



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 Probus 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 : portphillipprobus@gmail.com

The Club's web site details are: <https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/>

Issue 440

November 2025

PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

Dr. V. Beck (Vaughan)

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NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, 11th November, 2025

At **Kew Golf Club**, 120 Belford Rd, Kew East, 3102

IMPORTANT DATES in November, 2025

Deadline for Lunch Bookings	5.00 pm	6 th November	page 7
Coffee and Fellowship	9.00 am	11 th November	
Meeting	10:00 am	11 th November	page 6

Message from the President



Dear Colleagues,

I am in a rather reflective mood as I write this message to you all. I do not recall a time in my life when there have been so many conflicts in the world and the respect for the rule of law has been so challenged or ignored. During my scientific career I have been most fortunate to visit every continent, except Antarctica, and to have had scientific discourse with many colleagues. I know that many of you have also travelled widely and lived overseas.

At a personal level, most people I have met from diverse ethnic backgrounds have had relatively straightforward common goals: to build a successful career, provide for family, stay

healthy and live in peace and harmony with neighbours AND YET the collective societies in which they live can be very different to ours. Democracy is precious and a fragile entity that we cannot take for granted. Demonstrations are not always peaceful. Societies seem to be becoming more polarised as social media and artificial intelligence algorithms replace other forms of more friendly interpersonal communication. There is a sense that more people are becoming marginalised. Governments seem to be less stable, and the influence of the United Nations is but a shadow of what it was in former times. There seems to be increased emphasis on defence spending at the expense of health care, education and maintaining quality infrastructure. That is why organisations like Probus, Rotary and Community Groups are very important.

We are fortunate to have a vibrant, diverse but cohesive club where there is great respect for other members that sustains our caring fellowship. Participating in events beyond our monthly meeting does enable one to get to know other members much better in an informal setting. That is why getaways, coffee and conversation and visits are so valuable. Please participate in some of these activities.

We are always open to new members. I thank those of you who have introduced some talented people to the Club in recent times. When inviting potential new members please consider what they can contribute if they were to join our community. We have a membership committee of Russell Smith, Margaret Hill, Ruth Bunyan and Don McAllister. They are there to advise and to review applications. Please make use of their expertise.

The October meeting was very well attended. Well done to all. Jim Studebaker can take partial credit for the strong attendances as he personally consults with the head chef and Isabelle each month to design meals especially tailored to our needs. Thank you Jim!. The newsletter is our monthly flagship publication. Graham Marshall is doing an excellent job. He is always looking for additional copy. For those of you that have had recent travel adventures, it would be good to share the highlights (500 words Max) with the rest of us by contributing to the newsletter.

The revamped website, thanks to Adrian Farrell, is an excellent medium to showcase the Club. The link is at the top of the newsletter. It is proving to be a valuable asset for recruiting new members. Please review its content and provide feedback to Adrian as it will always be a work in progress.

Our November Getaway is upon us. Colin and Susan Palethorpe have arranged an excellent program. Please pay outstanding costs, if you have not done so already, and provide Colin with your personal contact details. We have some surprises for bus travellers.

Miles Pierce and Don McAllister have made good progress in arranging for our getaway in March next year from Sunday 15th March to Wednesday 18th March at the RACV Cobram

Resort. A detailed notice is part of this newsletter. March may seem a long way away, but the resort is very popular so we need to secure the cabins very soon. It is an excellent venue to relax with friends.

The wives of two of our esteemed members have died since my last newsletter. Margie Myers has been associated with the club since 2002 (23 years) when Milton was inducted. Barbara Fardon was also a regular attendee until recent years. Ross was inducted in 2011 (14 years). Their loss is cause for much sadness. I have sent condolences messages to both Milton and Ross on behalf of the club.

Teaching is a noble profession. I was impressed by the career and dedication of Gail Smith (inducted July 2024). In her profile talk she recounted her experiences as a school principal for 30 years. An outstanding career and great service to countless children and the community. It was my great pleasure to induct Patrica and Arnold Grodski as the latest members of our club. Please make them very welcome. I trust we can avail ourselves of their talents in the future.

Stuart Maunder, Artistic Director of the Victorian Opera, gave a most interesting account of his career and the world of Opera productions. He commented that as many as 250 people could be involved in a production. No wonder tickets are expensive.

This month we have a very different talk. Bojan Rajic will tell us about research he has done on Serbian medical support for the Allies during WW1. Details elsewhere in the newsletter. Colin Adam, as speaker coordinator, certainly does challenge us all with such a diversity of excellent speakers. Thank you Colin.

Looking forward to seeing you all on 11th November.

Thought for the day

What you think you become.

