

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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April 2024 Issue No 188

The HP Source – It's a bottler!

Richard's Rambles



Hello to All,

Well, the weather has certainly cooled down a bit although a little rain and a bit of sunshine certainly make it really muggy. I played golf the other day and

despite having a cart we felt the heat when the sun came out. It was nice and cool when the sun was behind the clouds though.

We had a bit of excitement on the day of our AGM. Just as I opened the front door to leave for the meeting, a one-and-a-half-meter python poked its head in. Fortunately, I spotted it in time and closed the screen door before it gained entry. We covered inside until it slid slowly away and we got to the meeting later than we had hoped. On arrival at home after the meeting, we were getting some lunch in the kitchen when I spotted a familiar pattern under our patio roof and there was our "friendly" python. So, on to the phone for a snake catcher who fortunately was available and not far away. He arrived in about 15 minutes and after a very short struggle with our now angry friend (a Coastal Carpet Python) had it safely bagged in five minutes flat. \$120 well spent. He had about five other snakes in his car and was going to drop them off on the north side (well away from us) later today near The Gap. Apparently, a nice home for snakes over there.

So, this month it's snakes, last month it was sewage which is still under review by the insurance company. What will next month bring?

I think that will do for now.

It was lovely to see everyone at the AGM with a very interesting speaker telling us all about "assistance dogs", how they are raised and how they help some unfortunate individuals with special needs.

Richard

*The Committee wishes all members and their families a very happy
Easter.*



Wendy's burger chain which plans to relaunch in Australia with 200 stores, is trialling surge pricing in the US. Surge pricing is increasing prices depending on demand. For example, if it's a busy Saturday night, Ubers would suddenly cost much more than the usual charge would be. But for burgers with so many other burger outlets around? Madness.

ACTIVITIES

APRIL 2024

Sunday 7th Coffee and chat 10.00am at Pacific Golf Club

Wednesday 10th Lunch 11.30am at The Nurso, 1666 Old Cleveland Road, Chandler. The Nurso is sited at the old Hawkins Nursery and was opened in 2021. Bring a hat so you can wander round the 4 hectares viewing the artwork installations and the many plants and pots, etc. Café is open from 8am to 1.30pm.

Thursday 18th Monthly meeting at Newnham Hotel 9.30am.

MAY 2024

Sunday 5th Coffee and chat 10.00am at Pacific Golf Club.

Wednesday 8th Lunch 12.00pm Lunch at The Old Seven, 567 Old Cleveland Road, Camp Hill. Their decadent cheesy jaffles are the best and soooooo yummy. Prices range from \$20-\$25. Wines can be purchased by the glass. Non-alcoholic drinks, tea & coffee are also available.

Thursday 16th Monthly meeting at Newnham Hotel 9.30am.

Wednesday 29th Cruise to lunch at River Room Café, 285 MacArthur Avenue, Hamilton. Travel by City Cat from Southbank, departing at 10.40am to Hamilton North Shore arriving at 11.38am. Lunch at own cost with meals from \$21 to \$25. Depart North Shore at 1.30pm to arrive Southbank at 2.28pm. Use your GoCard on City Cat.

Names on list by April meeting please.

JUNE 2024

Sunday 2nd Coffee and chat 10.00am at Pacific Golf Club

Thursday 12th Lunch Venue TBA.

Thursday 20th Monthly meeting at Newnham Hotel at 9.30am.

July 2024

Sunday 7th Coffee and chat 10.00am at Pacific Golf Club

Wednesday 10th Tina – the Tina Turner musical, Lyric Theatre, QPAC, 1.00pm. Cost \$89.00. Names and payment by March meeting please. When paying into club bank account use TINA/your name as reference please.

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

Outings for **June and July** will be completed in the next couple of weeks.



In 2019, an unmanned space probe was placed in orbit around the Moon. It was supposed to have a soft landing, but the mission failed and it crash-landed. On board were [tardigrades](#) – microscopic animals with remarkable abilities to survive situations that would kill pretty much any other animal. They are less than a millimetre in length, have neurons, a mouth opening at the end of a retractable proboscis, an intestine containing a microbiota and four pairs of non-articulated legs ending in claws, and most have two eyes. Most tardigrades live in aquatic environments, but they can be found in any environment, even urban ones. They can shut down their metabolism for decades by losing up to 95% of their body water. Dehydrated adults survive for a few minutes at temperatures as low as -272°C or as high as 150°C , and over the long term at high doses of gamma rays. However, whatever the dose, radiation kills tardigrade eggs. It is unlikely they will survive because of lack of water, but inactive specimens are on lunar soil and their presence raises ethical questions about contaminating space with life from Earth.

