



PROBUS

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

Issue No. 232

April 2009

Next Meeting: 10 am Tuesday April 21 Beaumaris RSL

10-Minute Speaker: Geoff Mason A Sporting Hero

Keynote Speaker: Geoff Croker Water from Tasmania

Geoff Croker is a Melbourne engineer who has developed a unique proposal to pipe water from Tasmania to Victoria to assist us in rectifying our current water deficit. Once approved and constructed, this project would provide massive amounts of water to Victoria at less cost than alternatives as it would be fed from the mountains of north-west Tasmania by gravity. More information, p4.

Investment Group: 9 am before the main Meeting. See p4.

— Office Bearers, 2009 —

President:	Geoff Wade	9588 2593
Vice President:	Eric Slater	9589 3526
Imm/Past Pres:	Noel Ineson	9589 5263
Hon Secretary	John Howe	9598 2429
Hon Treasurer:	David Robertson	9551 1930
Functions:	Alan Farmer	9598 2791
Functions Asst:	Robert Dun	9589 5456
Meeting Coord:	Bill Green	9596 1548
Meetings Asst:	Duncan Gibson	9585 3547
Almoner:	Andrew Watson	9589 5913
Hon. Auditor:	Neil Jones	9598 3158
Newsletter:	Peter McGregor	9533 4760

Peter's email <peterb64@bigpond.net.au>

— Group Leaders —

Investment :	John Brimage	9584 6349
Music/Opera :	Barry Amond	9589 1143
Theatres :	Allan Taylor	9521 6180
Grapevine:	Roy Petch	9589 5757
Bowls :	Ted Montfort	9589 5949
Prisms:	Bill Davis	9592 5982
Art:	Paul Crompton	9583 1310
Transport:	Roy Spalding	9589 5608
Recorder:	Alan Williams	9598 7550
Archivist:	Roy Petch	9589 5757
President's Table:	Ken Lucas	9584 5545

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I would like to set a target of 10 new Members in the next 12 months to ensure that we remain strong.

Welcome to another Probus year. I trust that this year will be as enjoyable and successful as the one just completed. Our congratulations to Immediate Past President, Noel Ineson, for leading us so competently over the past 12 months.

Thankyou to all Members for giving me the honour of leading for the coming year. I will be doing all I can to ensure that our Meetings and programs are as enjoyable as possible and I invite the co-operation of all Members in participating fully wherever they can. As you know, the strength of our Club depends upon your participation. I also want to thank those who have agreed to serve as office bearers, Committee Members and activity conveners and look forward to working with you all.

Throughout the year, it will be my aim to develop a program of informative and interesting speakers on a wide variety of topics - topics which can give us food for thought as well as entertainment. For example, our speaker this month is Geoff Croker who has developed an alternative proposal for piping water downhill from Tasmania to Victoria to ease our state's water deficit. He says Victoria could buy 500 gegalitres of fresh water from Tasmania a year and pipe it under Bass Strait. I am sure that all Members will find his key presentation particularly interesting, especially in this time of water shortages.

I stated at our AGM last month that we all need to seek new Members for our Club. It is a perennial problem, but unless we are able to recruit new people, there is no doubt we will eventually suffer as a result of natural attrition. Declining membership is not a sign of a healthy club. Therefore, I would like to set a target of 10 new Members in the next 12 months to ensure that we remain strong.

Finally, on your behalf, I express our sincere condolences to Doug Clark, a Past President of our club, on the passing of his wife, Gwen, on Saturday 28 March. Gwen was a regular attendee at many of our functions, including Howlong golf, and she will be missed by all.

Geoff Wade

MONTHLY PROFILE

John Howe

*In full swing as Convener
of the Monday Boys at
Victoria Golf Club*

As we know, John has now taken over as Secretary from Roy Petch. How he came to rise from humble beginnings in Footscray as an apprentice engineer/toolmaker to the lofty heights as Secretary of the illustrious Probus Club of Beaumaris makes for very interesting reading indeed. Some might even say, 'from rags to riches'.