Frank Larkins

2025-26 President, Probus Club of Port Phillip

Two new members inducted into the Port Phillip Probus Club – Arnold and Patricia Grodski



Arnold and Patricia Grodski (centre) who were inducted into the Port Phillip Probus Club at its meeting on October 14th are pictured here with the Club President, Frank Larkins and their sponsor, Don McAllister (left)

Arnold has spent most of his working life in the women's fashion industry, wholesale, retail and manufacturing, before opening a restaurant with his then partner, now wife, Patricia. He still plays table tennis regularly and is interested in politics and many other issues.

Patricia has spent most of her working life in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), serving in five countries overseas, working as the personal assistant to the Australian Ambassador in all cases after her first posting. After resigning she and Arnold jointly opened and ran the restaurant.

Profile Talk – Gail Smith



Gail Smith

Gail started by describing her life as a "tapestry of work, family, friendship and service". Catholic educated, she was accepted for Law at Melbourne University but went teaching instead because of family financial issues. Later, married and with three children, she undertook a Masters in Urban Sociology and worked part time at RMIT. Despite options here, family pressures determined that she go back teaching which she did enthusiastically.

Within ten years Gail was Deputy Principal and then Principal, which position she maintained for thirty years. She loved this role as it allowed her to work in the community and the local parish. She also undertook further studies, firstly a Masters in Educational

Leadership, and subsequently, to build on her work on parent effectiveness, a Masters in Counselling Studies. Nearing retirement, she became a Civil Celebrant and has greatly enjoyed marrying family members.

After retirement she used her background to write a book for parents; *The Primary Years. A Principal's Perspective on raising Happy Kids*. She has also raised funds to support families escaping family violence through her membership and work for the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. Overall she sees her life as having gravitated around family and social issues.

For recreation Gail and her husband Rod are keen sailors.

Almoner Role

Members will be aware that our very active Almoner, Ross Fardon has been ill and as a result has been unable to continue in his role for the moment. We are very fortunate however that Ian Webb has agreed to take over the role in the short term

ACTING ALMONER

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

Ian Webb telephone 03 98986297, or e-mail: iwebb9898b@gmail.com
Mob 0427 318 348

Access our club website from anywhere in the world, at any time.

<https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/> Adrian Farrell - Webmaster

Speaker for the November Meeting – Bojan Pajic



Bojan Pajic will speak on *Australians with Serbs in WW1*

Bojan Pajic has held several public and private sector management positions and has been a director of several companies and associations.

He is a graduate of the University of Adelaide and former Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

He has had twelve years of service in the Australian Army Reserve.

He has held positions as Australian Trade Commissioner and Consul at Australian overseas Consulates Generals.

He is President of the Australians with Serbs Association Inc.

Bojan will give a presentation about the over 1500 Australian and New Zealand volunteers – doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, soldiers, sailors and aircrew who served alongside Serbian forces during WW1, even before the landings in Gallipoli.



**Colin Adam Speakers'
Co-ordinator**

Ph Tel: 9889 4774

Mob: 0418 483 136

cmadam@bigpond.com

Catering: November 11 Meeting



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

Meeting & Tea/Coffee \$10

Tea/Coffee available pre and mid meeting.

Lunch Menu

Main Course

Herb crusted lamb loin, poached celeriac puree, flowering broccolini and minted peas, fried Enoki mushroom and red wine glaze

Dessert:

Orange infused panna cotta, lemon curd and candied orange

Booking Arrangements: Please contact me (**Jim Studebaker**) on **0413 304 864** or wjstudebaker48@gmail.com if you wish to attend lunch or just the meeting on November 11th. Booking (and payment) must be made no later than **5 pm Thursday November 6th**.

Payment arrangements: Payments by direct credit to the club's bank preferred. For the NEXT meeting, payment must be cleared into the Club's account no later than **5 pm November 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 show your name and those of your attendees. The correct amount must be tendered as no change is given. Envelopes need to be prepared before arrival. Everyone who has paid will be given a table number and can request one for a guest.

Jim Studebaker - Catering Officer Ph 0413 304 864

wjstudebaker48@gmail.com

Report on October Visit – Yea Wetlands, October 21st



More than twenty people went to Yea on a beautiful spring day. It took about 2 hours to drive there but the trip was well worth it. Frank had arranged for a very experienced guide to lead us so, after a delicious morning tea we set off. Although it was very dry, there was still plenty to see. The guide showed us a camera on a tall stick that was used to look into boxes and nests without disturbing the birds and animals. The

Probus members who went with the guide were all enthusiastic about his knowledge.



The Discovery centre, where the tour commenced, was quite fascinating with a wide range of exhibits. The shop also had a wide variety of items for sale. Lunch was at a nearby hotel and everyone was well catered for. We followed this up by going to Valerie and Frank Larkins beautiful home to see the spectacular wisteria, orchids and iris and the beautiful sculptures they had made by a local craftsman.