Did you know research has already shown that if we outsource boring but important work to AI, we forget how to do it ourselves?

When Trevor takes over the newsletter next month, he will most likely look for people to provide him with information for a “**Spotlight on Members**” item. So, to set an example, here is one he presented for this issue.

Mary W

Trevor and Marlene: A journey from hospitals to mountain trails, Spotify and Probus



Hi, I’m Trevor, and my wife is Marlene. We joined the Probus Club of Holland Park Central last year, after downsizing to become apartment dwellers in Coorparoo.

While I grew up in the western suburbs of Brisbane, Marlene hails from the northern suburbs. We both graduated in medical science, although in different years. Our paths crossed after we’d been working for a few years in different Queensland hospitals.

We have two daughters; one lives in the USA, and the other on the Sunshine Coast.

Marlene continued her career in health until retirement, while I decided to take a different path. After 18 years with health, I radically changed course and stepped into state disaster and emergency management where I remained until retirement.

Since our first meeting on a climb up Mt Barney in SE Queensland, we have maintained a love of hiking and outdoor adventures. It has taken us to many parts of the globe, particularly mountainous areas. Trail hiking in

the mountains is our passion. While we're not rock climbers nor dangle from ropes, we savour long challenging hikes and exploration. We enjoy the simplicity in our style of travel—"walk-eat-sleep-repeat!"

Our many pairs of boots have taken us to New Zealand, the Canadian Rockies, USA High Sierras, the UK, Himalayas and the Andes. The European Alps? Ah yes, the long arc from Southern France to Slovenia is sublime and was explored on multiple visits. Naturally, we've completed some of Australia's best hiking trails, and we've more to explore here yet. We are often asked if we've done the famous trails of Kilimanjaro, Kokoda, and Camino de Santiago. No, but our most splendid adventure was in Antarctica! No hiking there, but the icy mountainous landscape and wildlife are like nowhere else!

Being an avid photographer, the advent of digital photography in 2000 supercharged my outdoor photography which now goes crazy during our travels.

We are "comfortable-at-home" types. Marlene loves reading - crime being her passion, while I shifted from science fiction to real-life human stories of outdoor daring do and, you guessed it, walking.

Regarding music, Marlene loves her 80s and 90s rock and Jimmy Barnes. I started with classical and then broadened to "new age and relaxation" music and also discovered "techno beats". When our CD player died, I found a whole new world of music styles on Spotify, and our CD collection is now useless.

COVID stopped our travels and enforced a time to reflect. We're now focussing on covering smaller hiking distances with daypacks. Looking ahead, we're including Probus as well. I'm taking on the role of producing the club's newsletter and Marlene is Treasurer. So, here's a continued personal life of adventure, finding beauty in nature and a new melody each day on Spotify.



This year is a leap year. The need for calendar reform was driven by the inaccuracy of the Julian calendar. Introduced in 46 BC, it fell short of the solar year – the time it takes Earth to orbit the Sun – by about 12 minutes each year. This meant that being increasingly out-of-sync with the solar

year, by the 1500s, this discrepancy had accumulated to more than 10 days. Therefore in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII convened a commission of experts who fine-tuned the leap-year system, giving us the one (the Georgian calendar) we have today. A Papal decree also mandated the elimination of ten days, to realign the calendar with the solar year. So, October 4 that year was followed directly by October 15, correcting the calendar's alignment with astronomical reality.

Queensland traffic fines for offences have been hiked up this year. Here's what you are now charged for misdemeanours:

- Less than 11 kilometres over the limit, \$322 fine.
- Driving at least 11/kmh but not more than 20/kmh over the speed limit, \$484 fine
- Speeding more than 40 kilometres over the limit, \$1852.
- Drivers caught on their phone, \$1210.
- Driver failing to wear a seatbelt \$1210

All of us know that people over 65 are the most likely to end up in hospital after a fall, and the risk increases with age. The pressure on hospitals is expected to grow as our population ages, in what is sometimes referred to as the "silver tsunami". One concern is that the older the person, the more severe injuries are sustained in a fall or have more complications once in hospital. Major hospitals are now beginning to take a more holistic view of older patients to take into account the shock, possible delirium and other complications engendered by a fall, particularly in the aged, tackling problems by employing geriatric specialists. They are calling it "geriatric trauma" aimed at reducing hospital stays and working with community health organisations to get people home quickly.



