

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>
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February 2023 Issue No.174

The HP Source – It's a bottler!

Richard's Rambles

Well Christmas and New Year are done and dusted, Australia Day has been celebrated and January is over. This year is really galloping by. Soon it will be Easter and a quarter of the year will be behind us.

Julie and I are still in Sydney with our daughter and hope to be back for the February meeting.

Please be aware that we are still looking for members to put their hands up and join our committee for 2023. We urgently need a secretary (even just a minute secretary) and a Vice President. They are not very onerous positions but we cannot operate without them. If anyone would like to attend the committee meetings to see what we get up to, they are more than welcome. Remember, our AGM will be held on our regular meeting day of 16th March and takes less than 10 minutes. So, please can we have some volunteers for these positions?

That's it. Short and sweet this month.
Looking forward to seeing everyone in February.

Richard.



VOLUNTEERS

NEEDED

Attached to this newsletter are the Agenda for the March AGM, the minutes of last year's AGM and a nomination form for committee membership. Please volunteer and nominate. We are still in search for someone willing to take on the role of Secretary and also the VP. More committee members are welcome too.



Due to the fall in the share price of Tesla, in one single month, from November 2021 to December 2022, Elon Musk lost about \$US165 **billion** (\$A238.5 billion), according to data from publisher Forbes. And those at the Guinness Book of Records say other sources suggest Musk's losses could have been even higher. The previous record loss was \$US58.6 billion (\$A84.7 billion) suffered by Japanese tech investor Masayoshi Son in 2000.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY

Sunday 5th, **Coffee and Chat** 10.30a.m. Pacific Golf Club

Wednesday 8th **Lunch** 11.30 a.m. Cenzo's Cafe + Bar, 131 Lumley St, Upper Mount Gravatt.

Thursday 16th **Monthly Meeting** 9.30a.m. Newnham Hotel

Thursday 23rd **Maritime Museum** Sidon St, South Brisbane. 10.30am.

Tickets \$15.00 available at door. Followed by lunch at The Ship Inn. Train station, Bus station and Ferry Terminal are close by. Register by February meeting.

MARCH

Wednesday 1st Tour of Suncorp stadium 10.30-12.30 (to be confirmed). Followed by lunch, possibly at the Caxton.

Sunday 5th **Coffee and Chat** 10.30am. Pacific Golf Club.

Wednesday 8th **Ethnic Lunch** 11.45am., Dami Japanese Restaurant, 1305 Logan Rd Mt Gravatt. 11.30 Parking at Mt Gravatt Hotel (next Door)

Thursday 16th **Monthly Meeting** 9.30am. Newnham Hotel.

Tuesday 21st **Bus tour to RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre.** Departing from Greenslopes Mall bus stop at 7.30am. Morning tea and lunch included. \$74. [Expressions of interest please.](#)

APRIL

Sunday 2nd **Coffee and Chat** at Pacific Golf Club, 10.30am.

Wednesday 12th **Lunch** Proposed for Thai Dee Restaurant, 1185 Logan Rd, Holland Park. 11.30am.

Thursday 20th **Monthly Meeting** at Newnham Hotel. 9.30am.

Thursday 27th Possible visit to **Metro Information Centre**, 63 Adelaide Street, Brisbane City.

Did you know that there are about 20 quadrillion ants on the Earth at any given time? That's 20,000 trillion individuals. The new estimate is up to 20 times higher than previous ones, and represents the combined biomass -- that is, the total mass -- of all birds and mammals and is equivalent to about 20 per cent of human biomass.

Did you know that even seemingly simple creatures such as marine larvae use sight, smell and sound as navigational cues? In a new piece of

research, scientists were testing if sound cues would draw baby oysters to swim to the locations where they were trying to regrow oyster reefs. They amplified the natural sounds of the sea through underwater speakers and it worked! They are trying to restore reefs, by dropping boulders on to sandy sea floors, and enticing baby oysters and free swimming oysters to adhere to them to form highly productive shellfish reefs. Reefs of shellfish filter and clean vast volumes of water as they feed, while their shell piles provide habitat for fish and restores the ecosystem. Oyster larvae are brainless and earless, but they are certainly not clueless. Like fish, they hear by detecting and interpreting the movement of water particles stirred up by soundwaves as they pass. Fish can also be attracted with healthy sea sounds.

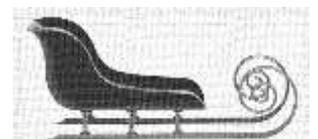


This is the probably final photo from NASA's InSight mission on Mars. The dome in the centre of the image covers a sensor that listens to the grumbles and gurgles of the red planet's innards. But after four years, the mission is drawing to a close. InSight is losing power, and its solar panels are smothered with dust. It touched down on Mars in 2018, and completed its primary data-gathering mission in 2020. Since then, its handlers gradually switched off most of its scientific instruments as dust began to cover its solar panels.



Sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) systems, are taking over the sporting world. They are changing the way sports are being coached and played. Automated player tracking has been used, and, tweaked and improved for over a decade now. The evolution of the technology and AI learning has gone from tracking balls (e.g. for LBW decisions), to tracking players, and finally, at last year's World Cup, to tracking the *limbs* of the players. Every move can be analysed and dissected and coaches are taking advantage of it.

How different it is! While we swelter, one Canadian club (Wasaga Beachcombers) as its January activity, had a pizza lunch, followed by a sleigh ride! Each sleigh held around 16 people and they filled two sleighs. Instructions for the day were "*Please bring your own hot drinks as there are none supplied. And a blanket*" Does the thought make you feel cooler?





In 1977, 45 years ago, an extraordinary spacecraft left this planet on a journey like no other. Voyager 2 was going to show us, for the first time, what the outer solar system planets looked like close-up. It was like sending a fly to New York City and asking it to report back. It arrived at Uranus in 1986 and mapped pale blue-green clouds and a possible "dark spot",

which was later confirmed by the Hubble Space Telescope. There was an unexpected magnetic field, and 10 new moons and two new coal-black rings were discovered. Three years later Voyager 2 reached Neptune. Slowly, Voyager 2's systems are now being shut down to eke out the power as long as possible. But sometime in the 2030s there will be none left, but it will still have life because the half-life of the plutonium-238 in its nuclear power source is 87.7 years, and that of the small patch of uranium-238 coating on the Golden Record it carries about life on Earth is 4.5 billion years. While constant bombardment by dust particles will gradually erode the surfaces of Voyager 2, its Golden Record should be at least partially legible after 5 billion years.

They say every cloud has a silver lining. Even Putin's war on Ukraine has one world positive. Because of the shortage of gas supplies to Europe, and the war-led energy crisis, the world is speeding up the global shift away from fossil fuels. In December, the International Energy Agency published two important reports that point to the future of renewable energy. First, the IEA revised its projection of renewable energy growth upward by 30%. It now expects the world to install as much solar and wind power in the next five years as it installed in the past 50 years. The second report showed that energy use is becoming more efficient globally, with efficiency increasing by about 2% per year.

Members now know that the hotel where we meet will be undergoing renovations and it is probable that we shall need to move. To date, the renovation plans have not been approved by the owners, let alone the City Council, so it is likely that many months will pass before anything happens. Meanwhile, the committee is researching possible nearby venues. While many venues are suitable, some have room hire charges which are prohibitive. Members will be kept updated. Apropos of that, the January meeting didn't happen. While we never had to do it before, the powers that be at the hotel claimed we should have booked the function room because it is a new year. We were locked out. The tables had been put away, and an electrician was working on the lights. There was no food for us and staff were coming later, so we couldn't even meet



elsewhere in the hotel. We cancelled the speaker and about 18 of us ended up having coffee and cake at the Southside Club. It was a shame, because we had two visitors join us for the meeting. While they came for coffee, they didn't get a chance to sample the meeting. We think it was because the Red Cross group have now moved, and the Hotel staff thought we had abandoned them also. However, the next meeting will be back to normal at the hotel.

We are in the second month of the New Year. Seventy percent of us make New Year's resolutions and they continue to capture people's imagination, hopes, and promises for betterment. So how are you going with yours? Even after 4,000 years, the New Year continues to symbolise an opportunity for a fresh start. The Babylonians were the first civilisation to hold recorded celebrations in honour of the new year, including resolutions. Though for the Babylonians the year began not in January, but in mid-March, when the crops were being planted. The resolutions for the Babylonians were intertwined with religion, mythology, power, and socioeconomic values. Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar, in 46 BC, which declared January 1 as the start of the new year. This new date was to honour the Roman god, Janus. Symbolically, Janus has two faces, to look back on the previous year and to look forward into the new year. Medieval knights pledged their allegiance and renewed their vows to chivalry and knightly valour each new year. However, in the 1800s there is some evidence resolutions were beginning to be satirised and contemporary resolutions tend to be more secular than religious, or societal in nature.



Whether they're stealing your chips or screeching at your picnic table, seagulls are a hallmark of Australian summers. While they're synonymous with the sea, they can also thrive inland, particularly in urban areas. Gulls have a large brain relative to their body. Research suggests birds with larger brains can more successfully adapt to changing habitats and colonise new

environments. They are curious and try to solve problems - both skills that serve them well in the urban jungle. Strangely, it has been found that the gulls were much more likely, when scavenging, to peck at food a human had handled, rather than food that hadn't been touched. If food is plentiful, they can breed almost anywhere, all year round. They use teamwork to harass their enemies and even vomit or defecate on the predator, with startling accuracy.



Museums are no strangers to controversial exhibits and questionable collection practices. But in 1874, when two big burly blokes hustled a man out of the Australian Museum and chucked him out onto the street, it marked the end of a particularly spicy chapter of the institution's history. The evictee was a zoologist named Gerard Krefft who had been there for 10 years. In 1860 he was employed as Assistant Curator because of his vast field experience and was promoted to Curator four years later. Australian specimens were in great demand, but Krefft decided he wouldn't send the museum's collections to Europe. Instead, he wanted to keep them in Australia to be photographed and studied here. He was a prolific collector of fauna and flora, even taking his wife on a field trip on their honeymoon in 1869. Krefft quickly became a fan of Darwin and the theory of evolution. This ruffled the feathers of the museum's trustees, which had a powerful religious — and creationist — contingent. Unsurprisingly, given Krefft's difficult and disagreeable nature, plus his evolutionist views and devotion to the museum, he and the board did not get along. Krefft blamed trustees for prioritising their personal collections over the museum's. When some gold was stolen from the museum, the trustees fired Krefft. Later he won some financial compensation for unfair dismissal, but didn't get his job back. He died in 1881. His legacy was that Australia began to see itself as a place where Australian nature should be kept, and was much more confident in its ability to do the work itself. These days, Gerard Krefft's name is enshrined in a handful of species, such as the northern hairy-nosed wombat (*Lasiorhinus krefftii*) and the southern dwarf crowned snake (*Cacophis krefftii*).

The Queensland government has launched a comparison website that allows people to compare the state's 330 retirement village operators and more than 32,000 retirement villages to quickly assess information on contracts and exit entitlements, finances and legal advice. The Compare Retirement Villages website also lists details on each village's services, facilities and location in relation to shops, public transport and hospitals.



If our crowded airports are a sign, then Australians are obviously keen to get back into the skies. And if you're flying long haul, in a few years you could have an even longer option. Qantas [has announced](#) from late 2025, it will fly passengers on non-stop flights from Australia's east coast to London. That would see you in the air for more than 19 hours in one stretch. So what do long hauls do to your body? You can become dehydrated, so drink more water than you usually would. As the cabin pressure changes,

the gas in our bodies reacts accordingly. Pressure can affect your ears, your gut and your sinuses, but they're mainly an issue as the plane climbs and descends. You can become drowsier, and after four hours there is a greater the risk of blood clots, particularly if you have pre-existing health problems. Compression stockings help. Then there's jet lag and Covid. Follow health advice, but many will prefer a break in the trip.

The committee has decided that there will be a raffle at meetings every three months, and members will be asked to volunteer to sell the tickets at the door. It will be another rostered item.

Did you know the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) is the second oldest in the world? The Royal Air Force (RAF) was formed on 1 April 1918 and the RAAF became the next truly separate and autonomous air force when it was established on 31 March 1921.

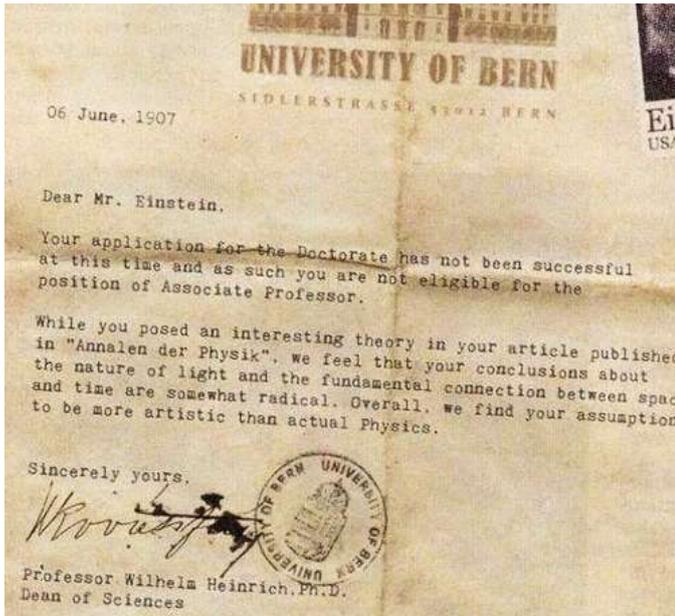
Duty Roster for February

Chair TBA 5 minute Spot Richard R Fellowship Marilyn and Helen
Door Con and Ron

Ageing is inevitable – or is it? A new study may be the first indication that the inescapable march of ageing may not be set in stone. Previous thought was that the longer you live, the more damaged your DNA becomes and as a result you age. Recently an Australian scientist (Prof. David Sinclair) working at Harvard Medical School published an article in the medical portal *Cell*, about an experiment which shows that it is not DNA damage that causes us to age. He and his fellow scientist claim it is epigenomes, which are chemical compounds that tell the genome – the entire set of DNA instructions found in a cell – what to do. That is, if DNA can be viewed as the body's hardware, the epigenome is the software, waiting to tell the gene what to do, literally turning genes on or off. They think ageing is caused by a communication problem between the "hardware" and the "software". To date, they have managed to repair the communication in multiple organs, including the eyes of mice. Don't hold your breath though, because while the research may soon be applied to help repair tissue damage, reversing the overall ageing process is a long, long way off.

At the time of publishing this newsletter, we are still awaiting confirmation from the speaker proposed for the February meeting. The

speaker meant for the aborted January meeting (from Life Flight) has been rescheduled.



Rejection: The vast rejection rates when scientists submit applications for research funding, and academics submit papers for publication, is horrific. The amount of time these people spend, and the anxiety that rejection causes is counterproductive to their jobs, employers and their mental health. In academia alone, publishing rejection rates range from 50% in general journals to 92% in prestigious outlets such as *Nature*. There must be a better system, but

as the picture above shows, it is not new and can happen to any worthy person.

National Parks in the NT will be charging visitors from April. The Parks Pass will cost families \$25 per day, \$75 for two weeks or \$150 for an 'open pass'. Locals will be exempt, but any guests visiting with them will need to purchase a pass. Travellers will be able to book passes in advance via the NT government's online booking system. The revenue from entry fees will go towards maintenance and care for the parks, an increase in park ranger numbers and the development of Aboriginal tourism opportunities. Even looking at nature is getting expensive.



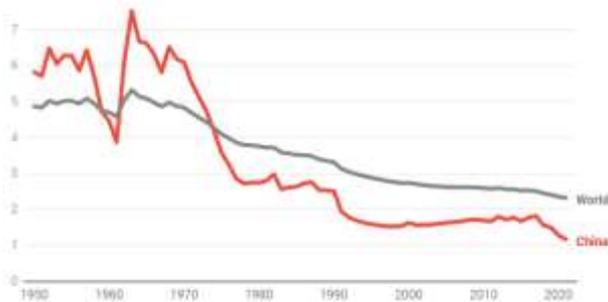
Amazing to find old web sites that are never taken down. The "latest" news on this one, a British site - Probus Information Centre - was 2013. Yet, at the bottom of the page, appear the words "*Copyright © Probus World 2023 All rights reserved*". It must be generated automatically. When sites don't have a date of its last update, it can get most frustrating. Even the Probus logo is different to the one normally used by Probus clubs worldwide.