What a great finish for the year. We have certainly had a wide variety of experiences. Thank you to all those who came along on the visits. The next visit will be in February 2026 and you will be notified about in the newsletter.

Susan Harraway Visits Coordinator
– Ph 0447 941 963
susanrlharraway@gmail.com



Getaway Lakes Entrance November 2025

Colin and Susan report that following their recent visit to Lakes Entrance arrangements are all in order. However some members' have cancelled for health and other reasons, so there is definite availability for members to make a late decision and join us for the Lakes Entrance Getaway 17th to 21st November. New members are particularly welcome as it is a wonderful way to get to know other members. Motel bookings can still be made with the Bellevue On The Lakes quoting reservation number 1717761.

Payment to the Probus club would be required to cover the coach trip to and from Lakes Entrance for those going by coach (driving your own car is also an option), as well as covering all meals and activities whilst at Lakes Entrance. If you do make a late booking please contact Colin ASAP. We are looking forward to an enjoyable, informative but relaxing Getaway.

Colin Palethorpe – Getaway Organiser Email cpaletho@bigpond.net.au

2026 Mini Getaway – Cobram RACV Resort

It is proposed to have a mini getaway based at the RACV Cobram Resort from Sunday 15 to Wednesday 18 March 2026. This spacious resort on the edge of Cobram in northern Victoria, about three hours' drive from Melbourne, has a range of quality self-contained cabins available along with apartments and caravan sites. Visitor facilities include camp kitchens, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and an on-site cafe that serves snacks and light meals during the day. Prices for a standard cabin - one queen bed + two single bunks - are quoted 'from' \$98 per night for RACV service members / \$131 for non-members up to \$155 / \$207 per night for a Deluxe cabin with two queen beds and 2 single bunk beds. For more information on the RACV Cobram Resort see: <https://www.racv.com.au/travel-experiences/resorts/cobram.html>.

As has been the tradition for past mini getaways based on cabin style accommodation (or own caravan) the March 2026 event will be loosely structured to enable participants to explore the local region as they are individually inclined or simply relax at the resort itself. A welcoming event on the Sunday evening where participants share self-catered nibbles and drinks in one of the camp kitchens is envisaged along with a self-drive visit to Yarrawonga, possibly including a cruise around Lake Mulwala, on one of the subsequent days. An evening meal together at a

regional restaurant or winery will likely round off planned events. More details will be advised later.

There are things to do and see in the region, including visiting Yarrawonga and the adjacent Lake Mulwala, a 36 km drive away via the Murray Valley Highway, and possibly returning via Mulwala on the NSW side of the Murray River. The Barooga Country Club just across the Murray River from Cobram offers extensive dining options along with a golf course, etc. Meals can also be partaken at hotels in Cobram or self-catered in the cabins or in a camp kitchen with other PPPC participants.

Accommodation bookings will need to be arranged by participants directly with the RACV Cobram Resort. Based on the show of hands at the October meeting, the resort has provisionally reserved twelve cabins (in garden and park areas) in the name of Port Phillip Probus Club **subject to a substantial number of firm bookings with payment of a deposit of one night's accommodation by the end of November.** (The RACV's normal cancellation policy is up to two days prior to the scheduled arrival.)

Before anyone moves to make a booking, it is requested that they confirm by email message (preferred) or 'phone call to Don McAllister (domca@bigpond.com , 0409 967 208) or Miles Pierce (milwen@ozemail.com.au , 0429 359 832) their preparedness to do so within the above timeframe by 14 November. Provided that a viable number of such responses are received, the individual respondents will then be given the go-ahead to proceed with making a firm booking.

Don McAllister Ph; 0409 967 208 ; Email; domca@bigpond.com

Miles Piece Ph; 0429 359 832; Email milwen@ozemail.com.au

Coffee and Conversation

There is no Coffee and Conversation in November or December

The next Coffee and Conversation will be in 2026

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

ambrownrigg@optusnet.com.au

Cultural Matters

All members are invited to contribute to this section of the Newsletter. Culture is a term that embraces a great variety of activities – film, art, literature, concerts, exhibitions, the arts generally, travel, broad aspects of Australian and overseas culture, in fact any activity that might be of interest to other Probus members. It certainly includes the Sciences and related fields. As a geographically dispersed club, it is not always easy to meet face to face, but the advances in information technology mean that it is relatively easy to share experiences and views online. Articles for publication should be no more than 500 words in length

So please feel free to contribute.

Cultural Matters 1: Review of Wonders of Nature exhibition at the Malvern Artists Society

Ann and I had the pleasure of attending the Wonders of Nature Art Exhibition at The Malvern Artists' Society. The Exhibition was mentioned in the September Newsletter. The exhibition was a presentation of work by the Thursday Art Group, of which Margaret Hill is a member, and was a collection of work inspired by the natural world. It was a pleasure to meet Margaret and view her beautiful watercolour artwork."

