.

Payments by direct credit to the club's bank preferred. For the Heide Tour and Lunch \$55 payment must be cleared into the Club's account ***no later than 5pm THURSDAY 13th March*** and make sure your name is included on the transfer.

A/C name: "Probus Club of Port Phillip", BSB: 033 058, A/C NO 750921

How to get to Heide: 20 minutes from Flinders Street taxi rank in Melbourne's CBD, via the Eastern freeway (Bulleen Road exit). **Train (Hurstbridge line) to Heidelberg station and bus #903 (Mordialloc bound) to Heide.** Disembark at the Bridge Street/Manningham Road stop. Estimated bus travel time is 5-10 minutes.

If you have any questions contact

Rod & Gail Smith on Ph 0425 785464 or email smirod49@gmail.com

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

The next Coffee and Conversation will be held at

10.30 am Tuesday 25th March 2025

**at Rylands, 349 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn East. Not far
from Camberwell Junction and on the route of the 70 and 75 trams.**

Allan Brownrigg, C & C Coordinator: Ph 0420 401 310 or 03 9193 7785

ambrownrigg@optusnet.com.au

Getaway Lakes Entrance November 2025

The November 2025 Getaway planning is underway and Colin Palethorpe has taken on the role of co-ordinator. Lakes Entrance will be the location and the dates will be Monday 17th November 2025 to Friday 21st November 2025. We could take a coach from Melbourne to Lakes Entrance on the Monday and a coach return on the Friday with a lunch and brief visit in the Latrobe Valley each way. Thus we would have 4 nights and 3 full days in Lakes Entrance.

It would help very much to receive expressions of interest in attending this Getaway, either by email or text to Colin or on a sheet which will be available at both the March and April meetings. An indication of your preferred means of travel to Lakes Entrance would also help in the planning. Assuming we do take a coach, it would be understood that you could still drive down or even take the train to Bairnsdale then the connecting bus to Lakes Entrance. Indications from 2 bus companies are that it would be quite cost competitive to use a coach, and save the relatively long drive as well as enabling group activities on the Monday and Friday. We plan to have several pick-up points in Melbourne, yet to be decided.

Colin and Susan have recently returned from a 4 night visit to Lakes Entrance researching the planned November '25 Getaway and have come up with a program which closely follows recommendations from incoming President Frank Larkins, and those involved in a past Getaway to Lakes Entrance many years ago.

A summary itinerary and an early estimate of cost is outlined below (based on 50 attendees and subject to changes if required). Overall Colin estimates that accommodation, all meals, 2 cruises, all coach travel, special dinner, and visits would be about \$1200 per person for a couple and about \$350 extra for a single supplement.

Monday 17th November. We could have lunch at the Warragul Country Club,- plenty of space and bus parking (centre of town is very busy and awkward). The visit to the Ellenbank Dairy Research Institute nearby would follow. We would then drive to Lakes Entrance and stay at the **Bellevue On The Lakes** in the heart of Lakes Entrance (and opposite the cruise wharf) for 4 nights.

Tuesday 18th November. Have talked to Peels Cruises and we can do the Metung Luncheon Cruise departing 11am-returning 3pm with a two course luncheon at the Metung Hotel-the rest of the day would be free time. There are shops, cafes and very nice walks along the waterfront over to the 90 mile beach.

Wednesday 19th November. This day we envisage 2 visits and we could also include a late afternoon talk about the new Dredge, located on Bullock Island in Lakes Entrance. We looked at options using a coach but not too far from Lakes Entrance. At this stage we envisage a relaxed morning start with a packed lunch from the motel provider, then having that lunch at the Historic Nyerimalang Homestead which has many rooms of great interest, all set in a wonderful location overlooking the Lakes. The coach would then take a scenic 40 minute drive west to Nicholson River Winery where they do a range of antipasto and cheese platters and can give a tasting and talk by the wine maker. It is in a beautiful spot with plenty of room for our group. It is then an easy drive back to Lakes Entrance.

Thursday 20th November. We can charter the 'Lake Victoria around Raymond Island and Paynesville Cruise' starting in the morning, say 9:30 for 3 hours. The cost is similar to 50+ seniors doing their scheduled cruise which leaves at 2pm and returns at 4:30 pm. The choice is ours and there would be free time in the afternoon or morning depending on our choice. Final Special dinner: we have found a preferred option close to Lakes Entrance - a short coach ride and a bit different at a location we would have to ourselves.

