

September 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

G'day again from the land down under.

'I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades
For ever and forever when I move.'

— Alfred Tennyson

For years, I have included this quote as part of my personal email signature, as I feel this is very much part of who I am. Now it is worth sharing with our fellow Probus Global members. As members of Probus, I feel we can relate to the quote below, which is the result of a Google search, 'Ulysses is old and home on his island, but he hates doing nothing.'

These famous lines from Ulysses by Alfred Lord Tennyson means that our past adventures, people we meet, and places we visit shape who we are, acting as a gateway to even more of life's endless and unvisited possibilities.

Meaning of the Quote

- ***Shaped by life:*** *Everything you see, do, and feel becomes a permanent piece of your identity.*
- ***An arch of experience:*** *The next line explains that experience is like an archway, where a vast, new world shines through just out of reach.*
- ***A hungry heart:*** *The speaker (Ulysses) refuses to stop exploring, believing that learning and moving forward must never end.*

Why the Poem Matters

- ***Restless spirit:*** *Ulysses is old and home on his island, but he hates doing nothing.*
- ***Pushing forward:*** *He wants to sail away one last time to seek a newer world before he dies.*
- ***Never giving up:*** *The poem ends with a famous call to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. "*

While members north of the equator have been suffering extreme summer heat, droughts and bush fires. I hope that fellow members and families have not suffered and are now looking forward to cooler autumn

days. Having an air conditioning background, I was reading recently that Global Energy consumption had reached record highs. All part of a changing climate, and increased sunspot activity, along with what we contribute as humans,

South of the equator in winter, parts of Australia have been experiencing the coldest nights on record. Our weather bureau is now warning that we will have ‘El Niño' – meaning higher sea temperatures and impending drought, along with damage to our Great Barrier Reef.

Google suggests that El Niño means ‘the little boy’ in Spanish and it is a natural climate pattern featuring the warming of surface waters in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean, weaker trade winds, and shifting global weather. In Australia, this means warmer summers and droughts, while across the Pacific, in South America, Peru and Ecuador have experienced floods and coastal damage.

La Niña replaces this regularly – or little girl child, where we have heavy rainfall in Australia – and droughts in South America

‘Life is made richer by contrast’ – but I’m not sure that we really need so much contrast between summer and winter or changing weather patterns.

Our Newsletter Editor, Geoffrey, has compiled excellent articles from members, and his own contributions, so please enjoy reading this newsletter and share with friends.

Regards to all

Merv Richens

Editor’s Note

Welcome to the September Global Newsletter.

In the Northern Hemisphere and especially here in the UK, we had a number of heat-wave warnings throughout July where we experienced daily temperatures well in excess of 30 degrees, which were unprecedented; a drought has been declared in Wales. The Paramedics were rushed off their feet, transport was severely affected and a hosepipe ban was imposed by some water companies. Now with Wimbledon and the World Cup behind us, and England still chasing success, we move into shorter days, longer nights and the gardens adopting their Autumn colours and closing down for Winter ready to bloom again next year. I have put together what I hope are some interesting articles for you in this Newsletter as there seems to have been a paucity of information flowing into my office from around the globe this time. However, that said, it's encouraging to note that meanwhile, Khairul Alam, a Rotary Past District Governor, is working on starting the **first Probus club in Bangladesh**. It is exciting to see Probus growing globally. He welcomes assistance from anyone with experience starting a new club.

What are some strange British habits?

You might well say that there are plenty of weird British habits, but I spotted this article recently on *Quora,* which will be music to the ears of Barrie Morgan of Probus Guildwood!

‘When I lived in England, in the North East (great people, by the way) for 12 years, this is what I noticed:

They like to eat from hot plates. If you say that you don't mind your plate not being hot they look at you as if you were an alien and remember to send a card to your loved ones for birthdays and Christmas; a WhatsApp audio won't suffice.

Tea… that's an art in the UK. If you like it with too much milk or sugar you are uncultured, the stronger the tea the better, and if you leave the tea-bag in the whole time you're fully English. However, I don't recommend it. I didn't like the feeling of touching a wet tea bag while drinking it. Coffees… when there are several coffees on the table they'll ask, ‘who's black?’, instead of 'who wanted a black coffee?’ That was hilarious for me at the beginning when white people would shout 'I'm black!' Don't say hello when you walk into a room full of strangers, they'll just look at you.

They say please and thank you a lot more than we do, for example:

- Would you like a coffee? ‘Yes, please’
- With milk? ‘Yes, please’
- Any sugar? ‘Yes, one, please’.

So, remember to say 'yes please' and 'no, thank you’; Aye is yes.

