



Newsletter

PROBUS CLUB OF BEAUMARIS Inc.
Reg No. A 001-6598G
Correspondence to Box 57 PO Black Rock VIC 3193



Issue No. 243

April 2010

Next Meeting: 10 am Tuesday April 20 at Beaumaris RSL

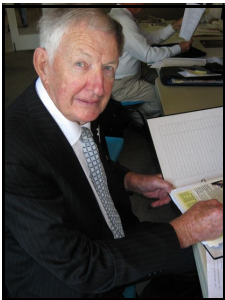
Investment Group: Is the recovery a 'V', 'W', 'L' - or trending slightly down? 9 am before the main meeting

10-Minute Speaker: Stan Ryding – How I Became a Living Treasure

Keynote Speaker*: Joe Joyce, Diamond Exploration Geologist

Topic: Diamonds Are Forever – Once You Find Them! After 35 years exploring for diamonds in Russia, Europe, South Africa, Canada, North and South America and Australia, Joe has an astonishing tale to tell about the search for one of the world's most elusive precious stones; but don't come expecting any samples. (* See note p4)

FROM THE PRESIDENT



“The year ahead beckons with plenty to interest every member...”

I must start by congratulating Geoff Wade on an outstanding year as President of our Club in 2008/09. On behalf of all members I would like Geoff to know how much we appreciate all the time, thought and enthusiasm he has contributed. It was a notable achievement, and we thank him very much.

Reflecting on my eight-year association with our club - being a 'maggie', I have kept all the newsletters - it is evident that we are a progressive club and we must acknowledge the efforts of members who work tirelessly to ensure that the club continues to move forward. If there is one member who personifies the word 'tireless', it is Barry Amond. His regular input into the monthly Investment Group has helped it to be informative and rewarding. Barry's Music & Opera evenings at his home, with the help of his wife, Margaret, are a pure delight to attend. Most appropriately, Barry was honoured with Life Membership at our March meeting. Congratulations, Barry. Also to John Brimage who is retiring from heading up our Investment Group, after several years of giving us the benefits of his financial experience. Thank you, John. He will hand over to Barry Donaldson.

This month, we will be inducting a new member, John Pound. I would ask everyone to give John a warm welcome to our club. A few members have left our club as a result of relocating to outer suburbs or due to ill-health. I would appeal to all members to introduce friends as guests at our monthly meetings. In our usual friendly, relaxed way I am sure we will welcome them, so that they can decide if they would like to join us.

Our guest speaker for April is Joe Joyce who was to speak to us in May but has stepped into the breach because Ms Anita Nayer, Consul-General for India, has been forced to cancel her engagement with us because of a high-level visit by Indian dignitaries. Joe is a geologist with a wealth of experience in exploration—including the search for water at Victoria Golf Club. His talk promises to be an interesting session.

The year ahead beckons with plenty to interest every member. I look forward to sharing it with you.
Eric Slater

President, Geoff Wade, hands over the chain of office to Eric Slater



Office Bearers, 2009-10

President: **Eric Slater** 9589 3526
Vice President: **Alan Farmer** 9598 2791
Past President: **Geoff Wade** 9588 2593
Secretary: **John Howe** 9598 2429
Treasurer: **David Robertson** 9551 1930
Functions: **Geoff Bransbury** 9598 1507
Functions Asst: **Robert Dun** 9589 5456
Meetings Co-ord: **Bill Green** 9596 1548

Meetgs Asst: **Duncan Gibson** 9585 3547
Almoner: **Andrew Watson** 9589 5913
Hon. Auditor: **Neil Jones** 9583 9315
Newsletter: **Peter McGregor** 9533 4760
Recorder: **Alan Williams** 9598 7550
Archivist: **Roy Petch** 9589 5757

Group Leaders 2009-10

Investment: **Barry Donaldson** 9598 6446
Music/Opera: **Barry Amond** 9589 1143
Theatre: **Allan Taylor** 9521 6180
Grape Vine: **Roy Petch** 9589 5757
Bowls: **Ted Montfort** 9589 5949
Prisms: **Bill Davis** 9592 5982
Art: **Paul Crompton** 9583 1310



Roses and Kangaroos

Dr David Smith says that digging up the roses and farming kangaroos in Australia is an absurd proposition

With a diverse background including a childhood on the family dairy farm in the Adelaide Hills, studying Agricultural Science, and key roles as Chair of the Rural Research & Development Corporation, Director-General of Agriculture in Victoria, and also staff member at Melbourne University, our highly-credentialed Speaker for March, Dr David Smith, spoke to his article, 'Green Myths about Farming', which was published last year in *Quadrant* magazine. He detailed various common myths and assertions that he believes are not only wrong but seriously impede the flow of funds to R&D programs which could be used to further improve our rural environment. In his view, the media - in the absence of real knowledge of the situation - often exploit these myths, "whipping up emotions rather than looking at the facts", he said. Prince Charles, for example, got it wrong when he blamed the introduction of genetically-modified plants for Australia's salinity problems - unaware that GM plants were illegal at the time. In David's words, "everybody wants to be a critic, but get the facts right first". He produced a wealth of evidence to debunk myths about 'fragile' soils, water and erosion, salinity and crops. He was particularly scathing of statements and book releases containing suggestions that the farmers of Australia have seriously damaged the land and it should be returned to the aborigines who are more in harmony with it. As he put it, "Dig up the roses and farm

kangaroos!" In contrast, he pointed to the early settlers who soon found that European farming methods would have to be modified substantially to be successful in Australia, and as a result they began developing alternative methodology and equipment such as the Stump-Jump plough, the Ridley Stripper and the HV McKay harvester, all of which (and a few others) were subsequently sold and exported around the world. David said that the reason our grazing industry is highly productive and efficient is because livestock is not required to winter in barns and sheep can graze on natural grasses, as they have for over 100 years.

"Prince Charles, for example, got it wrong when he blamed the introduction of genetically-modified plants for Australia's salinity problems"

A major Australian development in crop productivity and soil enhancement was the inclusion of sub-clover with phosphate spreading. Other significant developments from studies of agricultural science include minimum tillage methods - which increase organic matter in the soil - and contouring to reduce water run-off. This is beneficial in slowing the salinity in streams and rivers which is a growing concern and needs to be addressed. Also, he does not agree with the suggestion that native vegetation is necessarily best because it was here first, expressing a preference instead to improve soils with new technologies and nutrients for the best available plants to flourish, whether they be indigenous or not.

Alan Williams

Between half and a million tonnes of salt arrives in the Murray-Darling Basin each year in the rain, especially that originating over the Southern Ocean, as the winds moving over the sea take up salty spray... Green Myths, in Quadrant, April 2009

MONTHLY PROFILE

John Brimage

John at home in Mentone beside a picture of himself in his skiing heyday - still a member of the Mt Buller Ski Club



Most members would know John as the driving force behind the current Investment Group which meets at 9.00 am each month before the main meeting. But how did he acquire his encyclopaedic knowledge of, and zeal for, stocks and shares? He says he has always been interested in the share market, but when he retired at age 58, he reckoned that with the nest egg he had built up he could make a lot more money investing than on a salary. Was he successful? "Oh yes," he says with a laugh. "I probably increased it by 400% - until the Global Financial Crisis." Which, of course, was no laughing matter.

While his profile lists him as an engineer, he started working in the radio and electronics industries. As a lab assistant in a radio laboratory, he helped launch the first demonstrations of television in Australia in 1946. However, at the time, the Government said that because the ABC didn't have the technology, the country wasn't ready for television and would not issue a permit to broadcast - that would come 10 years later. John then moved into civil aviation where he was given time off to pursue his qualifications which led to a Radio Diploma at RMIT and work in navigational aids; in particular, to his involvement with setting up the traffic control systems for Sydney airport. He later worked on the Mirage jet fighter, the Nomad - the Australian-designed short-takeoff aircraft - and the US F18 Hornet. "I also did some quality assurance work with the Government Aircraft Factory who manufactured for Boeing," he says.

Some might be surprised to learn that John has been skiing since 1946 - including stints in Austria, Switzerland and France - and continues with his passion today, still a member of the Mt Buller Ski Club. While working in France on the Mirage, he was introduced to the 2-hour lunch and developed a healthy interest in food and wine which he proudly says continues to the present day. "I have a bit of a cellar," he admits and is mainly interested in Cabernet Sauvignon from Coonawarra and shiraz from the Barossa. He confesses a liking for Victorian wines - from the Yarra Valley and the Mornington Peninsula - but says, in his view, they are a bit pricey. He has a keen interest in genealogy, spurred by the discovery that a marine, Thomas Brimage, who arrived with the First Fleet and may have been an ancestor.

FUNCTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Geoff Bransbury & Robert Dun

April

Melbourne Zoo and 2-course lunch at MV Racecourse

Wednesday April 21 (the day following our April Meeting)

The bus leaves the Community Centre in Reserve Road, at 8.45. We have over 50 people coming, including 9 from Beaumaris Bay Probus. Please don't be late!

FOTZ* guides will show us around for about an hour and then there will be time to enjoy the animals and gardens. At approximately 12.45 pm, we get back on the bus for the short drive to Moonee Valley Racecourse for lunch. We return to Beaumaris around 4.30 - 5.00 pm.

* Friends of the Zoo

May

Bright

Over 40 people are joining the trip including members from other Probus clubs. The bus leaves the Community Centre, Reserve Road, at 8.30 on Monday May 17 and returns around 5 pm on Thursday May 20. Have a great trip!

June



Candlelight Dinner - Wednesday June 23 7 pm
One of our main events of the year is on again - and we're hoping for record numbers. This year, we are taking over Vincent's Restaurant, 468 Beach Road, Beaumaris.

We will have a 3-course dinner plus tea/coffee. There will be plenty of choice on the menu and Vincent's is known for really tasty food at reasonable prices. Similar to Tastes, a selection of wines will be available at \$15.00 per bottle. We will have some prizes to be won and we are trying to source some visiting entertainment. Please come along to experience this great evening. Cost: \$40.00.



Payment by May meeting but please register your interest immediately! This is one of the highlights of the year.

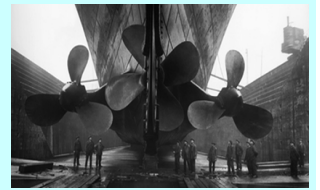


The energetic Functions & Activities team (from left): Robert Dun, new Co-ordinator Geoff Bransbury and out-going (no pun intended) Co-ordinator Alan Farmer

July

Titanic Exhibition - Wednesday July 21

We hope to secure tickets for this fabulous exhibition at the Melbourne Museum which starts in May. This is hailed as a 'blockbuster' exhibition and has apparently been seen worldwide by 22 million people.



Some of the artefacts salvaged from the wreck of the Titanic

During your time at this unique exhibition, you will:

- explore reconstructions of the ship's interior including the Grand Staircase and First and Third Class cabins
- discover how the 'unsinkable' ship met its untimely fate and connect with the personal stories of people on board as you view artefacts recovered from the ocean floor
- see treasures never before presented in Australia in this Melbourne-only showing

Estimated cost: including entry, a lunch and bus – around \$54.00 (to be confirmed). To assist us, please register your interest at the next (April) meeting as we need to establish likely numbers. More details in May.

STOP PRESS: LAKE EYRE 'MIRACLE' TRIP

July 3- 8 (5 nights/6 days)

We have a unique opportunity to see Lake Eyre in flood, witness migrating birds, see Wilpena Pound, Bunyerore and Brachina Gorges, the Flinders Ranges and much more!

Trip includes two 75-minute scenic flights and 4WD trips. Group maximum: 26, includes the flight to Adelaide then by Mercedes Coach. (Thanks to Geoff and Margaret Wade who found this trip and are already booked along with two friends.) Price: around \$3000 pp. If you are interested, a quick decision will be needed as this trip is open to the public and spaces are limited.

Full information to be provided at April meeting.



August

Tramboat Cruise on the Maribyrnong

Joint trip with other local Probus Clubs. To be organised by Beaumaris Bay. A delightful cruise up the Maribyrnong and an interesting commentary— followed by lunch. This is a uniquely built vessel, fully enclosed and heated cabin but with an open upper deck. This trip has proved very popular with other Clubs.

Tastes - A Timely Reminder

Please read all of this.