Vaughan Beck Ph 0418 362 792

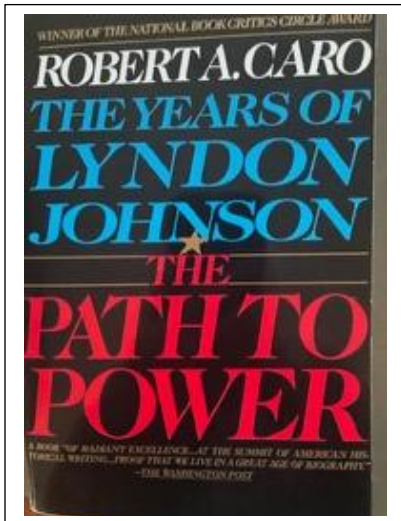
Stuart Maunder at the Australian Opera



Last month we were lucky to have Stuart Maunder talk about his life in the creative arts and specifically in the world of opera. He also mentioned he was a Gilbert and Sullivan fan. Members might be interested to know that he will be directing the Australian Opera next year in **Gilbert and Sullivan: A Musical Celebration** at the Regent Theatre May 22 – 24 (Ed)

Cultural Matters 2: Book Review by Graham Marshall

The Years of Lyndon Johnson by Robert Caro (Four Volumes)



Air Force One, The President's plane, is divided, behind the crew's cockpit, into three compartments. In the first of them, just behind the cockpit, women sat weeping and Secret Service agents were trying to hold back tears.....In the rear compartment the widow, her suit stained with blood was sitting next to the coffin of the dead President. And in the centre compartment was the new President.

Thus begins the dramatic opening of the Introduction to Volume 4, *The Passage of Power* (2012) of Robert Caro's mammoth biography of Lyndon Johnson, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*.

It is November 22, 1963, and this extract marks the transfer of the power of the US Presidency to Lyndon Johnson, after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. It also marks the culmination of Johnson's long and ruthless quest and justifies Caro's 3,388 page, (so far) biography. Commenced in 1974 it still awaits its fifth and final volume, civil rights and Vietnam.

But what a tale he has told to this point. It commences in the early nineteenth century as it covers Johnson's forebears and their exploits in the early days of Texas. Caro carries the story through his impoverished early years and then his electoral struggles and finishes up with his first months as President in late 1963 – 64.

Caro's achievement so far has been extraordinary. His work has received universal praise. The Sydney Morning Herald reviewer went so far as to say it was*The greatest political biography ever written.....The most sweeping historical tour de force since Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"*. Others contented themselves with calling it a *Masterpiece of biography*. Above all, it is a gripping read

Starting with the publication of the first volume in 1981, *The Path to Power*, Caro has sketched out the political and personal trajectory of a man consumed by political ambition and the quest for power, the need to bend men and events to his will. As Caro shows in Volume 1, even by his early thirties[Johnson] *had displayed a genius for discerning a path to power, an utter ruthlessness in destroying obstacles in that path and a seemingly bottomless capacity for deceit, deception and betrayal in moving along it.*

However, Caro points out that the story of Lyndon Johnson is also the story of bringing electricity to the impoverished Texan Hill Country of his youth, thus alleviating much of the back breaking drudgery of women such as his own mother, who previously had to do everything by hand.

Other volumes of the biography included *Means of Ascent* (1990; and *Master of the Senate* (2003).

Having read all 3,388 pages, I can say it is best political biography I am ever likely to read. Caro has also given us a slice of the political and social history of mid twentieth century Texas and America which illuminates America's past and present.

However, Robert Caro is now 89 years old. Are we ever going to get his final volume?

Cultural Matters 3: Handel's *Messiah* with the Camberwell Chorale at the Hawthorn Arts Centre: November 30

As we all know, *Messiah* is one of the treasures of the choral repertoire, an enduring favourite of performers and audiences alike.

Bookings can be made: <https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/events/handels-messiah-0>

See Margaret Hill for more details

Margaret Hill Ph 0448 948 548 marg.peter7@gmail.com

MESSIAH

2025

HANDEL



CAMBERWELL CHORALE CAMERATA ORCHESTRA
CONDUCTOR: DOUGLAS HEYWOOD OAM

SOPRANO	LAUREN OLDHAM	DAVID HOBSON	TENOR
COUNTER TENOR	HAMISH GOULD	MANFRED POHLENZ	BASS

Hawthorn Arts Centre
Sunday 30th November 2.30 pm
Tickets \$65 (DHS concession \$60, Students \$35)
To book: phone 03 9278 4770 - or book online
www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/arts
Proudly supported by the City of Boroondara

 BOROONDARA



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Newsletter Editor – **Graham Marshall**

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Please send copy for the next newsletter to Graham

Closing date for the **December 2025** Newsletter is: **am – Wednesday, November 26th**