



PROBUS Global Newsletter



APRIL 2022

A Word from our President

Welcome to the April 2022 edition of the PROBUS Global Newsletter. We wish to thank the many PROBUS Global members from around the world who contributed to our newsletter. We hope you will enjoy reading its global content and all that PROBUS Global has to offer.



As mentioned in our prior releases, we will continue to restructure the management team. Recently we added Merv Richens from Australia and Graham McCombie from Scotland to our team.

Gauthier De Brabandere from Belgium will help Jacques Pierre Nollet to market PROBUS and PROBUS Global in Europe. Linda Metcalfe heads up our Administration. In February we held a PROBUS Global management team meeting with 18 PROBUS Global members who reviewed our current status and discussed our path forward. They also reviewed some exciting new programs for our members. Two committees were formed, one to review the structure of PROBUS Global and another to develop a plan for 2022 PROBUS DAY on October 1st. If you, as PROBUS Global members, would like to participate in either of these task forces, please let us know.

In our December Newsletter we had introduced two new programs, our Coordinator program, and Question of the Week. We also announced that our Armchair Traveler was under development. We can now report that our Armchair Traveler will kick off in April with Robert and Rufus from Wales being our first Travelers.

The Traveler and other new programs will be found in more detail as you go through the newsletter.

- Ladies Chat is a rebirth of a program hosted by Past President Shirley Roberts and will be hosted by Marlene Pearce from Canada
- Speakers Corner is a list of speakers recommended by members, assembled by Stan Thomson from Scotland
- The Mapping Program of all clubs and members of PROBUS Global is now on our website, put together by our Webmaster Peter Jennings from Canada
- Information on Running a Hybrid meeting by our newsletter editor Patrick Whittick from UK
- Club Registration and updating on the PROBUS Global website as information is forwarded to Linda Metcalfe of Canada
- Not a new program, but an invitation to join a PROBUS Global virtual meeting on April 28 with a PROBUS Global update and special presentation on India by PROBUS Global member Dr. R.H.G. Rau.

PROBUS Global membership continues to expand and as the pandemic fades (hopefully) and our members start to travel again, do not forget, you have a PROBUS friend ready to offer fellowship in many locations around the globe, just go to the website mapping program, and you will find that PROBUS contact.

Dick Furlong

Join Probus Global Online



April 28th special presentation
on **India** by PROBUS Global member Dr. R.H.G. Rau.
See Dr. Rau's article Page 3

In this issue

A Word from our President	1
Introducing Armchair Traveler	2
Avoiding Scams.....	2
India: A Re-emerging Brilliance	3
International Day of Older Persons	3
Speakers Corner - New Probus GLOBAL Feature ...	4
Special Invitation to Ladies Chat.....	4
Come for a Chat Session	4
Map of Clubs with Probus GLOBAL Members	5
Updating the Probus Global Directory	5
Tips'n'Tricks	6
In and Around the Clubs - Club Stories.....	7-8
Probus Club of Probus Cornwall.....	7
Probus Club of Karori, New Zealand.....	7
Shediak Shores Probus Club, Canada.....	8
Coping with COVID in the Clubs.....	9-11
Ellesmere, England.....	9
Sandton, South Africa.....	9
Innerleithen, Walkerburn & Traquair, Scotland....	10
Goderich, Canada.....	10
Leuven, Belgium	11
Douglas, England.....	11
Simon's Town, South Africa.....	11
and now for a little humour.....	12



Armchair Traveler

Armchair Traveler
Robert Scott
P.G. Armchair Travel Coordinator
for Wales
resrhyl@gmail.com

PROBUS Global is announcing an exciting new program, Armchair Travel Coordinator. A country or region is selected, you can pose your inquiry and a PROBUS member(s) from the selected area will answer your question and the Q&A will be posted on the PROBUS GLOBAL site.

Our Armchair Coordinator is not a professional travel consultant but a PROBUS Global member with great understanding of their country/region, and we have selected a part of the world that our membership may not know well, or understand the history, culture and geography.

And the first selected choice is Wales, and our coordinator is Robert Scott with the able assistance of his friend Rufus.

Robert has opened the Traveler program with the following: "If you are thinking that a visit to Wales might be different, you are correct. The [Visit Wales](#) and [Welcome to Wales](#) sites will give you an idea of what to expect regarding scenery, culture, history, getting about and what to see and where to go, but Robert and Rufus will provide the behind the scenes view of Wales."

If you then have some specific questions, do please send an email and we will try our best to give you an answer within 1 to 3 days as I will consult with my expert historian Rufus and allow for time differences within our Global network. When we have accumulated your questions and our answers, they will be placed on our PROBUS GLOBAL website for all to read.



The flag of Wales (Y Ddraig Goch, meaning 'the red dragon') consists of a red dragon passant on a green and white field

Snowdonia is a region in northwest Wales concentrated around the mountains and glacial landforms of massive Snowdonia National Park.



An Introduction to our two Welsh gentlemen who will help you through the world of Wales:

Rufus - born in Jubilee year in Carmarthen to first language Welsh parents - went to Swansea and Bangor Universities reading History, an ardent Rugby player and supporter. He spent all his professional life in Adult Education culminating as director for North Wales.