Next month, we go off to another nearby establishment for one of our special food and wine tasting experiences. This time, it's a Portuguese restaurant in Bay Street, Brighton. However, to avoid the disappointment of last time (when members were turned away), it is important to remember to pay your money in full at the next (April) meeting. It is unlikely that there will be places available the next day. However, if you do decide to try your luck that way, the procedure is as follows: you must deposit the full amount in the Club's account at your nearest bank (see account details in the March newsletter) AND notify either Geoff Wade or Peter McGregor by phone or email. A handful of cash or a cheque means we have to go to the bank to do your banking for you! Not ideal.

WHERE: Madeira restaurant 325 Bay Street Brighton

WHEN: 7 pm Thursday May 6

MENU: Dips, lamb espetada, pasteis de nata, coffee

COST: \$45 per head

WINE: Available at the restaurant (\$10/\$15 per bottle)

Technology Mentors

At our January meeting, Barry Amond gave a 10-minute address on the topic of modern technology and what it can do for us. If you are feeling lost or need help in the use of any new technologies such as email, or your mobile phone, Geoff Wade is compiling a list of members who can help you. As a result, you will be able to contact one of our members who will assist you to gain the most benefit from whatever you have. For a start, Geoff can assist members in most areas of computers including the major software packages (Word, Excel, Publisher, video editing - Pinnacle Studio), email, and internet browsing.

If you are willing to act as a mentor for iPods, iPhones, DVD recorders, mobile phones or any other item of modern technology, please let Geoff know and he will add you to the list. If you would like some assistance – for example, how to attach a document to an email, or even open it – give Geoff a call (9588 2593) and he will put you on to someone within the club who can help you.

Beating the Odds

The odds of winning Division One in Tattsлото are one in 8 145 060. You are 3.5 times more likely to get killed by lightning, 14 times more likely to get hit by lightning (and survive), 12 times more likely to win an Olympic gold medal, 22 times more likely to die in an aircraft accident. On the other hand, winning Tatts offers similar odds to you becoming President of the United States which is two times more likely than becoming an astronaut.

[The Age 3/3/10]



Left: Barry Amond, receives his Life Membership award from President Geoff at the 2010 Annual General Meeting

NOTICEBOARD

RSL Notice

ANZAC Commemorative Service will be held on Sunday April 18, 3.00 pm @ Beaumaris Community Centre. The service is approximately 45 minutes and will be followed by refreshments in the Beaumaris RSL Clubrooms.

Change of Address

Allan Small: new email address: allan.small1@gmail.com

Howlong Golf

Bookings for the Howlong trip in October for a great few days of golf and fellowship are on the increase but we still have five rooms available for anyone interested. The dates are: Sunday night October 10 to Thursday morning October 14. Cost: \$87 per person per night which includes three days of golf, accommodation – continental breakfast – and a bistro meal each night. There is a reduction for all non-golfers and two optional, non-golfing excursions are to be arranged. Deposit : \$40 per couple at time of booking. Call me (9588 2593) or see me at the April meeting. Come and join in the fun.



Some people are still unsure whether they will be available to play at Howlong this year

Geoff Wade

Greater Melbourne Annual Open Probus Bowls

Competition played Wednesday, March 10, at several venues, representing 78 Probus Clubs. There were 182 teams comprising 720 ladies and men.

Winning Clubs: Frankston, Phillip Island, Pakenham, Heathmont, Lower Templestowe, Werribee, Essendon City. The final was played at Black Rock Bowling Club, Wed March 17.

Winner: Heathmont. Runner-up: Lower Templestowe.

Trophies presented by Irma Dymke, President, Probus Victoria.

Ted Montfort

Theatre

MORDIALLOC THEATRE COMPANY

The second play for 2010 is Wednesday evening, May 5.

Tickets will be available at the April meeting.

The third play, a rollicking comedy, *The Underpants*, will be Wednesday evening, July 7. Tickets at \$16 must be paid by the May meeting.

MARY POPPINS and WEST SIDE STORY

Details as per March newsletter.

Alan Taylor

Opera Group

The next opera evening will be on Wednesday April 28 at the *early time of 6 pm sharp*. Please have something to eat beforehand – but in the interval there will be larger cakes than usual! We are going to see one of the longer operas which ranked highly in the survey a year ago. As usual, please let me know if you wish to attend.

Music Group meet on Wednesday May 5.

Barry Amond

Change of Keynote Speaker

Due to circumstances beyond her control, Ms Anita Nayar, Consul-General for India will speak to us in May instead of the original planned visit in April.