A group of Holland Park Central Probus members, as well as visitors Ron and Les, attended our monthly luncheon at the Old Lighthouse restaurant in Cleveland. There happened to be a slight delay in lunch being served, because three of our male diners chose to take the scenic route, via Wellington Point, before being redirected to Cleveland Point. Their names will remain anonymous. Lorelei could not have chosen a more perfect day for us to take in the beautiful views of Moreton Bay and the clear outlook to nearby Islands. During our meal, we could view the Wednesday sailing boats in

the distance off Manly. Lunches were delivered promptly after the late arrivals and I am sure everyone enjoyed their seafood meal as there was not much left on the plates. A very convivial time was had by all.

Lynne

Since COVID, sales of caravans have boomed, particularly among retirees who no longer wish to risk travelling by ship or air. However, some are not familiar with towing three tonnes or more of caravan and pose a risk on the road by overweight and unstable vans. RACQ runs training courses, and they have found about 50 per cent of caravans are overweight, which is both illegal and unsafe. There were 28,301 recreational vehicles built in Australia during 2022, up 17.1 per cent from the previous year and the highest figure since the 1970s. The number of imported RVs entering the country that year also rose by more than eight per cent. Inexperienced caravan drivers are being involved in more accidents, almost all of them involving older people. A suggestion that Australians need a special caravan license has been mooted by RACQ, but to date has not been taken up by the government.

At Australian universities, there have been growing concerns in recent years about China's attempts to influence free speech and academic freedom on campus. Our universities enrolled more than 162,000 international students from China in 2023. Since January this year, China's new patriotic education law targets its people living overseas. The law delivers patriotic education to young people, while clearly stating the do's and don'ts of being patriotic. While it is being imposed on Hong Kong, Taiwanese and Macau's youth in educational institutes, it has sparked concerns among some members of the Chinese Australian community. China's stated aim is to "enhance patriotism among overseas Chinese, and promote patriotic traditions". If the Chinese can infiltrate our universities, the fear is that China could influence free speech here.



Green anacondas are the world's heaviest snakes and among the longest. Remarkably, this hidden species has slipped under the radar until now. Predominantly found in rivers and wetlands in South America, they are renowned for their lightning speed and ability to asphyxiate huge prey and swallow them whole. It has just been discovered as a completely different species, with significant genetic differences from other anacondas. Their level of genetic divergence of 5.5% is staggering. By comparison, the genetic difference between humans and apes is about two per cent. They live much of their lives in water.

Here's something for Trivia fans: In the 1850s, Cunard was commissioned to carry horses to the Crimean War. Almost all the horses used in the Light Brigade travelled on the ship *Arabia*. It carried 7500 horses to the war, at the tedious rate of 203 at a time. Churchill claimed that contribution to WWII shortened the war in Europe by at least one year.



The Club's April speaker will be outback author **Elizabeth Fysh**. Elizabeth (Betsy) spent most of her life in outback Queensland. After attending boarding school and University, she married back into the bush and she and her husband raised two children first near McKinlay and then between Longreach and Muttaborra. Now widowed and living in Brisbane, she has indulged her love of writing and published two books. The first was a biography of her husband's grandfather and founding chairman of Qantas, *'When Chairmen were Patriots'* in 2020. The second is *'Hear them Roar'* a collection of 19 stories of strong Queensland women with colourful lives. She will talk about her life growing up in the bush and her eventual new 'career' as a writer. She has titled her talk *'An Unlikely Author'*.

Her books will be available for sale to those who are interested.

Australia's 3G phone network is in the process of being decommissioned. There are phones, – **even 4G ones** configured by the manufacturer to use 3G for calling triple zero, despite otherwise working over 4G to make voice calls – that may not have access to triple zero after decommissioning. One estimate puts the number of handsets currently affected at 740,000. It is not a huge number in the scheme of things, but it will increase by year's end. Therefore if you own an older phone, (especially if manufactured before 2019) which many retirees tend to do, contact your service provider to find out if 000 will continue to be supported.

Did you know effective 3rd April, the basic rate to send an ordinary letter will rise 30 cents from \$1.20 to \$1.50? Larger letters will still be priced based on weight. The price of the concession stamp has not increased since it was introduced in 2014. In addition to this, the seasonal small-letter greeting card rate will continue to be offered at 65 cents.