The war for talent is no longer just between companies. More than 40 nations or territories now offer "digital nomad" visas to attract those able to be employed in one country while living, and spending their income, in another. How long you can stay varies, from 90 days in Aruba in the Caribbean to up to two years in the Cayman Islands. Most are for 12 months, with an option to renew. Some places, such as Latvia, restrict visas to employers registered in an OECD country. But generally the key

requirement is that you can show you have no need to find local work and can meet minimum income requirements. But does reality live up to the fantasy. Some [studies](#) have shown remote workers can feel socially and professionally isolated while working in one's personal Paradise. Internet speeds, time zones and maintaining work-life balance can become challenging. However, if one has the right personality, the right job and a helpful and understanding employer, being a digital nomad might be a dream come true.

Are you aware that the PAQ President, Rob Neary, is running a ten day, fully inclusive, escorted tour for Probian's to the Cook Islands in May? The tour costs \$5125 twin share (\$995 extra for single supplement). If interested, check out the PAQ web site for a full itinerary.

Total fertility rate: children per women



2022 was the year China's population turned down, the first time that has happened since the great famine brought on by Chinese leader Mao Zedong in 1959-1961. This downturn will be long-lasting, bringing forward the day the world's population peaks

and starts to shrink. Fertility rates elsewhere in the world is also falling. Evidence from European countries, which were the first to experience fertility declines and ageing, shows that once fertility falls below replacement it is very difficult to turn it around. India is likely to have overtaken China as the world's biggest nation in 2022. However, while forecasting when and if the global population will shrink is extraordinarily difficult, what has happened in China is likely to have brought the day it starts to shrink closer.

Most natural fibres can take a heavy toll on the environment. Last week, for example, an [ABC investigation](#) revealed hundreds of hectares of the Northern Territory's pristine tropical savanna had been cleared to make way for cotton farms, (sometimes without permit). Petrochemical fibres made from fossil fuels – such as polyester, nylon and acrylic – are the backbone of fast fashion, but they don't biodegrade. However, these days, new ecofriendly fibres derived from seaweed, corn, and mushroom are hitting the market. Other emerging natural fibres include lotus, pineapple and banana fibres and some are recycled from wastes such as [orange peels](#), [coffee grounds](#), and even from the protein of waste milk. It's coming, but we, as consumers, need to be more demanding to speed up the process.

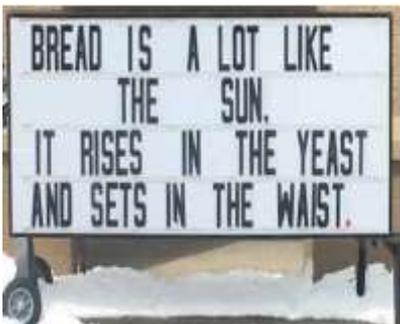
Their boy always looked a bit different from his parents! So Mum decides to get a DNA test. She finds that their boy could not be their child! She confronts her husband.... Wife: "Honey, I have something very serious to discuss with you!" Husband: "What's Up?" Wife: "According to the DNA results, this is not our kid." Husband: "Well, don't you remember? When we were leaving the hospital, you noticed that our baby had pooped and you said "Please go change the baby, I'll wait for you here". So I went inside and got a clean one and left the dirty one there."
Moral: Never give a man a job for which he is not qualified

The emotional support dog after I get done telling it my problems.



A few thoughts on gardening:

- Someone has been adding soil to my garden. The plot thickens.
- No secrets should be told on a veggie patch because the potatoes have eyes and the corn has ears!
- What kind of tree can fit into your hand? A palm tree.
- When the watermelon fell in love with the cantaloupe, it said "You're one in a melon".
- To get on line, trees just log in.
- It was about thyme the herbs were fully grown!



The worlds first tool



Made by Black and Pecker

Q: What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?

A: Pumpkin π
 Sorry. I'll see myself out.