Overall, I had a fantastic experience. Everyone was so nice and helpful to me. I loved it there. People from Durham, Newcastle, Gateshead, South Shields… are
really, really nice and I grew to love the accents from the North.’

Some more British Oddities!

It was always a puzzle to our American cousins when visiting the UK as to why stores would close for a half-day mid-week. For decades, British high streets shut down every afternoon, but this wasn’t some local quirk, it was a pioneering piece of Edwardian labour law.

In the early 20th century, shop assistants routinely worked 80-hour weeks, there were no weekends off and Saturday was the busiest shopping day as factory workers had just been paid, usually in cash on a Thursday, and Sunday trading was prohibited as it was deemed ‘a day of rest’, so to curb these exhausting hours, the government passed the Shops Act 1911. This was a landmark UK law that granted shop workers a mandatory weekly half-day holiday. Part of the Liberal welfare reforms, it mandated that most retailers close by 1:30 pm on one designated weekday, improving conditions for a notoriously overworked retail sector, but it had to be a weekday and it became known as *‘early closing day.’* Local authorities usually coordinated this so an entire town shut down simultaneously, preventing any single shop from gaining a competitive advantage. Wednesday became the most popular choice because it neatly broke the workweek in half, though some towns opted for Tuesday or Thursday to avoid clashing with local market days.

The tradition held throughout the mid-20th century until strengthened by the Shops Act 1950. This was a foundational piece of UK legislation that consolidated earlier laws regarding shop closing hours, Sunday trading, and employee working conditions; the Act established the structural framework for retail rules that still influence British high streets today. But in the 1970s and 1980s, the rise of supermarkets and out-of-town shopping malls began to erode the practice. The definitive end came with the Sunday Trading Act 1994. But again, oddities arose depending on the size of the store.

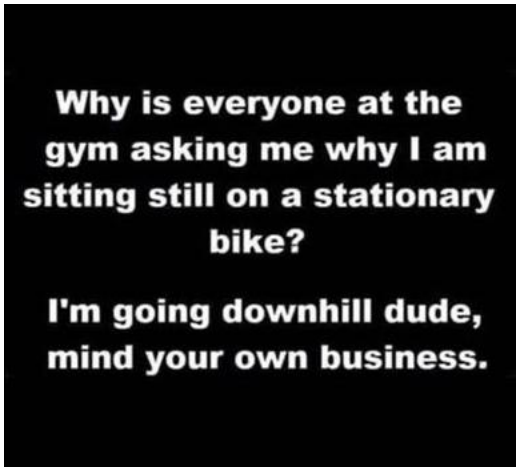
If a store measured 280 sq metres or less, they could stay open for 24 hours, 7 days a week that included all religious festival days. But if they were above this figure, they were only permitted to open for 6 hours, usually from 1000-1600. The law does not restrict opening hours for certain specialised retailers, including: airport and railway station outlets, motorway service station outlets, registered pharmacies (for medicinal products), farms selling primarily their own produce, exhibition stands and boat/aircraft suppliers.

As retail became a seven-day operation and modern shift patterns replaced fixed hours, staff took their mandated time off on varying days, making a universal midweek shutdown obsolete. The exceptions are that some smaller towns still adopt the practice of a ‘half-day’ off. A quirk that still exists today, however, is that many Post Offices are still not open on Sundays so you cannot go there to buy stamps, but you can go into a store that sells books of stamps and buy those instead.

Why do people thank the bus driver when they get off?

Driving a large vehicle through busy, congested streets requires immense focus and patience, by saying thank you this is a quick way to show gratitude for a safe, smooth journey. Bus driving can be an isolating and sometimes stressful job. According to data from the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), 87% of bus drivers reported that being thanked at work had a positive impact on their well-being. In busy, densely populated areas, politeness helps make the sometimes frustrating business of daily commuting more tolerable for everyone. It sets a positive, respectful tone for the day. In many jurisdictions such as the UK, New Zealand, and Canada, it is simply how people are raised to behave. It acts as a shared social code that brings a touch of warmth to everyday interactions. Saying thank you to bus drivers is a deeply ingrained social custom, particularly in the UK, Ireland, and New Zealand. It acts as an easy and low-cost way to show common courtesy, acknowledge the driver's service, and foster a sense of community.







Strange happenings in a Scottish pub



An American couple were in East Kilbride, a town just outside of Glasgow many years ago, visiting from the USA and stopped in a local pub for a drink. People were friendly and after enjoying their first pint decided on a second. They had both gone up the bar to order the drinks, but the wife stayed seated for the second. The bartender gave them two glasses, one straight and one with a handle. When the man went up alone to order the second drink, he was given two glasses with handles, on returning to the table an older man sitting next to his wife looked up in surprise and said, 'What aur ya doing laddie, that's not a proper glass for a lady, take that back and make the bartender pour it into a proper glass!' So he took one back to the bar, told the bartender it was for his wife, who apologised, and poured a new pint into a straight glass. In the USA handles on a pint never seemed to matter much but in this local bar at least it was a big mistake. They enjoyed their visit, but from then on the man carefully stated that one glass was for his wife when ordering a pint at any pub in the UK!

Battle of the cakes at Wimbledon

A top UK chef serving up afternoon teas for some of Wimbledon's Centre Court and No.1 Court guests has defended his decision to put Welsh cakes on the menu instead of classic favourite, the scone. Along with strawberries and cream, the scone is traditionally a massive hit among the crowds of tennis fans at the annual tournament and the addition of the Welsh cake has not gone down well with some, according to the Daily Telegraph newspaper, with diners unhappy it knocked the scone off the menu.

Bryn Williams is notable for his success in a competition to cook the fish course for the Queen's 80th birthday celebrations on the television programme *'Great British Menu'* said both were 'British classics' but he had chosen dishes from home for the *Renshaw*, an on-site restaurant where diners can enjoy a three-course lunch for £467.50 per person. Lunch is followed by afternoon tea, including Welsh cakes and *Bara Brith*, a Welsh bread, with raspberry-lime jam and lemon curd. Williams, whose main course options include dressed crab and Welsh lamb, said he would never exile the scone.



BBC Food describes both the Welsh cake and scone as traditional tea-time treats best served warm. 'The scone is a British classic and so is the Welsh cake so they are both in the same bracket,' said Williams. He told BBC Radio Wales that Renshaw bosses had visited one of his two restaurants in north Wales to sample its traditional menu and agreed to make it available to Wimbledon diners.

‘They wanted a point of difference,’ he said, ‘so, being a Welsh chef, we gave them our Welsh afternoon tea. ‘We haven't changed anything, it just happens to be a bit different from the scones that people normally have.’

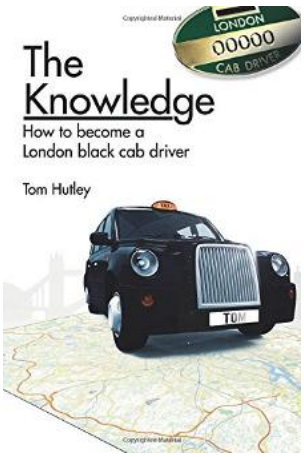
But the newspaper said it had caused some off-court controversy. ‘Wimbledon just has this magic, and so much of that comes from the traditions you look forward to every single year,’ one diner told the newspaper, ‘take the scones with jam and cream - honestly, they're just as essential to the whole Wimbledon vibe as a glass of Pimm's or a bowl of strawberries and cream.’Williams said his staff were baking about 400 Welsh cakes a day to keep up with diners' appetites. But, the scone is still expected to remain champion because, according to business magazine ‘Forbes’, 72,000 were sold during last year's tournament.

<u>Why are London cabbies reluctant or refuse to go south of the river after dark?</u>

By law, a London cabbie cannot refuse a valid fare. To dodge trips south of the river after dark, they’ve spent decades relying on locked doors, cracked windows, and creative excuses, but the real reason for this reluctance comes down to the stark economic geography of the city. The vast majority of the city’s nightlife, theatres, major train stations, luxury hotels, and business districts, the West End, Soho, Mayfair and the City of London, are all located north of the Thames.

When a driver picks up a fare in Central London late at night and drives them to a residential neighbourhood in South London like Brixton, Clapham, or Croydon, they face a severe drop in demand. The likelihood of finding a passenger waiting on a street corner in the suburbs in the early hours who wants to head back into town is exceptionally low. To get their next paying job, the cabbie usually has to drive back across the river empty and in the taxi trade this unpaid journey is known as ‘dead mileage.’

The river itself compounds the problem. The Thames creates a natural bottleneck, forcing traffic through a limited number of bridges that historically suffered from severe congestion, extending the time the driver is losing money on the meter-less return trip. But it's not just an issue of navigation as every licensed taxi driver has to pass a rigorous test known as *‘The Knowledge or the Blue Book,’* which was introduced in 1865, to qualify for their coveted ‘Badge’. Mastering the Blue Book is a massive challenge, as it requires mentally tracing 320 routes plus memorising around 25,000 streets and 6,000 landmarks within a 6-mile radius of Charing Cross and anyone who wants to drive an iconic London cab must memorise them all, which can take up to four years, the same time that a university degree can take to obtain, which is why London's taxi service is known as the best in the world.



Under Transport for London's ‘compellability’ rules, if the yellow 'TAXI' light is on and the destination is within Greater London and under a 12-mile distance or one hour's duration, the driver must accept the fare although the rise of ride-hailing apps has heavily altered this dynamic and private hire vehicles often have drivers based in South London or rely on algorithms that can match return trips.