DUTY ROSTER: Chair: Barrie, Cameo talk: Thomas, Fellowship: Rosemary and Rosslyn, Door: Lyn and Con



While Probians are no longer in the age group where the crowds of music festivals are attractive (never mind the music), Australian, music festivals look to be going the way of the Tasmanian Tiger. Over the last ten years, 40 major

Australian festivals have been cancelled due to heat, fires or floods, and pandemics. The latest one, a few weeks ago, was in Victoria where

around 17,000 patrons were evacuated at the last minute amidst a record-breaking heatwave and extreme fire danger warnings. There are also drug-related overdoses which occur regularly. The increased uncertainty of staging events in these circumstances is compounded by an insurance crisis, with events and venues suffering reduced coverage and higher premiums. Staging a festival involves project management, logistics, security, first aid, emergency services, local government, insurance, ticketing agencies, food and beverage provision, and of course performers. A staggering 44 per cent of the population over 15 attend music festivals at some time and it not only forms part of the commercial marketplace but is an important cultural and arts component of the community. Ensuring the sustainable development of music festivals requires evidence-based planning and a coordinated approach from government and industry.



Fake! The word is often used these days. Fake news, fake photos, fake websites, the list is endless. Recently, modern palaeontology has kept unmasking fake fossils. The latest forgery uncovered is a lizard fossil that has been celebrated for decades as one of the best-

preserved fossils from the Alps. Since its discovery in 1939, it has been cited in books and articles but scientists took another look with modern techniques and discovered its skin was fake. The history of fossil forgery dates back to the late 18th and 19th centuries. Scientists have discovered that natural history museums worldwide have counterfeit specimens in their collections. There is a huge trade in fossils (fake and real) and scientists are urging laws to record the moment of discovery in detail – along with information about when and where it was found and how it was prepared and conserved. Embellishments should be avoided.



No, President Richard does not promote alcohol when inducting two new members, but we were celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Welcome to the club Ron (left) and David! Enjoy the fun, fellowship, friendship, and, of course, the food that sometimes goes with it – the four F's of Probus.

Things to ponder as we age... The inventor of the treadmill died at the age of 54. The originator of gymnastics died at the age of 57. The past world bodybuilding champion died at the age of 41. The best soccer player in history, Diego Maradona, died at the age of 60, and then, KFC inventor died at 94. The inventor of Nutella brand died at the age of 88. Cigarette maker Winston died at the age of 102, and the inventor of opium died at the age of 116 in an earthquake. Irish Hennessy cognac inventor died at 98. How did doctors come to the conclusion that exercise prolongs life? The rabbit is always jumping, but it lives for only two years. The turtle that doesn't exercise at all, lives 400 years. So ... have a drink, take a nap, and if you wake up, have bacon, eggs, and cake. Oh and be grateful you reached an age to qualify for Probus membership!



Pictured above are members (mostly in green for St Patrick's Day) with four therapy dog visitors, their handlers and guest speaker Tracey Murray (front in cream blouse) from Empower Assistance Dogs.

Based on data from more than 13,000 adults collected between 2011 and 2016, scientists determined that those who binge-watched television (five or more hours a day) are over 48 per cent more likely to develop nocturia (the need to wake up to urinate) a minimum of twice each night. Sitting for long periods can lead to fluid retention, causing a person to need to urinate more frequently.

The research by flight booking site [Wingie](#) analysed TripAdvisor reviews of tourist experiences in every country. A favourite one of ours was lambasted as unsatisfactory. Gold rush era Sovereign Hill was rated eighth most disappointing worldwide because of the prices charged. It was called 'not worth it' and 'too expensive' 500 times in 3823 reviews.

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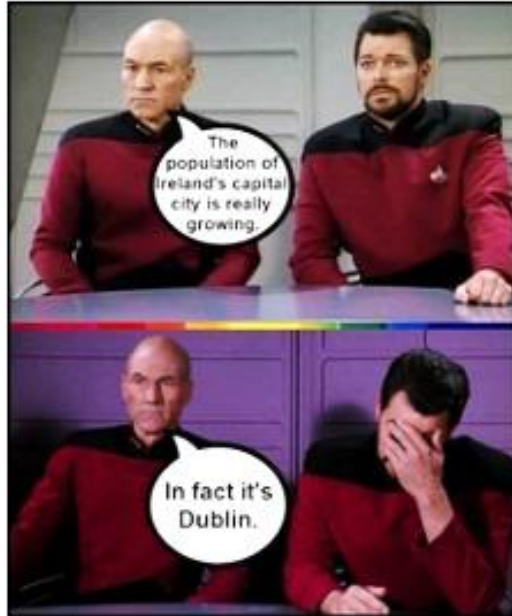
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It's never too late to start exercising. That's why I'm waiting until later.

You know me, if I ever win the lottery, rest assured nobody around me will be poor, and I mean that. I will move to a rich neighborhood.



I don't need anger management. I need people to stop pissing me off.

Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes; come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller?