

The Probus Club of Holland Park Central



PO Box 5151 Mt Gravatt East 4122

Meetings: 9.30 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. every third Thursday of the month.

Venue: Newnham Hotel, Newnham Rd, Upper Mt Gravatt

<https://www.probusouthpacific.org/microsites/hollandparkcentral/Home>
hpcprobus@gmail.com Editor: fawmpl@optusnet.com.au

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The HP Source – It's a bottler!

Mary's Musings

Occasionally I "visit" Probus clubs in other states and throughout the English speaking world, by browsing their newsletters. I have been gob-smacked at how well many clubs have responded to the trials and tribulations caused by COVID. Older people are generally regarded as Neanderthals when it comes to technology, but the way many clubs have adapted to zoom meetings and activities is astonishing. From coffee breaks, to meetings with guest speakers, to craft get-togethers and book clubs, and yoga classes, Probians have conducted all these via Zoom. And then, when restrictions have been partially lifted, socially distanced picnics (even in snowy weather), crocodile walks and other innovative activities have been adopted. The Probus population has been able to innovate and adapt to local hardships and have proved to be flexible, resourceful and inventive in adversity. Probians need to acknowledge that they are inspirational and that the diversity of ingenious solutions to restricted meetings and activities has been awesome! Hats off to Probians in states and countries with extended lock-downs – it is hard to keep good seniors down!

On one matter though, I ask our members to very marginally curb their enthusiasm. We start our meetings at 9.30 a.m. The hotel does not open the function room until 9 a.m., but sometimes people turn up as early as 8.30 a.m. and ask for the doors to be opened. The hotel staff have requested that if we are earlier than 9 a.m., we wait patiently until they open up at nine, because their security protocol is such that without pre-arrangement (such as for a breakfast function) they really need to stick to their security procedures.

If you don't receive your newsletter by the last day of the month, please let me know, or ask another member to forward you a copy. I have had trouble communicating with some emails, primarily Hotmail, over the last two months. It may be my email, but I suspect Hotmail has changed its security protocols and doesn't readily accept some attachments.

Stay safe,

Mary W.



ODD SPOT

Did you know that North Sentinel Island in India has tribes populating it who are still almost untouched by mainstream society? No modern amenities and virtually no communication with the outside world. Visitors are banned. The islanders lack even the most basic immunities, and exposure to illnesses such as the common cold could decimate the tribe practically overnight.

Activities

OCTOBER 2021

Sunday 3rd Coffee and Chat 10.30am Pacific Golf Club

Thursday 7th **The Cathedral Tours have been postponed until next year due to Covid restrictions.**

Instead we will have a fun games day at Minnippi Parklands at 163 Meadowlands Road, Carina (near the dog park areas) from 10.30am. Come along and try your hand at Croquet, Bocce and Finska. BYO morning tea and lunch. There are barbecues available and, if you're feeling very energetic, you can stroll along Bulimba Creek.

Wednesday 13th Coffee and/or lunch 11.30am at Club Southside.

Thursday 21st Club meeting at Newnham Hotel at 9.30am. Bring your creations and exhibit them at the meeting. We are celebrating **PROBUS DAY** by showing off our members' creative bent at our **CREATIVE ARTS & CRAFT EXHIBITION**. (see article below).

Wednesday 27th High Tea at Sunnybank Community Sports Club at 10.30am. Cost \$25 members \$27 non-members. Pay by October meeting.

NOVEMBER 2021

Sunday 7th Coffee and Chat 10.30am Pacific Golf Club

Wednesday 10th Coffee and/or lunch 11.30am at Club Southside.

Tuesday 16th Tour of Cross River Rail Experience Centre

This is a guided tour at 10.30am on Level 1, 151A Elizabeth Street. Cost – FREE. Lunch after at a local café.

Thursday 18th Club meeting at Newnham Hotel at 9.30am.

Wednesday 24th Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane City Hall – Exhibition "City in the Sun" at 10.30am. Cost – FREE. Lunch after at a local café.

Saturday 27th Brisbane City Pops Orchestra @ 2.00pm. New location – Church of Christ Community Centre, 41 Brookfield Road, Kenmore. Cost \$26.00 to be **paid by October meeting**.

DECEMBER 2021

Sunday December 5th Coffee and chat 10.30am Pacific Golf Club

Wednesday December 8th Coffee and/or lunch 11.30am at Club Southside.

Thursday December 9th Lord Mayor's Christmas concert at the Brisbane City Hall at 1.00 pm including afternoon tea. This sets the mood for

Christmas and is always very enjoyable. Come along and bring your voice to join in some Christmas carols. Cost - \$5.00.

Thursday December 16th Club's Christmas lunch at the Newnham Hotel. Cost to be advised.



Saipan. Ever heard of it? It is a US island in the Pacific, about 190km² in area, with a population of just under 50,000. As a holiday destination, over 75% of its population have now been fully vaccinated and it is considered a safe destination. Indeed, flights from Brisbane are planned as soon as a travel bubble can be established. It is the same distance (from Brisbane) as Bali, it has the same quality of hotels, the same sort of resorts, English is the main language, and they're in the same time zone as us. While it is part of the US,

the main population comprises Pacific Islanders and Asians, but the food is similar to ours as is the mild to warm weather - 19-31^o. Ideal for travel when we can. Unfortunately the US has granted the island some exemptions under its law, and its burgeoning garment industry exploits cheap Chinese labour, and its casinos are said to be laundering money. However, for the tourist it is a safe environment and has a rich and varied history.

The committee values your feedback on speakers and activities, as well as your suggestions. Please don't forget to use our suggestion box IDA.



The Lascaux Caves in France feature some of the finest prehistoric paintings anywhere on Earth, depicting Palaeolithic practices such as taming horses and hunting wild aurochs. Only discovered in 1940, a toxic cocktail of humidity, carbon dioxide, lichen, and the exhalations of visitors quickly caused the ancient pigments to degrade, some beyond recognition or repair. So in 1963, Lascaux was closed permanently. If you wish to take a virtual tour visit [here](#).

The days of lock-downs and working from home has created courses to train people in "netiquette" — those helpful hints for avoiding offence or miscommunication in emails. Compared to face-to-face communication, email entails delayed feedback. In face-to-face communication we're better able to monitor and repair misunderstandings in real time, and we can read body language to know that what is spoken may not be what is meant. In the workplace, this is particularly important. A Google search

will find hundreds of articles about how to avoid words, phrases and email "language" which may unintentionally offend or sound negative. Some of the hints include care in the use of "reply all", avoiding power dynamics and impersonal emails, avoiding short (terse) emails, and minimising ambiguous messages. Unintended negativity in emails can create stress, particularly for the relatively new home-based workforce.



Don't Forget! We are celebrating Probus Day at this month's meeting! We'll have a table for you to display the favourite picture you have painted, the award-winning photo you took, the cot-blanket you crotched, the bikini you knitted or the statue you carved. Origami, flower arrangements, leadlight goblets, charcoal sketches, whatever your bent! Bring along **one** favourite piece you have created and share your talent with members. If you wish, you may have two minutes to talk about your item during the meeting, otherwise be prepared to answer members' questions individually during morning tea, or after the meeting. (And put a sticky note with your name on the item, so we know who made it).

Online grocery shopping has boomed. Woolworths and Coles enjoyed record e-commerce growth in the 2020-21 financial year and have already increased their online sales by 77.9 per cent and 61 per cent respectively this half-year. Geezy Go was launched in Sydney earlier this month and aims to compete with Woolworths and Coles. It is an on-line only grocery store, charging a flat delivery fee of \$3.99 and promising deliveries in under 20 minutes. Geezy Go plans to deliver across the rest of country by the end of the year. Local supermarkets will look very different in five years with 50% of their floor space repurposed. It is also predicted that Australia will be 98 per cent cashless within three years.