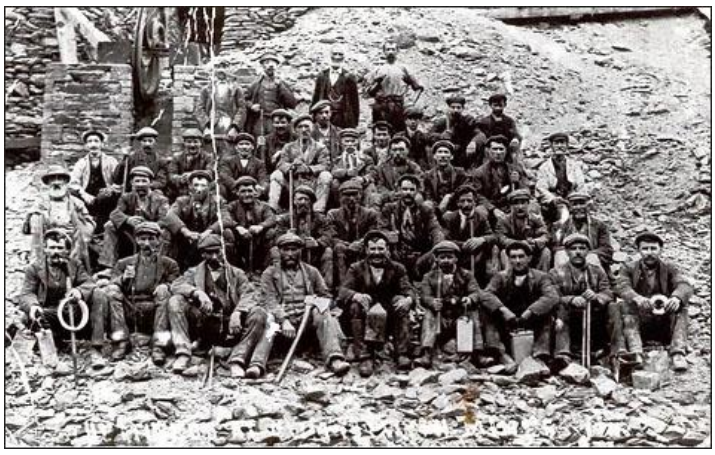
4000 years of Mining in Mid Wales

June 24th was the Llandrindod Wells Probus Club's 'summer day out' with a planned trip to see the 4000 year old mine workings at Cwmystwyth. The Cwmystwyth Mines probably constitute the most important mining site in central Wales and just like many other sites have something of a chequered history making fortunes for some while bankrupting others.

The day started with a briefing on the history of the Cwmystwyth Lead and Zinc mines, not far from Aberystwyth on the coast of Mid Wales by Ted Cochrane, the Club's social secretary. 'Mining artefacts' such as picks made of antlers and shaped stones used for grinding metal ores found on the top of Copa Hill and carbon dating shows that mining has taken place here since before 2100 BC.

This is in the Stone Age and it is thought the mining may have been for blue, black, green and red coloured metal ores for decoration, possibly face painting. After the invention of smelting the mining was for copper and, later again, for zinc and lead ores. The Romans arrived 1,500 years later and systematically mined the area for copper, lead and zinc. The land at Cwmystwyth eventually passed into the ownership of the Cistercian Abbey at Strata Florida and monks produced much of the lead for their roofs from ore mined at Cwmystwyth.

Going forward into the 16th Century, after the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, the land was given to favoured aristocrats and shortly afterwards mining became a very serious industry in the area. A miner could earn 3 times the wages of a farm labourer although constantly breathing the ore dust and the very dangerous *'hard work by dim candlelight'* reduced their average lifespan to 32 years. Miners even had to buy their own candles made from tallow. As hand digging was augmented by mechanical aids production increased rapidly and the mine became exceptionally productive. A 'by-product' of lead mining in this area was the extraction of silver and through its heyday the mine is known to have produced a quarter million ounces of silver.



Many of the mines fell out of use when the cost of imported lead and zinc made them less profitable in the mid19th Century although there was a brief renaissance in the early 20th Century during WW1 when zinc was considered a 'strategic metal' and they were restarted. However, mineral extraction is a very arduous, dirty and polluting process and the local streams show extremely high levels of toxic pollutants.

Today much of the infrastructure has been demolished and the spoil tips have been tidied up to make them safe and the valley has been designated a heritage site preserved for tourism. Following the talk the Club members had an excellent lunch at the Metropole Hotel. The weather was brilliant, if hot, and an official guide explained what was still to be seen and what had been there in the past.

News from Canada

A Message from the President of Probus Canada



Congratulations to Dennis W. Pommen who becomes President of PROBUS Canada for 2026/27. He is excited about the year ahead and deeply appreciative of previous District Directors and of the immediate Past President, Martin Buscher and Past President Inga Thomson-Hilton. Dennis has provided a link for you to read his inaugural message:
PROBUS Canada - President's Message

From Barrie Morgan of Probus Guildwood

A remarkable coincidence occurred on 2nd May this year. I had just read two texts from my kids wishing me Happy Anniversary Dad. I looked up at my wife Freda's photo on the nearby window sill. The sun at the back of the house was shining through the upstairs bathroom window and bounced off the mirror above the wash basin, then down the staircase into the living room and the narrow beam was centred on the photo. Two minutes earlier or later, and that incredible coincidence would have gone as the sun would have moved on.

This experience then led my thoughts back to our 1959 wedding day in London at Chelsea Old Church, close to the River Thames, which dates from 1157. It was formerly the parish church of Chelsea, before it was engulfed by London. The building consisted of a 13th-century chancel with chapels to the north and south (c. 1325) and a nave and tower built in 1670. Chelsea Old Church was frequented by Henry VIII, Jane Seymour, Lady Jane Grey, Anne of Cleves and Princess Elizabeth. Freda had a flat nearby in the same parish as the church, but as I lived near the World's End north of the Kings Road which was outside the parish, I had to get a special license to be able to get married at the church. Another famous marriage there (apart from Freda and I) was earlier in the week to ours, for Chris Brasher. Chris, together with Christopher Chattaway was a

pacer for Roger Bannister when he ran the world's first under four minute mile in 1954. Roger was Chris's best man.

Freda was friends with their Curate Frank Roe (who married us) and to avoid the £25 special license fee (over 8 weeks' rent !!!) Frank gave me an address of 31 Cheyne Row to use on the marriage license, which was close to the church.

Some family members came down on the train from Northumberland up north, and after the wedding they went to Wembley Stadium to watch the F.A. Cup Final that afternoon – I am sure you will all remember it was between Nottingham Forest and Luton Town. Forest won 2-1. Freda and I were then on our way to our honeymoon on the Isle of Wight.

When discussing our flowers with Frank, he assured us we did not need to spend any money on those, as the Brasher wedding had spent a thousand pounds on flowers, and they would still be fresh for our wedding on the Saturday as well as for his own Sunday service. My experience with Freda's photo, and my thoughts going back to our wedding day give me great comfort with lovely memories.





Dennis Bayley of Whitby was recently honoured by being presented with the Senior Achievement Award by Madame Edith Dumont, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Ontario Provincial Parliament, whilst on the left of the picture is the Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister of Seniors and Accessibility. Dennis is also pictured together with his wife, who is a Fellow Charter Member of Durham Central Probus Club, Ontario, Canada. His Citation reads:

'Dennis has demonstrated exceptional, sustained service both within and outside of his community over many years, with the support and encouragement of his wife of 66 years, Patricia. He served for several years in Scugog Ontario on the Physicians and Surgeons recruitment committee to alleviate the gross shortage of professionals in the area. He worked hard to obtain sponsorship for the Port Perry lawn bowling club, and represented the club for eight years at district level. During his service as a Rotarian he received 3 Paul Harris fellowships in recognition of his service and served for several years as district 7070 Literacy Chair.

For the past 10 years he has participated with a team of seniors at Taunton Mills retirement home to produce annual gifts of knitted items of clothing for all JK to grade 8 students in a selected First Nations fly-in

community school. He selects and communicates with the school and negotiates free transportation of gifts. Dennis devotes considerable time to educating Community leaders about the neurodegenerative and carcinogenic impacts of emissions from barbecues.' He was thanked for building and sustaining a stronger and more connected community by Lorne Coe MPP, the Honourable Member for Whitby in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

News from 'Down Under'

Digital Inclusion at Probus ... and understanding exclusion 'down under'!

For the past three years my home club has used an AUD$1000 grant to conduct a meeting or workshop (and more) to focus with members and visitors on matters around using the internet, mainly mobile phones, tablets and computers. But firstly let me state a position I have and that is 'technology is meant to serve people, not remove dignity from our friends because of age or other barriers or just because they are more comfortable to not participate in this newfangled thing!' We are becoming more selfish when we exclude people through technology when they need to access basic rights in their own way. If booking a medical appointment or paying a bill requires the help of a friend, a son or daughter (if they have one), then the system has failed.

So back to our workshops! Our founding Rotary club gets the grant money ($1000) and we spend it. The source is 'Good Things Australia'. Their motto is, 'We do good things to make sure no one is left behind.' The originator is Good Things in the UK, but Good Things have been in Australia since 2017.

Typically, our workshops offer 'scones, jam and cream' and a cuppa in an attractive venue as an incentive to members and friends to come along to listen and actively participate. The sessions are free and in past workshops we have concentrated on firstly getting online, then seeing how useful this venture can be and moving on to having fun. Not just Probus members from our club come along, all are invited. We make all participants fully aware through clear demonstrations of the many resources that are available at no cost from the Government, from local libraries and more. For instance in Tasmania all libraries are committed to literacy and digital skills at all levels at no cost to participants. This can include individual sessions on arrangement with volunteers under careful guidance from library staff.

Good Things offers a range of support materials and ideas. Of course, we also take advantage of the Government materials and ideas that are offered online. In Australia that can be via a website named 'Get Connected'. On this site there are easy programs where excellent 'self-help' is offered but initially people need to know how to handle such a site, that's one purpose of our workshops. We know there are excellent global sites too.

From the beginning we have alerted our participants to potential scams and listen intently to any stories they have to share. We continue with that concern and, of course, add the uncertainty of information that is often presented via AI in a myriad of ways. All sessions are very visual and we encourage participants to share stories and help each other. Much of our material is projected from both our own computer and mobile phone

onto a large digital TV screen, which means, for instance, if I am demonstrating a way of doing something on my phone, it will be clearly shown to all on the large screen, even something as simple as moving a phone icon or deleting it. In my case I use my Android phone, while my Probus partner demonstrates with his iPhone.

Each of the sessions is two hours and mostly that's not nearly enough time as we certainly need to allow a friendly chat while enjoying the scones, jam and cream! We spend important time on social media and our guidelines are broadly covered in this AI summary; Social Media. We do emphasise the care one must take with information as expressed here as not everything online is factual. Before sharing a news story or an amazing claim, take thirty seconds to verify it with a trusted, independent source. This year we will be using our funds during the week October 19 – 25 and the focus will be on awareness of a wide range of skills, including using AI tools, QR codes, online banking, taking photos, and navigating the internet safely. The offer to participate will also be made to about 10 nearby Probus clubs but we also plan to travel to three outlying clubs, at another time, for smaller workshops - but the same content. I have a particular hobby to try to get friends, and that means all Probus members, to 'enjoy' their gadget. My first thrust is to make use of the excellent camera that EVERY mobile phone has, then how to enhance any result via the phone's inbuilt applications and also free ones. In addition, we explore the world – geography, music, short films, reading, and much more. Enjoyment of the gadget is key to using it and understanding it. By the way, I need to enjoy these workshops too, as well as to learn hints and experiences from the participants. I do!

John G. Thorne, Tasmania.



Probus President Merv Richens sent this image and quite a few more, from his recent trip into the wilds of Birdsville and 'Big Red'. Birdsville and Big Red feature an iconic 40-metre-tall red sand dune, a remote outback town, and a famous desert music festival. Big Red sits 35 kilometres west of the Birdsville Hotel township on the edge of the Simpson Desert in Queensland, Australia. The festival site is a 1.3 million-hectare organic cattle station and the concert area measures 63,000 square metres. The event takes place over three days in July.

In 2023, there were 6,000 campers at the festival. This year, due to the heavy rains it was under 2 metres of water and had to be cancelled.



2023: 6,000 campers



2026: Cancelled. Under 2 metres of water

2026 PAQ VIRTUAL WALK - FROM CAIRNS TO SORRENTO

Probus is celebrating 50 years in Australia this year, and PAQ would like to mark this milestone with an event that all Probus members can enjoy. Because Queensland is such a large state and the distance between clubs is considerable, we are inviting clubs to take part in a virtual walking challenge from July to October. Together, we aim to walk the equivalent of 1,760 kilometres, the distance from our northernmost club in Cairns to our southernmost club in Sorrento; it's a fun way to celebrate our Probus family and connect members across the State.

News from Japan



Tadao Matsushita, President of Yokohama Probus Club, kindly sent this article to me from their recent celebrations. The Yokohama Probus Club, established in 2001, celebrated its 25th anniversary recently with the support of the Yokohama Yamate Rotary Club. Its ceremony, held on 23rd May, was supported by numerous guests from Probus Clubs right across the country. Yokohama serves as a gateway port for Tokyo some 30 miles to the north and is Japan's second largest city with a population of around 3.8 million.



Another notable event was the 12th National General Meeting and Asahikawa, Hokkaido Convention of the All-Japan Probus Council, which was successfully held on July 27 at Art Hotel Asahikawa, with over 70 Probus members from 11 clubs across Japan attending. At the General Meeting, Ms. Machiko Miyashita was introduced as the new President of the All-Japan Probus Council and delivered an address. During the event, an Asahikawa Probus Club father-daughter duo delighted participants with wonderful

Tsugaru-jamisen music and folk songs. At the social gathering, members enjoyed a toast, delicious food and drinks, and a spectacular magic performance by an Asahikawa member whose skills rivaled those of a professional magician.



Representatives from participating clubs shared information about their activities. I introduced Probus Global (PG) and explained the Tokyo Tama Probus Club's new 'open meetings,' inspired by advice from PG President Merv Richens and New Zealand Coordinator Liz Smith. This initiative attracted great interest from other clubs.

The following day, members enjoyed a bus tour to the Biei and Furano areas, further strengthening friendships among Probus members. The Asahikawa Probus Club provided warm and generous hospitality throughout the event, including arranging a memorable visit to a karaoke bar in San-roku-gai, one of Hokkaido's famous entertainment districts.

News from the USA

From Larry Wright, Probus Palm Coast, Florida



This month, July 4th, we celebrated the 250th anniversary of our founders declaring independence from Britain and our right to self-governance, with fireworks and parties throughout the country. Probus Palm Coast continues to grow with 36 members and we have attracted some great speakers, including our new City Manager. Now we have adopted an official Constitution, thanks to Club member Alice Edington, a retired lawyer, and appointed our first Board of Directors. We also have a webmaster, Brent Bergin, who has our site up and running at www.probuspcfl.com.

News from Europe



Probus France and Probus Belgium recently celebrated 35 years of friendship between them. This unique occasion saw the first Probus club in France, – Probus Le Touquet Paris-Plage, chartered in 1991 with the assistance of Georges Dick, founder of Probus Belgium, who created the first Belgian club, *'Antwerpen Ring'*, in 1984. Both clubs have been linked ever since by friendship and regular encounters.

The event was celebrated at the club's 'home location', the Westminster Barrière Hotel in Le Touquet Paris-Plage, on Monday, July 20th. About 70 club members, partners and guests enjoyed an interesting presentation on the hotel's history. The hotel was built by a Belgian company in just 8 months and opened in mid-1924, ready to welcome guests to its 110 spacious rooms. After the presentation, everyone was invited for a friendship drink on the terrace, facilitating contacts and exchanges among all participants. Probus Le Touquet has been meeting twice monthly in this hotel since its chartering in 1991. Unfortunately, Probus Antwerpen Ring could not be represented. However, Mrs. Annie Goddaer, President of Probus Belgium and Gauthier De Brabandere, international contacts for Probus Belgium and Probus Global team member for Europe, were delighted to participate and pass on messages of friendship, conviviality, and international exchange.



Bruno Carquillat, current President of the club, first welcomed the widow of founder Vincent Campion, calling her the 'living memory of the club', before welcoming all other members, partners, and guests. He went on to speak of the history of this dynamic club, which continues to play a leading role and serves as an example for the development of Probus France. Mrs. Annie Goddaer, President of Probus Belgium, focused on the mutual friendship and the development of exchanges between Probus France and Probus Belgium.

Finally, Jacques Pierre Nollet, current President of Probus France and team member of Probus Global, proudly presented the further developments of Probus France and its place within the worldwide Probus community. Probus France and Probus Belgium are proud to have contributed to international exchanges and mutual understanding within the global Probus community for the past 35 years and consider themselves 'good examples' of the spirit and objectives of Probus Global.

Probus Kortrijk Rodenburg visits the Dutch Province Friesland and meets with two local Probus clubs in Leeuwarden.



The annual four day Probus club trip was organised in the last week of May with 48 members and partners and a long bus trip from Kortrijk to Leeuwarden, capital of the Province of Friesland, was interrupted for a break, a light lunch and a short walk to the art work '*Exposure*' by British artist, Antony Gormley, which overlooked a large lake (the Oostvaardersplassen) in Lelystad. The town of Leeuwarden is the birthplace of Mata Hari, and hosts a ceramics museum, a leaning church tower, as well as plenty of attractive historic monuments. Its inner canals provide a pleasant way to discover the city. There are over 30,000 students that provide an attractive feeling of youth throughout the city.

On the way to the coastal city Lauwersoog we visited the 12th century church of Hegebeitum, built on a traditional mound (or '*terp*' in Dutch), man-made as a protection against the risks of rising sea levels and storms. Lauwersoog is home to a brand-new World Heritage Centre of the Sea.

The charming small cities of Sneek and Sloten provided for the quiet charm of the Frisian Province, the place of the well-known skating event 'Elfstedentocht' (Eleven Cities tour) a tour of 200 km on natural ice held once a year when the natural ice along the course is at least 15 cm thick, The last time the race took place was in 1997.



The best part of the trip was a reunion of members of the two Leeuwarden Probus clubs, Festina Lente and Doorlopers, and the visiting Probus Rodenburg. The word '*doorlopers*' is derived from a special skate typical for Friesland. We were charmed with the presence of eighteen Dutch Probus members who accepted the invitation to participate in the evening drink and dinner.

The city garden of the old Post-Plaza Hotel was a perfect setting to make acquaintances and was a perfect venue for the value of international exchanges of friendships between neighbours, fitting the objectives of Probus Global.

Jacques Pierre Nollet & Gauthier De Brabandere European Members of Probus Global.

The Coming of the Railways

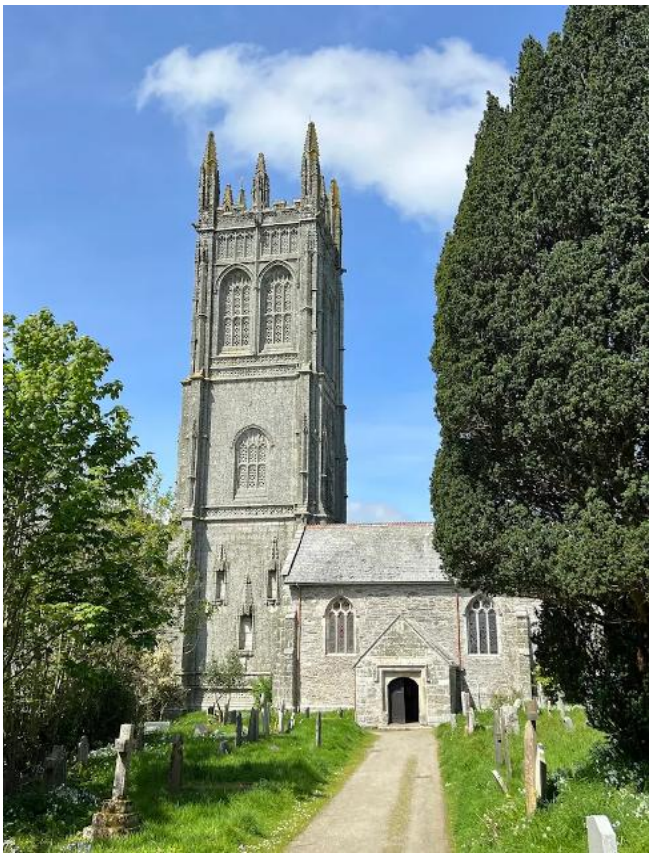
Throughout 2025, there were numerous celebrations held throughout Britain commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of the railways. In 1825, Locomotion No. 1 (originally named *Active*) was an early steam locomotive that was built by the pioneering railway engineers' firm, Robert Stephenson and Company. It became the first steam locomotive to haul a passenger-carrying train on a public railway, the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR), which opened to passengers on the 27th September the same year; the company operated across north-east England from 1825 to 1863. The first line connected coal mines at Shildon in County Durham to Darlington. The building of the line was the start of the railway network from which all modern railways across the world developed. It brought in mass transport and supercharged the Industrial Revolution in Britain. It also brought with it holiday destinations. The industrialist George Stephenson had heard of the proposed S&DR and believed that it could be powered with steam engines instead of horses as originally proposed. Stephenson was credited with the title 'Father of the Railways'; he was a civil engineer whose chosen rail gauge, sometimes called 'Stephenson gauge', was the basis for the 4-foot-8½-inch (1.435 m) standard gauge used by most of the world's railways today.

In Great Britain during the 1840s, a phenomenon known as *'railway mania'* occurred when 263 Acts of Parliament for setting up new railway companies were passed, with the proposed routes totalling 9,500 miles (15,300 km). About a third of the railways authorised were never built. The companies either collapsed because of poor financial planning, were bought out by larger competitors before they could build their line, or turned out to be fraudulent enterprises to channel investors' money into other businesses.



Not to be left out, the Great Western Railway (GWR) also affectionately known as *'The Great Way Round'* or *'God's Wonderful Railway'*, built a line from London all the way to the end of the country at Penzance some 253 miles (407 km). It was developed in stages as different railway companies connected London to the South West between 1838 and 1867.

Situated between St. Austell and Truro in Cornwall was Probus and Ladock Halt. Opened by the GWR in 1908 to serve the local communities, the station featured two platforms with corrugated iron shelters. It was permanently closed to passengers on the 2nd December, 1957. The halt was located roughly midway between the villages of Probus and Ladock. While the station structures were removed, some of the original brick platform edges can still be found in the area today.



PROBUS (*Cornish: Lannbrobus*) is a civil parish and village in Cornwall, England. It has the tallest church tower in the County, which is 129 feet (39 m) high and is richly decorated with carvings. The place name originates from the church's dedication to Saint Probus.

The medieval church of St. Probus and St. Grace stands within a circular churchyard, suggesting that it evolved from a very early 5th century Celtic Christian community, or monastery. Around AD 930 King Athelstan founded a monastic church here, and this 10th-century church was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. In 1120 Henry I granted the church to Exeter Cathedral, but it was not until 1312 that the first vicar was appointed. Around 1140 the church was re-founded along collegiate lines, with a college of five canons under a dean. The collegiate church was granted the right of sanctuary, one of few Cornish churches to be awarded this right. In 1447 a chapel dedicated to St. George was erected in the churchyard but there is no trace of the chapel today.

PROBUS Global Mission Statement

To advance PROBUS as a vibrant community for retired and semi-retired people by sharing ideas and information, coordinating opportunities for friendship, fellowship, and social interaction, and encouraging and assisting with the formation of new clubs anywhere in the world.

To promote PROBUS Global through effective, ongoing communications with all members and support those who may enjoy travel around the world with local knowledge.

New members are always welcome at **probusglobal.org**