Robert - born in Lancashire, mother from Wales, father from Durham - started as an Articled Pupil to Borough Engineer in Manchester. Subsequently, at age 21, he was recalled to manage the family High St retail business established in 1885. He spent his life with Scouts, Lifeboat, Church, Chamber of Trade, all in a variety of management roles. Now retired, he has joined PROBUS and became secretary, building his club from virtual extinction to a flourishing club.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Avoiding Scams

There has been a surge in cyber scams since COVID-19, as more people are using the Internet. Australia's top scams have been investments scams, dating scams, false billing, hacking, online shopping scams, remote access scams, identify theft, inheritance scams, even puppy scams and COVID-19 safety text messages scams.

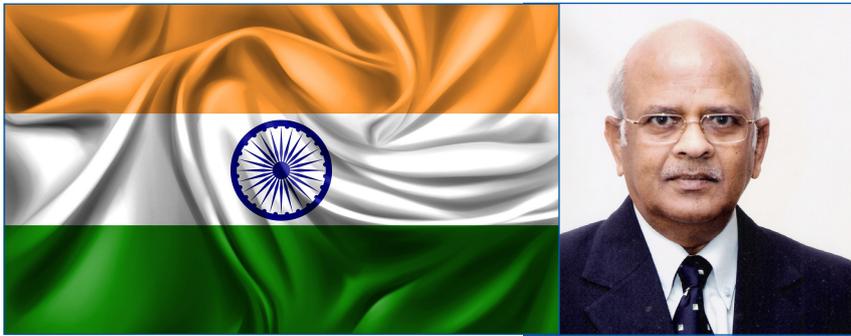
They all do the same thing: they try to trick you into giving them your money or personal information. They often look real, catch you by surprise and come with believable stories. They are far more sophisticated now than ever. If you receive an email and wonder if it is a scam, please check: the email address, click on the email header name to look at the full email address. If you cannot confirm who it is from, it is a scam. If their domain name is not in the email such as @stayintouch.net.au or @westpac.com.au, it is a scam.

- If it has spelling and grammatical errors
- If it has a request for you to do something, e.g. click on this link to update my address
- If it has a malicious link. You can hover your mouse over the link to see the actual website you will be taken to. Do not click on the link.
- If there is a sense of urgency, such as 'update your details now to avoid paying...'

These scams try to push your buttons, play with your emotions, make you feel you have to do something straight away. You do not. Do not reply. Do not agree to anything. If unsure call someone else – a digital-savvy friend to ask advice. Call the organisation they are supposed to be representing with the number you know it to be, not the number on the email or phone call. Go to www.scamwatch.gov.au and see what scams there are. Just remember, you do not have to act on what the email or caller is asking, and you most certainly do not have to act on it straight away.

If you are on a shopping site, check the website address is correct and you haven't been redirected to somewhere else. Use secure websites and payment methods such as PayPal. Take note of the receipt or transaction number. Avoid using public Wi-Fi or computers to make your purchases, read the return policies and make sure you are using a reputable shopping site. Also, remember if the price sounds too good to be true, it is probably a scam.

If you are going to be delivering your purchases to your friends and family, pay for tracking if you can or check if the shopping site can wrap and ship directly to the person who would be receiving the goods. Then you are also not paying and waiting for two deliveries.



“INDIA: A RE-EMERGING BRILLIANCE”

By Dr. RHG Rau

President, Probud Club of Hyderabad, INDIA

India was a leading economy for centuries, measured at about quarter of the world's economy during the 17th century. As an effect of colonial rule, India GDP in 1950 dropped to 4.2% of world GDP. Following independence in 1947, the country adopted socialistic principles with several developmental projects under government management and control. Economic progress, measured across multiple vectors such as GDP growth, poverty alleviation, income equality, labor productivity and exchange rate, lagged global competition.

Economic liberalization in 1991 provided necessary impetus to India to be not only competitive but also take leadership position in several fields, helping to achieve rapid growth. In the last three decades, Indian GDP increased by 1100% from \$266 billion in 1991 (inflation adjusted) to \$3 trillion in 2019, with purchasing power parity rising from \$1 trillion in 1991 to \$12 trillion in 2019, while recording impressive performances across several fields, notably technology/IT and pharma.

The rise of India is globally acknowledged. The recorded success stories are propelling the nation to race ahead beyond leadership positions in both old-age and emerging technologies. India is proving “even the sky is not the limit”.

Dr. Rau's presentation shares a summary of India's efforts on the key business imperatives like Quality, Productivity, Technology and Change management. The subject matter being vast, he focuses on a few key areas like Quality, Technology, Medical services, Work culture, Education and Training, Learning processes, Skill development and India's Global positioning. He ends his presentation by identifying a few India-specific attributes helping the country to not only achieve such global positioning but also strategizing the futuristic path.

The presentation provides us the perspective that having already recorded several success stories in the recent past, India is seeking to accelerate the progress towards achieving brilliance in the chosen fields. It also provides a balanced view of the hurdles to be overcome to achieve this goal.

The presentation is of current relevance and is frequently supported by quantification while recognizing the sources of such quantification. It gratefully acknowledges the contributors, who are specialists in their respective fields.

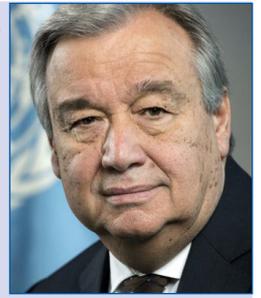
Dr. Rau is uniquely qualified to share this perspective, with his varied professional and academic accomplishments across the globe. He authored several papers for national and international conferences. He is academically qualified as a metallurgical engineer, has professionally managed functions such as operations, technology, quality and global marketing for over five decades, nationally recognized for his meritorious inventions, and a senior professor at leading Indian technical and management schools.

**Join us online to see & hear the
April 28th special presentation on India by
PROBUS Global member Dr. R.H.G. Rau.**

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

1ST OCTOBER

António Guterres
UN Secretary General



Staying connected with loved ones. Attending a religious service. Taking a stance. All of these actions and many more are increasingly carried out online, especially as individuals and communities grapple with restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we face the challenge of navigating our world's growing reliance on technology, perhaps no population could benefit more from support than older persons.

“Digital Equality for all Ages,” the theme of this year's International Day of Older Persons, offers an important chance to expand opportunities across generations for the benefit of society as a whole.

Older persons have often been left more isolated during the pandemic. They are also at greater risk of suffering from the rising threat of cybercrime. While taking all possible measures to hold to account those unscrupulous criminals preying on older persons, we must also work to strengthen the digital skills of the elderly as an important defence and means to improve their well-being.

Older persons are far more than a vulnerable group; they are a source of knowledge, experience and rich contributions to our collective progress. When older persons can access, learn and use new technology, they will be better equipped to contribute to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), our universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy health, peace and prosperity.

On this year's International Day of Older Persons, I call for more inclusive policies, strategies and actions to achieve digital equality for people of all ages.

Speakers Corner - A New Feature on the Website



Many clubs have been unable to meet in person for the past two years. Fortunately, we have learned that seniors can learn to use new technologies and many of us have met for our regular meetings using Zoom. A benefit of this has been the ability to hear presentations from distant speakers who would not have been able to join us under normal circumstances.

As we resume physical contact, many clubs have decided that it is worth some effort to maintain a hybrid combination using Zoom to include guests and members unable to attend the meeting and allowing for presentations by speakers from a distance.

PROBUS Global is building a directory of speakers, all recommended by our members, who are ready to present to your club by Zoom, or in-person if circumstances allow it.

Stan Thomson from Banchory PROBUS Club in Scotland has been curating the list and working diligently to create the new Speakers Corner page.

The number of speakers on the list is growing. We have already catalogued 42 talks ranging from Magic to Military History. Our speakers tell of their trips to Easter Island and crossing the Atlantic in a small sailboat. You won't be bored.

If you have a favourite presenter who has enthralled your members, please drop us a line and introduce them to us so we can add them to our list.

Special Invitation to Ladies - Chat Session



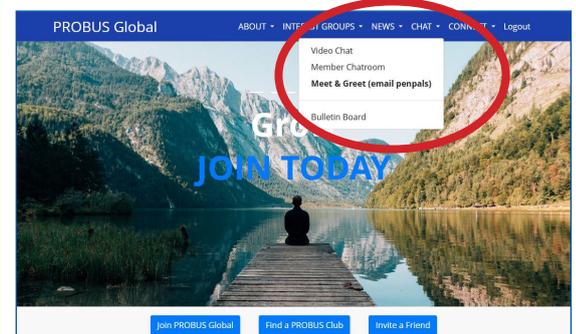
ZOOM Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81032222447?pwd=UzhMRW10dFNOL2RDVmx-NdGZtOUNLdz09>

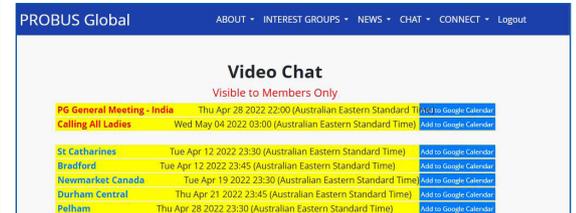
Come for a Chat Session

On the [Probus Global website](#), you'll see a 'Connect' link, and then a 'Video Chat' option. At 3pm (UK time) on Sundays, there are often people from different parts of the world online - it's a great way to make new friends and catch up with old ones!

And if you can't make *that* time (I realise it's really not a good time in Australia!), try joining anyway - you never know, there might be someone else looking for a chat!

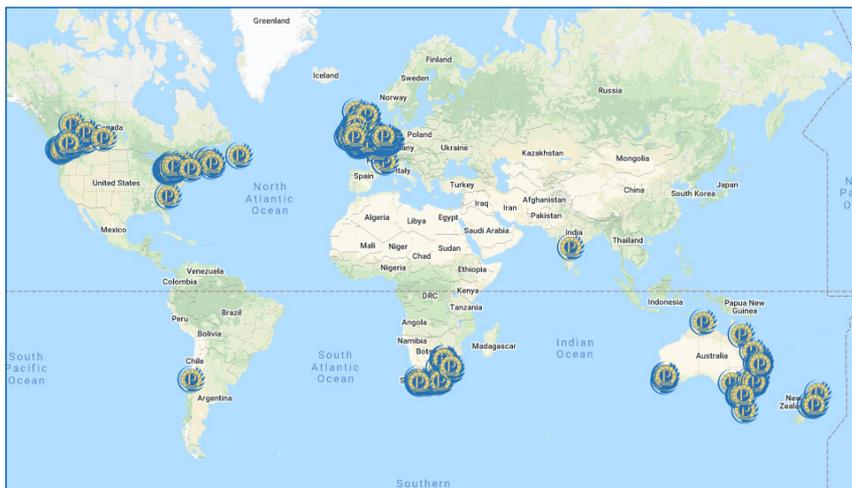


CHAT is found on the Home menu on the PROBUS Global website and when selected offers chat choices



Map of Clubs with PROBUS Global Members

Peter Jennings



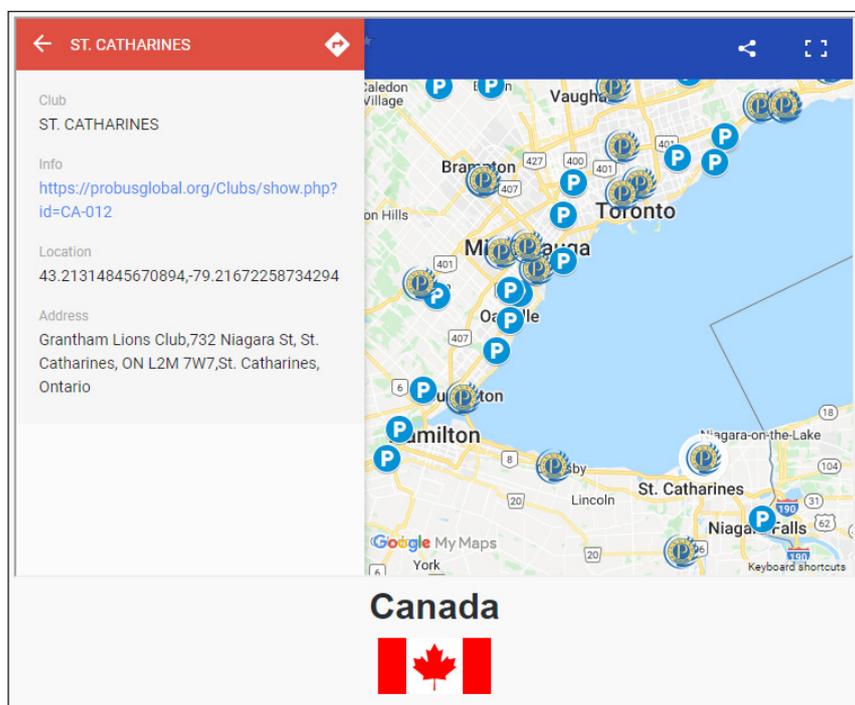
As the world opens up for travel, we are ready to realize one of the founding objectives of PROBUS Global - attending meetings at other clubs and meeting fellow Probians in far off lands.

Since the beginning, it has been my personal goal to place all of the clubs on a map, making it easier to answer the question, Where are the closest PROBUS clubs to me, right now? We are getting closer to achieving that goal.

It is probably no surprise that most non-member visitors arrive on the PROBUS Global website after Googling for a nearby PROBUS Club.

From the CONNECT menu, select Contact a PROBUS Club. Choose a country by clicking the map or selecting from the list. You will see a map of the country with PROBUS Clubs shown. Clubs with PG members are shown with the PG logo.

Zoom and scroll the map to find the closest club. Click on the club to display links to the contact information. What could be easier?



Linda Metcalfe has been working hard to keep the information for each club current. Check the information for your local club. Please let us know if anything is out of date. Linda will be happy to update your club page.

If you see a nearby club with no members in PROBUS Global yet, why not invite yourself to one of their meetings and tell them about the benefits of joining us? PROBUS Global is a growing happy family of members seeking fellowship with other Probians.

Updating the PROBUS Global Directory - we need your input!

Linda Metcalfe

When visitors to the PROBUS Global website click on the “Find a Probus Club” tab, it displays a page showing every club we have listed in our directory. Once a club is selected, the information displayed can include the name of the club, the number of members, the type of club (men, women, combined), meeting location (map), time and frequency, contact name, phone number and email and the club website. The information displayed is what we had when first added to our directory and some fields may be blank.

So how does PROBUS Global keep the information displayed current? As there are 4,500 PROBUS clubs worldwide, keeping the information current is quite the challenge. One way of doing so is a process whereby the PG webmaster, Peter Jennings, has set up an automatic email to the PG administrator, Linda Metcalfe, for every instance where a non-member views or asks for the contact information on a club page. Linda then sends an email to the contact for the club viewed stating:

PROBUS Global Maintains a directory of PROBUS Clubs which we find is mainly used by people searching for a club to join in their area. Recently someone was searching for information on your club. Please help us keep the information up to date by checking what we currently show in our directory and letting us know if any changes are required.” (The club’s information that is in our directory is included in the email)

Linda does receive current information from replies to her emails and then updates the PROBUS Global directory. Unfortunately, not every club in our directory has a contact email address. Linda then relies on Google to search for contact information for that club on the web. Unfortunately, not every search yields a contact.

A shout out to PROBUS Global members who are reading this article – we need your assistance. Please take a minute and view your club’s information on the PROBUS Global website. It would further help if you can check the information for a nearby club as well. If it is not current, then please email linda@probusglobal.org with any changes/additions to the content displayed on our website. She will be happy to update the directory.



Tips'N'Tricks for You

Creating Hybrid Meetings

Patrick Whittick

Many clubs are now able to meet face-to-face, but you may find that a proportion of your members are unwilling or unable to attend these meetings.

Some clubs have implemented 'hybrid' meetings, where most people are meeting face-to-face, but those who can't are joining via Zoom (note: other video conferencing solutions *are* available, e.g Google Meet, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc.).

How does this work? I'd suggest you need a couple of laptops or tablets - one which allows people on the call to see the 'top table', and one which faces the room so that people on Zoom can see their friends (if only 'virtually') and therefore feel part of the club.

The biggest issue is likely to be with sound: you might need to ask people to move close to the computer in order to be heard by those online. Please let us know how you're getting on with these meetings - it would be good for us to learn best practices from each other, or help with any issues.

patrick@whittick.org.uk

Dunmow & District Probus Club

Email Communication with Our Members

Patrick Whittick

I have read a lot about how clubs are keeping in touch with their members, but - in case it's useful - thought I would write a short article explaining how we have set up our email communications with members.

Rather than each member of the committee having their own list of members (which is always going to be wrong!), we use 2 main mailing lists (both hosted by Google - groups.google.com):

1. Probus committee

A mailing list which our committee members can use. Any email sent to the mailing list is automatically sent to all the committee members, and any committee member can send to it.

2. Probus members

This is a list which includes all the members; however, the only people who can send to the list are members of the committee. The advantages of this approach are:

before we implemented this, we used to have lots of "OK - thanks" emails which were sent to everyone

the mailing list keeps the members' email addresses private

if a member replies to an email, it is only sent to the person who originally sent the email - not to all the members

If anyone would like to know more about mailing lists, please get in touch.

patrick@whittick.org.uk

Dunmow & District Probus Club

Promoting Your Probus Club

Rob Neary President Probus Association of Qld

Internally by Club Management Committee

- Encourage a "competition" to introduce new members -> monthly prize (bottle of wine);
- Encourage positive talk at meetings -> deal with dissenters promptly;
- Stop emphasizing problems -> negative talk -> negative attitude.

Get a Club Business card (Vistaprint)

- Get business cards printed for club with place for member to put their details to give to prospective members.

Club Newsletter

- Celebrate new members to club with their story;
- Small paragraph -> recognition for effort by MC member/s and club helpers.

Meetings

- Ensure there is promotional material on display;
- Have club promotional material available for members to take with them and use.

Members

- Encourage members to promote Probus -> places and people on their outside activities;
- Use members connections in other community and interest / hobby groups to promote club.

Externally - Local Council Listings

- Ensure your club is posted on council website -> seniors area and community groups listings;
- Send Ward/Division councillor your newsletter and write a club story for their newsletter.

Running Out of Space on Your PC

Rob Neary President Probus Association of Queensland

These days MicroSD & SD Cards are extremely cheap and offer a way to expand your storage on your PC or laptop.

Most PCs will have a multi-function facia including SD cards reader. By buying and using a large capacity



Front panel on desktop PC with multibay reader

SD or Micro SD card in the PC or laptop, you can easily and cheaply expand your storage. The card is simply another drive.

I have an SD Card permanently in my laptop which allows me to carry all of my important files for meetings. The card is actually a microSD card in an adapter and this lets me put the microSD into my tablet as well.



Laptop with SD Adapter & MicroSD Card inserted

In and Around the Clubs

The Probus Club of Probus, Cornwall at 20

Nick Hibbett, Hon Secretary, The Probus Club of Probus

Just over twenty years ago a group of three locals, Roy Jarman, Mike Saker and Ray McVay were enjoying their weekly 5pm get together at what became known as 'the old boys table' in the village local, The Hawkins Arms when two of them who were members of the Truro Tregolls Probus Club, part of the international but entirely independent association of 'Professional & Business' clubs, remarked that it was odd that given our unique village name, there was no Probus Club in Probus.

From this early beginning a club, The Probus Club of Probus was duly established, friends from within the village like Dennis Keam and John Stringer were encouraged to join and the first Annual General Meeting was held at Probus Demonstration Gardens in January 2002.

Fast forward 20 years and The Probus Club of Probus is still going strong with a membership of around forty, holding it's twentieth AGM in Probus Village Hall on 20th January. (See photo of the 2022 Executive Committee). Back in 2002 the club had a thriving membership who enjoyed a huge range of activities including one, a walk across Bodmin Moor organised by John Stringer which proved quite a bit more 'interesting' than envisaged!



2022 Executive Committee:

*Standing l – r: Colin Honey; David Meggs; Barrie Anthony; Richard Ludlow
Seated: Ray Schofield, Chairman and Nick Hibbett,*

For its celebratory year the Probus Club has a full programme of monthly coffee meetings with speakers and three luncheon visits to the Falmouth Hotel. These monthly get-togethers are backed up by a range of social activities, including walks, visits and a very popular 'Jazz in the Garden' picnic. Although essentially a 'men's club', wives and partners are welcome to attend meetings of interest, the luncheons and all social activities.

The club holds true to the ethos of Probus Clubs internationally to provide friendship and fellowship for retired people, although members are not restricted to 'professional and business people', indeed it is not even necessary to be fully retired to be eligible to join!

It's also worthy of note that 'the old boys table' at The Hawkins Arms has also withstood many changes at the pub but 20 years later, continues to meet at 5pm every Friday evening to put the world to rights over a few beers (and perhaps the odd whisky!).

Probus Club of Karori 30th Anniversary

Judith Baxter, Publicity Officer, Probus Club of Karori Inc.

On Monday, 65 members and guests met at the Wilton Bowling club to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Probus Club of Karori.

It was a happy collection of friends, some new and some old, but all determined to enjoy themselves after not knowing until very recently whether the lunch would go ahead because of Covid restrictions. Good food, cheerful chatter, lively table companions and even the weather behaved, with the sun coming out from behind the rain clouds behind which it had been lurking for several days.

Two Probus Ambassadors were guests, one of whom was part of the team originally tasked with getting the club established. He presented a certificate to David Marshall, the President commemorating the anniversary. In thanking him, the President raised the question that as there are nine committee members, whose living room wall would the framed certificate grace?

One member had made two cakes. One with icing and copious amounts of brandy, one without. Both were greatly admired and appreciated by all.

The cake was cut by the President and Heather Montgomery, not the oldest, as she loudly proclaimed, but the longest serving club member and ex-president. Heather and three other ex-presidents each shared a short memory, and the two Ambassadors each gave a short introduction of themselves and their responsibilities as Ambassadors. The cake was then distributed by three bridesmaids, so called because they were the 'back up' team, tasked with the many small tasks that inevitably arise in such a gathering.

It was then time to go. The room slowly cleared and the committee members were faced with the detritus of such a gathering. But many hands and cheerful chatter make any job easy.



President David Marshall with 2 Probus Ambassadors

Coping with COVID in the Clubs

In England

What outstanding thing/s has/have your club done to keep your PROBUS club “alive” during COVID?

Our Probus Club is located in a rural community with a population of just over 4000. Since the outbreak of Covid and lock-down we rapidly set up a regular series of Probus Newsletters, initially weekly and then fortnightly to ensure regular contact with our members. We also kept regular telephone contact particularly with those who were more ‘socially isolated’ and especially those living alone and/or with more limited health. The feedback about the Newsletters has been excellent, many members providing articles about their earlier times, desert-island-discs and stories of interest/amusement. We re-organised our regular speaker-programme to enable sharing Zoom presentations instead of face-to-face which proved popular. We were conscious though of those of our members who do not have internet access so delivered paper-prints of the newsletters including notes of the speaker events. We were delighted to see an expansion of our lady members particularly. Although we have sadly had a number of our members pass away in the past two years our membership has increased by approximately 15%.

What should the club do when it can meet “normally” again?

Our Club has resumed ‘normal’ face-to-face meetings, subject to government Covid guidelines. As anticipated and understandably, some more vulnerable members were nervous about attending after long periods of isolation. However, we continue to support those of our members who find it challenging to meet face-to-face in a group situation by visiting them individually at home and by telephone. We are pleased to see that some of our members who were initially reluctant to re-join meetings in person have now done so. Face-masks are optional under our government guidance and we ensure that social-distancing measures are available.

What are the future challenges for your Probus Club?

We are confident that our Probus Club will continue to thrive. Our members are always keen to encourage their friends and neighbours to consider joining our club, often initially as a guest. We maintain and try to expand good relationships with other local Probus Clubs and with other clubs and societies. Probus is seen locally as a good and welcoming group for retired people moving into Ellesmere who are looking to engage with the community with like-minded people.

Paul Goulbourne, Hon Secretary, Ellesmere (Shropshire) Probus Club, UK

and in South Africa

Sandton Probus - keeping the club alive during Covid

We did send out a newsletter advising members when we would re-open but did very little to keep the club “alive” during this period.

Sandton Probus ran a short quiz during hard lockdown from April until September 2020. Our quizmaster sent out by e-mail to 28 interested members 30 quizzes, each of which were spread over 3 – 4 days.

What did our Club do when we met normally again

We ensured that we only filled the room to 50% of its capacity.

We have a lunch and used to sit at round tables taking 8 – 9 members, we reduced this to 5-6 members per table.

As we are situated in South Africa, we were able to open all the double doors on the one side of the room for fresh air.

Wearing masks depended on the individual.

The future challenges for Sandton Probus

We have been extremely lucky over the last two years as our membership has increased substantially in spite of the natural loss of some older members.

Our challenges are:

- To maintain our current membership.
- To find interesting speakers as we do not pay our speakers but give them a bottle of wine or chocolates.
- To keep within our budget against spiralling food costs, etc.
- Provide a pleasant atmosphere where members can communicate with each other.
- Ensure the lunch supplied maintains its standard.

Sandy Davey Smith

Speaker Convener and Secretary

Sandton Probus, Gauteng, South Africa

and in New Zealand

Along with all the other clubs around the world, the past two years have provided the Karori Probus Club with a huge learning curve.

In 2020 as her very first job as newly elected President, Kay Klitscher had to advise the members there would be no meetings for the next few months. Other than that, and until now, with very few exceptions, our club has been operating as usual. We are lucky in that our meetings take place in a large hall connected to a local bowling club with plenty of room for the 70 plus usual attendees. During December we celebrated our 30th anniversary there with a sit down, catered lunch.

During the two years, the committee, subcommittees and intent groups have continued to operate mostly uninterrupted.

Now, with the introduction of Omicron to our shores, and with the rapidly increasing numbers, we have decided that our AGM will be held via Zoom. This is a first for us and we are hopeful that most members will join.,

Judith Baxter, Karori Probus Club, New Zealand



Coping with COVID in the Clubs

and in Scotland

Probus Club of Innerleithen, Walkerburn and Traquair, in the Scottish Borders answers the theme question: *How well has your Probus Club survived COVID and what next?*

What outstanding thing/s has/have your club done to keep your PROBUS club 'alive' during COVID?

At the start of the 2020-2021 season our club, like many others, conducted all our meetings on Zoom. We were in the fortunate position that one of our Committee members was able to act as host for these meetings, as he already had experience with the system by hosting church services. Our Secretary also kept all club members up to day by sending them information about upcoming talks/ presentations and forwarding the minutes of Committee meetings. This maintained a link with members who did not choose to attend Zoom meetings.

What should the Club do when it can meet 'normally' again?

We have now returned to our normal venue in Innerleithen, following the Scottish Government's guidance for such gatherings e. g. wearing masks until seated, keeping windows open, avoiding areas that might act as 'bottlenecks' and asking members to bring their own cups for coffee.

What are the future challenges for your Probus Club?

The central challenge that we face is increasing the membership. Our Club is already open to all retired people in the area. Before the Covid lock-down we had 56 members but at the moment the number is down to 36. Ideas which we have acted on/discussed include: (1) encouraging members to invite friends to a 'taster' meeting to give them a chance to experience the high quality of talks/ presentations that we have. This was carried out in February with a topic that we thought would be popular with people: 'Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels'. It did attract some new faces but there are no new members confirmed to date. (2) In September we will send out information about the Club in the local U3A newsletter. This is a relatively large organisation which may well provide a likely source of new members. (3) A poster is being prepared to display on notice boards in local organisations such as bowling clubs. This will also be ready later in the summer, in advance of the new Probus season starting in October. (4) We continue to send a report on our meetings to the local newspaper. This helps to keep alive an awareness of the Club's activities in the local community.

Douglas Gray, Honorary Secretary

and in Canada

Life During/After Covid

Life during Covid for the Goderich Probus Club in Goderich Ontario has been very challenging, what with the on-again, off-again ability to meet face to face; masking and disinfecting hands etc., becoming the norm.

Our Probus Club Management felt that providing an alternative to "face-to-face" meetings by offering to host on-line Zoom meetings to our membership was a much-needed new avenue and the way to move forward. The problem we encountered however, was that some members were either not interested in picking up the challenge or if interested, could not figure out how to make it happen for themselves. Our club's technology guru spent countless hours mentoring members who wanted to be included on how to get access to the monthly Zoom meetings.

As restrictions lessened, we found we were able to offer a hybrid style meeting, marrying technology with in-person meetings. This allowed members who wanted to attend meetings in person to meet at our designated meeting space and incorporated our Zoom members who still had a hesitancy to personally join in the meeting. Again, some challenges, but as each meeting ends, we learn new ways to smooth out those bumps.

Other interesting by-products of our Zoom journey has been the establishment of two monthly social Zoom groups, a Probus Coffee Café and Happy Hour gathering. These gatherings are geared toward getting to know each other a little more intimately, sharing fun time, jokes, etc., etc.

Although most of the federal/provincial restrictions have been lifted, we are still required (in Ontario) to wear masks when we are in a store, meeting room, or space where we are socially gathered.

My personal belief is that going forward, we will continue to keep some form of dual in-person/zoom connection with our Probus club membership. Having spent two years either being completely isolated from others, with all the restrictions we've had to acclimatize ourselves with and/or having some but not all restrictions lifted, things will not go back to "normal" (whatever "normal" is for you), any time soon.

But one big outcome for us is that our club has been able to maintain itself and is currently going through a bit of a growth spurt.

Irene Gordon



PROBUS Global would love to hear how your Probus Club plans to celebrate Probus Day in 2022

Celebrating
PROBUS
Day

Send your story & pictures to newsletter@probusglobal.org

Coping with COVID in the Clubs

and in Belgium

PROBUS LEUVEN www.probusleuven.be

Our club is situated in Leuven, a university city in Flanders, Belgium. We were founded in 2005 and we count at this moment 36 members, with 32 partners and 9 widows of deceased partners. At this moment we are a men's club but we hope that we can change that in the future. I had the honour of being their president for the last four years.

During the covid intermezzis we stopped our reunions on March 2020, restarted in July 2021 till November 2021. We are going to restart now in March. Then we can finally make the transition of presidency.

During the lock-down periods we had several zoom-meetings on several subjects. Also I wrote every month a long letter by mail about the covid news and the news about our members, and a few jokes as final touch. Every two months I had a telephone-marathon with all the members and their partners as well with the 9 widows.

In January 2021 and 2022 we brought with the members or our board to all our members and the widows a bottle of Cava and a nice box of Belgian chocolates. All this was highly appreciated and the close ties between us kept intact.

We were lucky that we did not lose any of our members on covid during these years.

With the best Probus greetings to you all,

Hari Jacobs, (still) President Probus Leuven

back in England

Our former President Victor Ward played a leading role in keeping contact with members during the Covid 19 pandemic with the issue of a weekly newsletter to all members. Covering current topics, matters of interest and of course the current state of play with regard to the impact of Covid 19 on our club. This was a lifeline for the club. It should also be noted that members showed their appreciation by submitting contributions to Victor. Without doubt this was the single most important action in keeping the club alive. Later when restrictions allowed we did meet as "friends" for coffee on Wednesdays. This also proved positive in maintaining member contact.

We did nothing different. Our club met as we always did. This was a comfort in that it delivered a wider message that normality had returned which was what everyone wanted to hear. A close eye however is kept on Covid numbers and the need to reintroduce mask wearing at meetings if deemed appropriate or requested by the members. Our safety is a primary concern.

During the pandemic our club lost 6 members who died. We also lost a further 4 members who can no longer attend due to ill health. Our challenge therefore is recruiting new members. This is a major focus of the club presently. We are confident that this issue will be addressed successfully and already we have seen new members join our club.

Kind Regards

Oliver McCann, President Probus Douglas

For more club reports, goto the Newsletter Supplement page
https://probusglobal.org/Newsletters/2022_04_PG.html

and back in South Africa

How well has the Simon's Town Probus Club survived COVID and what comes next?

Simon's Town is a historic port and naval base found in South Africa on the False Bay side of the Cape Peninsula, which has Cape Town with Table Mountain at its head.

Lockdown in South Africa arrived on 24 March 2020 which was a particularly draconian lockdown. Our club's AGM, which had to be postponed; it will be held this month, almost two years later. President Bruce Parker and his committee have continued the last two years keeping the club 'ticking over'. The absence of monthly lunches, with their speakers, and outings every two or three months, made us rely on email and our monthly newsletter to communicate to members. Virtual meetings by Zoom never caught but we were able to resume our lunches, with social distancing, from last October.

What outstanding things has our club done to keep it "alive" during COVID?

Our Managing Committee quickly realized that we had to do *something*, or we might lose members. We decided to concentrate on reinforcing the newsletter to maintain contact and morale.

For the first few months we concentrated on the history of our club, particularly as our club celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2020. We then ran another illustrated series on Artists of Probus Simon's Town. Now that we have run out of artists' stories, we intend to include another feature on Mariners of Probus Simon's Town, even though we have begun to return to normal.

What has the club done since it began to meet "normally" again?

As the summer began last year, we began regular lunches with speakers. In February, we organized a wine-tasting at a winery that offered out-door facilities. This month, lunch will be combined with the much-postponed AGM. We expect attendance to also return to normal as news of the safety of these gatherings spreads within the club.

We have also organized get-togethers involving social members at roughly six-weekly intervals. The inaugural gathering at the end of January was highly successful.

What are the future challenges for your Probus Club?

The main future challenge would be a return to lockdown conditions. Thankfully, the Pandemic has not caused major mortality among members and retention of members has been good. Lockdown made it impossible to induct new members and so our numbers have declined slightly.

Another challenge is that of an ageing membership. The mean age of members is 80 years. Now there is the challenge of finding and recruiting younger members to maintain the viability of the club into the future. In confronting the challenges of an organization for retired people in who are the most vulnerable to this mutating coronavirus we are surely not unique among Probus clubs worldwide.

Robin Palmer



*and now
for a
little
humour*

All arrivals in Heaven have to go through a bureaucratic examination to determine whether admission will be granted. One room has a clerk who inputs computerized records of what each applicant did on his or her last day of life.

The first applicant of the day explains that his last day was not a good one.

"I came home early and found my wife lying naked in bed. She claimed she had just gotten out of the shower. Well, her hair was dry and I checked the shower and it was completely dry, too.

I knew she was into some hanky-panky and I began to look for her lover. I went onto the balcony of our 9th floor apartment and found the SOB clinging to the rail by his finger tips. I was so angry that I began bashing his fingers with a flower pot. He let go and fell, but his fall was broken by some awnings and bushes.

On seeing he was still alive, I found super human strength to drag our antique cedar chest to the balcony and throw it over. It hit the man and killed him. At this point the stress got to me and I suffered a massive heart attack and died."

The clerk thanked him and sent him on to the next office.

The second applicant said that his last day was his worst.

"I was on the roof of an apartment building working on the AC equipment. I stumbled over my tools and toppled off the building. I managed to grab onto the balcony rail of a 9th floor apartment but some idiot came rushing out on the balcony and bashed my hands with a flower pot.

I fell, but hit some awnings and bushes and survived, but as I looked up I saw a huge chest falling toward me. I tried to crawl out of the way but failed and was hit and killed by the chest."

The clerk couldn't help but chuckle as he directed the man to the next room.

He is still giggling when his third customer of the day enters. He apologizes and says, "I doubt that your last day was as interesting as the fellow in here just before you."

"I don't know" replies the man, "picture this, I'm buck naked, hiding in this cedar chest"

If you ever feel like your brain is inadequate... Think of this guy!



**PRETTY WILD
HOW WE USED TO
EAT CAKE AFTER
SOMEONE HAD
BLOWN ON IT...
GOOD TIMES...**

**Felt
uncomfortable
driving into the
cemetery. The
gps blurted out
you have reached
your final
destination.**



"All I'm saying is that the difference between humans & animals is that animals would never allow the dumbest of the herd to lead them."



"Don't blame me. I was cleaning his cage and he flew up the pipe."



"You getting athlete's foot is about as ridiculous as a coal miner with sunstroke!"