Friday 21st November. Coffee stop at the Sale Art Gallery looks a good option (90 minutes from Lakes Entrance). Cafe with plenty of room, toilets, gift shop, and a very good gallery with bus parking behind it. We could then drive (around 40 minutes) to The Jack Vines lookout over the Loy Yang Opencut, have a very brief viewing stop-(no real facilities), then a 45 minute drive to Warragul Country Club for lunch. Then back to Melbourne.

Colin Palethorpe – Ph Tel: 9857 7672 Email : cpaletho@bigpond.net.au

Newsletter Editor – **Graham Marshall**

Mob: 0408 308 382 Email graham.marshall8@icloud.com

Please send copy for the next newsletter to Graham

Closing date for the **April 2025** Newsletter is: **am – Wednesday, March 26th**

Full PLANNING MEETING REPORT from Tuesday February 11 at Kew Golf Club.

The Probus Club of Port Phillip held an interactive Planning Meeting on Tuesday February 11, 2025 at Kew Golf Club attended by 53 members. The meeting was supported by a grant from the City of Boroondara, whose assistance is greatly appreciated.

The Planning Meeting consisted of three sessions, the Monthly Meeting, Activities and Membership Issues. Each was discussed simultaneously by seven table groups whose findings were then reported to a plenary session.

The overall conclusion of the Planning Meeting was that there is a high level of satisfaction with present arrangements, a concern about recruiting new, younger members, some interest in a modest expansion of activities and a few technical matters requiring attention.

THE MONTHLY MEETING

There was agreement that the current meeting schedule is satisfactory. The venue was excellent and the relatively recent semicircular ‘theatre’ seating arrangements worked well. The lack of public transport was noted and consideration of a regional car pooling arrangement for members unable to drive was suggested.

The main concern was the microphone system which require speakers to keep close so they can be properly heard, particularly as some degree of hearing impediment is not an uncommon complaint among club members. A small group agreed to investigate lapel microphones and other technology consistent with KGC’s infrastructure. If necessary capital expenditure would be considered – evidently some other users of the venue bring their own equipment.

The meeting format is currently around 45 minutes of ‘business’ and includes guest welcomes, apologies, Almoners report, confirming minutes, member numbers, officer/coordinator reports by exception, (leaving the main communication channel as the Newsletter), inductions, profile talks, volunteering experiences and other business. There was general support for the more abbreviated content (no detailed coordinator reports) but some question as to whether apologies are needed. They are rarely comprehensive and serve no real purpose.

Currently the Speakers Coordinator invites speakers who are available (and often known to them or to other members). The main criterion is that they should be interesting, so they

address a diverse range of topics. This has worked very well and needs to continue. There was a belief that members should periodically be requested to provide suggestions for speakers or encouraged themselves to speak if they have a topic of broad interest.

The current catering arrangements were generally deemed to be satisfactory and food quality good.. There was some concern about large portion sizes and the need for more vegetables. An 'alternative drop' arrangement could be explored, so effectively allowing a choice of main courses.

The table seating arrangements were supported and there was little enthusiasm to reintroduce the Standing Order system with widespread comment that the current system works well. There was no significant support to switch to a buffet style meal.

PCPP ACTIVITIES

Unlike some other Probus Clubs, PCPP has only a modest range of activities outside the monthly meetings. In the past there were other activity groups but the age profile and geographical spread of the membership has seen a decline in interest.

Getaways were strongly supported with several suggestions that more interstate and even overseas destinations be considered. The main criticism was that more free time needs to be allowed when planning itineraries.

Visits were highly regarded and well organised. There was a concern that interesting places to visit might be getting harder to find.

Coffee and Conversation is highly regarded but needs more publicity, an email a few days before the meeting would be a timely reminder. There was strong support for adopting a theme for each meeting with an introduction from someone (not necessarily a PCPP member) who has specific relevant knowledge or sufficient interest to undertake some research to provide factual material and statistics to inform the discussion. At times it may be possible to tie the topic in with the last guest speaker or visit.

There was general satisfaction with the Newsletter. Suggestions include provision for short reviews of commended books, films, concerts etc. and the publication of the profile talks or at least a short personal history of new members.

There was some support for resurrecting a Walks Group (as long as they were 'gentle' and followed by refreshments) and for determining whether there would be sufficient interest in reintroducing a Golf Group. The greatest support was for a Book Group (meeting by Zoom) and a Cinema Group, meeting at the Rivoli or Nova.

There was general agreement that there should be a 40th Anniversary dinner later this year, with a high profile speaker, possibly at a function centre in the Boroondara area, or at Rylands in Hawthorn, or at Kew Golf Club. A small planning group would need to be established for this function. There was only lukewarm support for making a formal dinner an annual event.

MEMBERSHIP

Current membership numbers of just over 80 need to at least be maintained and if the opportunity arises, increased to around 100. Other than continuing to remind current members to be proactive with friends and acquaintances there were no new suggestions as to how a higher target could be achieved. There was a strong belief that there should be no change to the current 'Professional and Business' criteria contemplated.

Current members are not frequent users of the website but those that do feel that it needs to be improved. More personal stories, reports on activities and other items may enhance its role in attracting new members.

There were mixed views on the question of Honorary Life Members – The Club has can award Honorary Life Membership to long term members who have rendered significant service. There have been no such awards made for some years. On balance the majority view favoured continuation of the system on the basis that it was used sparingly and the guidelines for assessing candidates were more transparent.

It was accepted that the name 'Port Phillip' is confusing and could create problems in respect to recruiting new members. The problem was recognised but there was widespread agreement that no change is needed. Consideration needs to be given to how PCPP will be featured high on the list of responses to anyone searching the web for 'Probus Clubs in Melbourne'.

There is a growing reluctance to nominate for key Management Committee positions. It was agreed that at induction new members need to make a public affirmation of their willingness to serve on a committee or as a coordinator. There was support for formal job sharing arrangements which would assist in enlisting members with travel plans, medical issues or family commitments.

A Brief History of the Probus Club of Port Phillip Inc.



John Hodder

By John Hodder and Mal Fleming



Mal Fleming

In March this year our club will have been in existence for 39 years, somewhat of a record for Probus Clubs in Victoria.

This is due primarily to the quality of its membership and also to the conversion, in 2019, of the club from being a men's club to being a mixed gender club.

To hold accreditation, a probus club must have been sponsored by a rotary club. In 1983, the Rotary Club of Melbourne formed the Probus Club of Melbourne and within two years, the membership of this club had reached its upper limit of 100 members.

John Morgan had been the very creative and efficient organising chairman of the Probus Club of Melbourne, so he was asked to be the organising chairman to get another Probus Club started, to be known as the **Probus Club of Port Phillip**.

Dr Doug Fullarton was the proposed foundation president of the new club. This committee began work in January 1986, with the aim of having the foundation meeting of this club in March or April of that year.

The foundation meeting with 15 attending was held on 25 March, 1986, with the president of the Melbourne Rotary Club, Peter Parkin, presiding.

Others had expressed a desire to join but were not able to be present at the 25 March meeting, so, the committee decided that any members inducted at the initial meeting of the new club and a further 11 members who were inducted by 22 April, 1986, making a total 29 members, are regarded as the club's **foundation members**.

The new club adopted the standard constitution recommended by Probus Centre – South Pacific. The annual subscription was fixed at \$15.00 with a joining fee of \$7.50.

It was agreed from the beginning that membership of the Probus Club of Port Phillip would be male, but that the wives of members would be invited to participate in meetings and in all activities of the club – if they so wished.

From the first meeting, the club met at the Collingwood Football Club rooms at Victoria Park, Abbotsford, – a very attractive venue. This venue was used right up to May 2004 when, because the Collingwood Football Club was relocating to Olympic Park, a new venue had to be found.

For a variety of reasons, the club moved to a number of different venues until in 2014 when the club moved to the Kew Golf Club. It has been a happy association ever since.

The members at the foundation meeting elected 5 committeemen covering the offices of secretary, treasurer, 2 committeemen and a services director.

Following this first meeting, Doug Fullarton wrote the following which was published in the second (April 1986) newsletter.

Greetings! It is great to have you all sharing in a little bit of pioneering as we set the course for a new probus club.

I have suggested a few guidelines that we keep in mind:

- 1 *Let's aim for diversity in our membership.*
Please invite your retired friends to join us. The club will be much more interesting for us – and for them –if our members represent a broad cross section of men who have had responsibilities in business and the professions in Melbourne – interpreting both “business and “professions” pretty broadly. This will give us an opportunity to meet interesting friends whom we may not meet otherwise.
2. *Lets aim for variety in our programme.*
What kind of speakers would you like to hear? Maybe there is some particular person you would like to suggest we invite to speak to us. and what about outings? Any suggestions? What we have in mind is visits to places where we would probably not be likely to go alone.

3. Lets look at opportunities for our wives to share in our activities – if they would like to.

4. Let's keep a relaxed style about our club.

We will not try and talk you into doing what you don't want to do. We hope we will have the pleasure of your company regularly – just because we enjoy your company! on meeting days, you can arrive any time after (8 a.m.) and have a cup of coffee and a yarn. stay for lunch after the meeting if you would like to.

Please let me, or (the secretary) or any of the committee members have your comments or suggestions. Cheers, Doug.

These guidelines are just as relevant today as they were then.

It was not until about 3 months had passed that the committee recommended that a vice-president be appointed. This person who would be a member of the committee and be the next year's president. The club also adopted the rotary policy of presidents only serving a one-year term.

For the monthly meetings, members usually arrived as early as 8.00 am, but generally at around 9.00 am, for coffee/tea and fellowship before the business part of the meeting began – not unlike what still happens today. Lunch, in those days consisted of sandwiches and a slice of cake provided by the bistro and eaten in the club rooms. (somewhat different from today's sumptuous repasts)

By the end of the first year in March 1987, 43 members had been inducted into the club.

The Newsletter

Apart from the president's presentations at meetings, the most important means of communication to all members of the club has been the newsletter.

John Morgan was the original editor, quickly followed by Roy Davies at the beginning of 1987. He remained editor until the end of 1989. John Willis took over as editor, a position he held for 24 years. John stood down at the end of 2013 and the position was taken up by Mal Fleming. Mal held this position for 7 years, and was followed by Arthur Stubbs for 2 years, then David Sutherland for 2 years and now Graham Marshall. They have all done a great job.

The newsletter was originally collated, typed up, and mailed out by John Gabb's secretary (Dianne Burns). The only cost to the club was the cost of postage.

In April 1997, John acquired a word processor and was able to set up the newsletter, but Dianne continued to print and mail out the copies.

In November 2001, Bill Raper set up the facilities for John to email the newsletter, although 21 members continued to receive the newsletter by mail.

Photographic Membership Directory (PMD)

A PMD using passport photos was compiled in 1987, but it was found to be difficult to keep it up to date so the idea lapsed. However, in 1996, then president, Gilbert Ralph, asked Mal Fleming if he could create a new PMD using modern technology.

So, a campaign was initiated to take everyone's photo, a job which took about 7 months to complete. John Rankin took over the task of maintaining the PMD in 2019.

As the cost of having the booklet printed commercially is prohibitive, we are most fortunate that Milton Myers has for many years printed, collated, stapled, and folded the booklets. this is a yearly chore. Since 2014, an "electronic" version has been made available for use on computers and iPhone.

Activities

1. Visits

As the membership was growing steadily, the club gave the committee the authority to co-opt new committee members. The first was to appoint a visits co-ordinator. Visits started in June 1986, the first visit being to the Latrobe Valley to see power generation stations and an open cut coal mine. the visits were often into places of industrial activity and of great interest. The visits lapsed for a while in recent years, but it is pleasing to see that they have started up again thanks to the inspiration of Susan Harraway, Neil Pearse, and Dedrie and Jim Green.

2. Walks

The club's walks group started in may 1990, with John Pearse and Tom Russell as their leaders.

They were serious walkers who were fully kitted out for all weathers and able to trek for 6 hours or more.

Their first walk was in the Warrandyte National Park.

In the first year, John Pearse organised a more extensive excursion to Wilsons Promontory during which the participants stayed a few days at foster. This was such a success that it became the forerunner of the annual getaway.

The walking group lapsed in 2015 mainly through lack of interest and because of the aging membership. Miles Pierce made a valiant effort to restart the group but with limited success.

3. Getaway

As mentioned previously, the getaway got its start following the success of the Wilsons Promontory walk.

The annual getaway developed into 5 day events usually held in November with carefully developed itineraries, generally involving bus transport to points of interest during the getaway, although members have usually made their own way to the getaway. Many of the getaways set aside the Wednesday afternoon for bowls, tennis and golf.

These getaways have been extremely successful and very well attended with the turnout mostly in the 70's, 80's and even 90's.

The Covid pandemic has had an effect with our most recent getaway to Warrnambool only managing about 35 attendees

4. Mini-getaway

In 2012 I was asked by then president Noel Richardson to come up with a new activity. a trial small getaway was conducted to bright in North East Victoria. 28 members and spouses attended. They were made up of members with caravans and others who stayed in cabins in a caravan park. This proved very successful and led to the establishment of an annual mini-getaway to be held preferably in the week before Easter. The venues were caravan parks that had cabin accommodation for those without caravans. The idea was to have an informal approach compared to the main getaway. They involved a few get togethers such as a BBQ and evening drinks but also plenty of free time to allow for members to follow individual activities. The last day included a luncheon at a selected venue. Covid and our aging members has had an impact on the format. The last couple of getaways have been a little more formal and stays have been in hotels.

5. Theatre Group

This group started in 1991 and obtained group bookings to theatres, cinemas and concerts. This activity ceased in 2020 mainly due to the Covid threat.

6. Sport Days

During the 1990's there were some keen bowlers and tennis players in the club. Once a year a group of the club's better bowlers formed a team and competed against other Probus Clubs for a trophy. PCBC was runner-up on a couple of occasions.

In 2005, Mal Fleming organised a golf day at the RACV resort at Healesville. Both men and women played in a 9 hole amprose event followed by a sandwich and cake lunch. This became a yearly event, but at different courses, until around 2021. Ian Webb took over the organising of this activity in 2016.

7. Stash Tag Group

In 2007, some of the wives, partners and associates formed a **sewing/quilters group**. this group (now lapsed) used to make very attractive quilts, cushions and other items that were raffled at the Christmas meeting, and the proceeds donated to a charity usually selected by the incumbent President or the President's wife.

8. Coffee and Conversation

In 2018, John Hicks and Derek Prinsley introduced a **Coffee and Conversation** group that met at John's residential facility at Rylands in Hawthorn. This has proven to be very popular with regular informative discussions on current topics.

Other interest groups were the gourmet adventurers and investment groups the latter inherently having a finite life.

It is to be hoped that with the resourcefulness inherent in the club that renewed and new and stimulating interest groups will be formed to encourage existing members and attract new ones.

When I joined the club, and for some years following, when a new member was inducted, a welcome letter was read out by the president. This procedure has fallen by the wayside in recent years. Of particular pertinence was the call for the new member to contribute to the running of the club. This was not only an invitation to the new member to contribute, but

also a reminder to all members to be involved in the running of the club. I have thought of this as being part of the contract between me and the club, so when i was asked to take up some responsibility, I agreed.

We are seeing over recent years difficulty filling committee positions. Over the last couple of years there have been instances where the secretary and treasurer positions have failed to be filled so that previous incumbents have had to return to fill the vacancies and for the first time , this year we have a previous president having to fill the position for a second time.

Each year we see Probus Clubs fold. A major reason is that committees can't fill their management positions. It is entirely possible that our club may be heading in the same direction.

The cornerstone of probus clubs is the 3 "f's". Fellowship, friendship and fun. For this to work members have to develop relationships with other members. This is one area where Port Phillip has been very successful. These relationships develop more through the club activities. The most powerful way that this has been developed in our club is through the getaways. If we don't improve and achieve larger turnouts how will we continue to maintain that level of fellowship?

Newsletter Editor – **Graham Marshall**

Mob: 0408 308 382 Email graham.marshall8@icloud.com

Please send copy for the next newsletter to Graham

Closing date for the **April 2025** Newsletter is: **am – Wednesday, March 26th**