CSIRO researchers evaluated the travel bans implemented by the Australian government at the start of the pandemic. The results showed they lowered the number of COVID-19 cases brought into the country by 88 per cent. It also enables authorities to pinpoint the groups of travellers most likely to be carrying the virus and plan opening up travel accordingly.

The aborted Gilbert and Sullivan concert at RPAC was replaced by an Andrews Sisters concert, and as a result our club attendance was much reduced. The show was professional, with good voices and all who went enjoyed it, although the comment was made that some light relief should have been thrown in to the solid 1.25 hours of song.

In the absence of national leadership, local communities are forging new responses to the climate crisis in places where they live, work and play. Some have taken the party-plan model made famous by Tupperware and adapted it to small gatherings to allow meaningful discussions about small scale solutions to climate change to happen. Others have organised education by visiting schools, guest speaking at clubs and generally spreading the word about sustainable living. Local market gardens have sprung up to educate and actively involve locals, and propagating give-away plants is also an aim. And then, the quiet activists, through festivals, events and interventions, have invited those who live, work and play in the arts to join them and help them in more innovative programs.

It sounds like too soon, but in five months' time we will be holding our AGM again. As you know, it was with some reluctance that I became a recycled President, and we need lots of "new blood" injected into the committee, if our awesome club is to survive. Please give some thought to taking up a role on the committee. Members are always welcome to attend a committee meeting at 10.30am on the second Thursday of each month, over coffee, at the Pacific Golf Club.

Did you know that the cost of retirement is now two to three per cent more expensive, on average, than a year ago?



Just five years ago, this fluffy eared marsupial was listed as 'vulnerable' under the national environment law. Now it is to be listed as endangered. Australia's environmental laws have failed to protect these greater gliders as well as other tree-dwelling threatened native species. Habitat destruction has increased in some states, driving the species closer to the brink. Despite this, the federal government has put forward a bill that would further [weaken](#) Australia's environment laws. If Australia wants to ditch its shameful reputation as a [global extinction leader](#), our environmental laws must be significantly strengthened, not weakened. Greater gliders are the largest gliding marsupial in the world, and can glide up to 100 metres through the forest canopy. They nest in the hollows of big old trees and, just like koalas, they mostly eat eucalypt leaves. In Queensland, habitat clearing increased by almost 300%, from a total of 3,002 hectares before listing compared to 11,838 hectares two

years after it was listed. Other states have been just as bad. Once logging is approved, it is not reassessed, even if a species becomes vulnerable and a wildfire burns much of its habitat. And breaching of environmental laws, such as they are continues, and no recovery plans are in place. Shame!

Autocorrection, or predictive text, is a common feature of many modern tech tools, from internet searches to messaging apps and word processors. Autocorrection can be a blessing, but when the algorithm makes mistakes it can change the message in dramatic and sometimes hilarious ways. The joke about the text message regarding a man who texted "Mate, I'm sorry I messed with your Wi-Fi" and the results when the autocorrect turned "Wi-Fi" into "wife" is not new. Autocorrect errors, particularly in Excel spreadsheets, can also make a mess of gene names in genetic research. Of 10,000 papers studied, more than 30% contained at least one gene name mangled by autocorrect. These algorithm changes matter because they raise questions about how errors can sneak into scientific publications. Similar errors occur in modelling software and has caused much damage in finance and trade predictions. Last year, such an error caused eight days' loss of Covid contact tracing in the UK. Default autocorrect settings are designed to satisfy the needs of most users, most of the time, but they can be hazardous.

From the Ipswich East Club's newsletter: If we run out of doctors and nurses, we may need to use vets. Have you seen how they take temperatures? Stay home and be safe.

Did you know that when cats are kneading, they are demonstrating that they are happy and content? It usually happens around their favourite people.

There has been research in the US, UK and Canada about people's sexual activities during the pandemic. When in March 2020 the world went into lock-down, the media quickly speculated that a baby boom would follow nine months later. Research has found the opposite. The stress associated not only with the pandemic itself, but with the lifestyle imposed by restrictions has markedly diminished sexual activity between couples. The exception was higher rates of sexual coercion and an increase where relationships are violent - which is becoming a major issue for health systems and women's shelters to address.

Did you know that on average, taxes account for 42 per cent of the price of fuel for your car?



Melbourne University's research team has demonstrated that the use of care robots could ease staff shortages and provide comfort to people in aged care. They claim care robots could potentially provide not just *functional care* – like cleaning, lifting, feeding, and taking blood pressure – but also the *affective care* we tend to think only a human can provide – like comfort, reassurance or company to anxious, ill or lonely people. Robots are already in used to help children on the autism spectrum develop their social skills, to give “unconditional love” for residents with dementia, to lift and carry patients, etc. However, ensuring that robots don't undermine genuine human care remains essential and no-one should be coerced into accepting robot care.



The pandemic has nudged the world into a transitory twilight, suspended between the death throes of a pre-COVID existence and the unseen emergence of a post-coronavirus era. But already perceptible in the half-light of this new world is a changing geopolitical landscape. Over the last 12 months, several countries around the world have attracted an itinerant community of digital workers. What we are witnessing is an attitudinal shift towards mobile people whose only address is an email address (or an IP address) and a mobile phone number. Work visas are being granted to nomads. Millions of newly untethered workers are suddenly free to work from wherever they want and many countries such as Greece and Estonia are attracting them with favourable tax breaks.

At the upcoming meeting we will be asking members to sign a document giving the club permission to use the photos taken of them at meetings and activities. We have already been using them in the newsletter, on our web site and for reproduction of articles in (say) the *Queensland Probian*. The permission will pertain to Probus associated use only. In future, a request for permission will be included on the membership application form.



There's a growing tendency to link mental health and wellbeing as an inseparable conceptual couple, but the two concepts have very different connotations. Unfortunately, our governments lump them together and don't differentiate. The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as a state in which people can successfully cope with stress, work effectively, contribute to their communities, and realise their potential, and not as an absence of mental illness. It is a positive concept. Conversely, having a mental illness is not

the same as having low wellbeing, although these states often go together. Impaired mental health is negative. People can successfully cope with stress, work effectively, and realise their potential, then it's hard to avoid seeing ordinary experiences of stress and anxiety, Zoom fatigue and unattained goals through the lens of mental ill-health. Pathologising everyday experiences of sadness, dread, loss of motivation, and self-doubt as problems of 'mental health' is counterproductive.

How often do you sanitize your mobile phone? They allow us to take our online lives everywhere: to the shops, on our daily commute, on an outing, and even (go on, admit it) into the toilet. And sometimes we even use them to make phone calls. Mobile phones are vectors for bacteria and viruses, and contamination moves from our phones to our hands and all over our homes. What's the use of washing your hands if you don't sanitize your phone very regularly?

Calling Probiants who are interested in volunteering to Digital Mentoring of other seniors. Visit [here](#) if you wish to register for a training session (via Zoom) on 5th, 6th or 7th October, and for further details of the mentoring program.

Over the years we've been given assorted reasons for the price discrepancies, including our geographical isolation from rest of the world, our sparse and spread-out population and even the relatively high minimum wage in Australia. Rod Sims, chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), says the main reason for Australia's high prices is our outdated and ineffective merger laws that have allowed a few powerful players to absorb their competitors and effectively set their own prices for goods. Contrary to popular myth, we don't need permission or approvals for merges, and if the ACCC is unhappy, the onus of proof of the merger (after the fact) is on the ACCC. The ACCC would like to see an overhaul of Australia's merger laws to bring them in line with those in the US, UK, EU and Canada where companies must get regulatory approval before pushing ahead with any merger.

Many forgot to go, so we had a rather intimate lunch meeting (of five) at the Southside Club last month. Small as it was, it was fun. Then, there were 14 of us at the coffee and chat which was postponed for a week because of Father's Day. That too, was most pleasant.



They say it is to curb gaming addiction, but China in 2019 imposed a cyber curfew restricting game play at night, then it forced players to make their real names and identification numbers visible when playing, and

now, people under the age of 18 will only be allowed to play video games between 8pm and 9pm on Fridays, weekends and on public holidays. However, research suggests most kids are drawn to gaming chiefly because it is a way to hang out with friends. In fact, some [studies](#) are showing the benefits of gaming on children's well-being. But gaming addiction affects only a small number of people, (estimated at .03% to 1% in the US). If players all game at the same time, there will be a lot of pressure on the servers and a lot of lag time. Many games will not function properly. Kids will get around it by shifting to platforms that are not official video game platforms, such as unlicensed games accessible on foreign platforms, and games developers will also respond by developing different types of games.

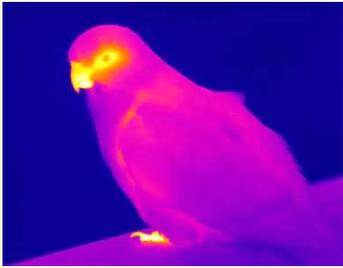


Nineteen of us attended the European Masterpieces exhibition at GOMA. This remarkable exhibition of 65 paintings is drawn from the very best of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It spans some 500 years from the early 15th to 20th centuries and included the most influential and defining artists of the Western canon. The exhibition is divided into three: (1) *Devotion and Renaissance* beginning some 500 to 600 years ago when patronage was dominated by the Church: 35 works including 'The Crucifixion' by Fra Angelico. (2) *Absolutism and Enlightenment* led by Luther in the early 16th century: 20 works including works by Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Rubens. (3) *Revolution and Art for the People* follows the 1789 French Revolution up until the modern era: 10 works including works by van Gogh and Monet. We entered the exhibition in small groups but once inside, we were free to move about individually and take photos without using flash. We were able to download an app 'metgoma' which provided detailed information about each painting. I managed to take 40 photos. Not just the artworks, but the framings were also spectacular. After some three hours it was time to go and some of us tarried for a coffee and refreshments afterwards.

Ron

We have all heard enough about COVID. But why are we not informed about the variants, such as the Mu variant which appeared in Australia in January, and the other variants of concern, Beta, Gamma, Eta, Iota, Kappa and Lambda? So far, the Delta variant is the worst, but The WHO said preliminary evidence suggests the Mu variant could partially evade the antibodies we get from vaccination. Some vaccine manufacturers could alter their existing vaccines to match a new escape variant, possibly within 6-8 weeks. It's likely we'll have regular booster shots to protect us against variants in the future.

Global warming is a big challenge for warm-blooded animals, which must maintain a constant internal body temperature. As anyone who has experienced heatstroke can tell you, our bodies become severely stressed when we overheat. Animals are dealing with global warming in various ways. Some move to cooler areas, some change the timing of key life events such as breeding and migration, but scientists have recently revealed that some change their body shapes to cope. Their ears are



bigger, birds' beaks are longer and depending on the animal, tail, leg and wing size grows. For example, African elephants pump warm blood to their large ears, which they then flap to disperse heat. The beaks of birds perform a similar function – blood flow can be diverted to the bill when the bird is hot (see thermal image of a king parrot). Many animals evolve to cope, but even more will perish because their habitats and food sources are effected and they cannot evolve fast enough.

Duty Roster for October

Chair: Elwyn **5Min Spot** N/A (art and craft talks)

Fellowship: Stephanie and Bev

Door: Lyn and Ron



From 1996 to 2001, the Taliban outlawed almost all forms of art while looting and destroying museums. With their resurgence what's left of Afghanistan's dazzlingly diverse cultural history is severely threatened. Situated along the Silk Road, - a tangle of Eurasian trade routes stretching back to the days

of the Roman Empire — Afghanistan and its people have long served as a place of connection between Mediterranean, Persian, Indian and Chinese civilisations. It has been home to Hellenistic cities populated by the successors of Alexander the Great, glittering Buddhist monasteries that served to transmit early Buddhism from India to far away China and Japan, and a series of Medieval Islamic kingdoms at the forefront of the literature and science of their day. This dazzlingly diverse heritage is preserved in over 2,600 archaeological sites scattered across its rugged terrain. Fanatical interpretation of Islam forbids representative imagery, and is particularly dismissive of anything it considers to be non-Islamic. While Afghanistan remains first and foremost a humanitarian tragedy, spare a thought for the past, when the Taliban glorified in the demolition and destruction of priceless artefacts (and inadvertently promoting looting).





Did you know that there are more than 400 submarine cables criss-crossing the world's seabeds, with a combined length of 1.3 million kilometres? These are carriers of much of the internet traffic around the globe, in conjunction with underground fibre connections, satellites and microwave links. Australia funded the Coral Sea Cable System for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands that launched in December 2019. New Zealand supported

the Cook Islands component in September 2020. Australia has also provided funding to assess route options for Timor Leste's first cable. However, the laying of undersea internet cables has become entwined with geopolitics in the region, with China offering "cut price deals" to Micronesia, Nauru and Kiribati and the US, NZ, Australia and Taiwan being nervous about security threats. Time may reveal whether internet access in the Pacific region is held back by geopolitical tensions.

One of the Probus clubs in the ACT has this on their web page "*Club Newsletters are sent directly to Member's email to ensure that our Members have a copy when they come out!*" Does that mean they are all gay and when they own up to it they get a newsletter?

Vocal production learning is a highly specialised trait that's rare among animals. It requires flexible and sophisticated control over vocalising sounds, and can be associated with enlarged regions of the brain relative to non-vocal learners. The lyrebird and some parrots are among the best known mimics, but recently the Australian musk duck (pictured) was added to the list through an archival find. And then, other mimics include some bats, elephants, dolphins, whales, seals and female songbirds.



Some recordings of these animals exist in historical archives, but researchers fear these will be lost because a few cassette tapes have already degraded too far to be heard. What other treasures lie gathering dust in forgotten sheds or library stacks?



Our October speaker will be Peter Ludlow, who was scheduled to speak when Covid locked us down the first time last year. He is a pharmacist, researcher, biographer, and author, and a historian of the Moreton Bay area. He has written numerous books about the area, and in 2013/14 he was a resource person and co-author of a book for the Museum of Brisbane's exhibition entitled "The Many Lives of Moreton Bay". He will talk to us about the history of the Port of Brisbane.

2021-22 Committee

President: Mary W

Vice President: Margaret O'D

Immediate Past President: Jill

Secretary: Barbara

Treasurer: Ron

Activities: Lynne and Brenda

Membership: Bill

Welfare: Lynne

Newsletter: Mary W

Speaker organiser: David (not on the committee)

The meaning of opaque is unclear.

It's not that the man couldn't juggle, he just didn't have the balls to do it.

So what if I don't know the meaning of the word 'apocalypse'? It's not the end of the world.

Police were called to the day care centre. A 3-year old was resisting a rest.

I can't wait to walk down the aisle



My local barber got arrested for selling drugs. I've been going to him for years. I never knew he was a barber.

I asked my daughter if she'd seen my newspaper. She told me that newspapers are old school. She said that people use tablets nowadays, and handed me her iPad. The fly didn't stand a chance.

Everybody knows that 70 is the new 50, right? But the cop giving me a speeding ticket couldn't be persuaded.

My old aunts would tease me at weddings and engagements: "Well, do you think you'll be next?" I settled this quickly once I started doing the same to them at funerals.