As an apprentice, he realised that going back to school at Footscray Tech to complete a course in mechanical engineering would be a step in the right direction. With the possibility of a good position in the proposed Burnie paper mill (which never came to fruition), he set off to Canada to gain the necessary experience. On returning to Australia, he found himself involved in stainless steel production and took himself off to RMIT - where he was taught the basics of pneumatics and hydrology by no other than Beaumaris Probarian, Bill Hogarth. John worked for Myttons, Vulcan,



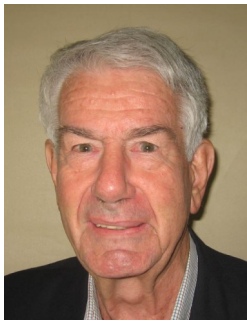
the Government Aircraft Factory and eventually, the CSIRO at Geelong - where his work entailed managing engineering and the super-pure air-conditioning and water filtration. He says the most interesting tasks along the way were building stainless steel tanks for Yalumba, Wolf Blass, Henschkes, and Rockford in the Barossa. Perhaps that explains his abiding interest in good red wine!

His pastimes include genealogy and reading the fiction of Clive Cussler, exciting stories of deep sea exploration and adventure with an historical background.

In his younger days, he played baseball but was told he wouldn't make it because he couldn't run. So, he took up athletics. Nevertheless, he played baseball until he was 38. Soon after, he took up golf and has been a member at Victoria for 30 years, where he is probably best-known today as the co-ordinator of the Monday Boys, a group of 60 or so retired golfers, ranging in age from the 50s to the 90s who compete vigorously - in order to win a ball!

A Bulldogs supporter who lives Bayside, John reminds us again that 'you can take the boy out of Footscray, but you can't take Footscray out of the boy.' (I think we knew that.) All Members wish John well in his new position.

On the Rigs: A Life at Sea



Jim was quick to dispel the Hollywood myth of oil spurting from oil wells as in those old black and white movies years ago.

Jim Patton, a retired engineer from Lloyd's Register, London was our keynote speaker for the March meeting. Jim presented a rapid-fire visual presentation of his experience with the design, construction/fabrication, installation and operation of offshore oil rigs and platforms in various fields around the world which produce oil and gas for export to land-based refineries, or are off-loaded to shuttle tankers for shipment further afield and to foreign refineries. Included in the presentation were photographs and drawings illustrating the complex, intricate design and construction of these mammoth structures, all of which are much larger than they appear from photographs. The base, or jacket, alone weighs some 34 000 tonnes, with its four vertical columns rising from the seabed to above sea level. The topsides, mounted on top of the jacket, also weigh in the vicinity of 30 000 tonnes and cover an area of 85 by 85 metres, and stand in about 150 metres of water to 200 metres above sea level. The underwater area is protected from corrosion and marine growth by about 800 tonnes of paint. Jackets were traditionally fabricated from steel tubulars and girders, as were the topside structures, but later trends are for the use of concrete.

Jim was quick to dispel the Hollywood myth of oil spurting from oil wells as in those old black and white movies years ago. He said that all drilling rigs today are fitted with 'blow-out preventers' which avert such an eventuality.

Rigs in the North Sea and other areas can drill up to 5 000 metres and have the ability to drill directionally away from the vertical, to enable further exploitation of the field, without having to relocate the drilling rig. This enables several wells to become producers from one field, to a central production platform, thereby saving considerable time and money developing the field to bring it on-stream. Oil and/or gas produced is transferred ashore by shuttle tankers, or by sub-sea pipelines which are laid onto the sea bed by specially-constructed barges, some up to 420 metres long, working 24 hours a day laying fully-welded steel pipe onto the sea bed at a rate of 4 000 metres per day. The LNG carriers, with a capacity of 125 000 cubic metres, are fitted with specially-constructed stainless steel tanks, and can load at a rate of 3 000 cubic metres an hour. The gas is frozen and liquefied at minus 163 degrees for transportation around the world; the largest market is Japan, receiving in excess of 300 cargoes each year, from Brunei alone.

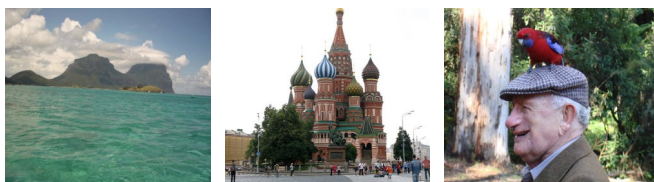
Jim's many visuals gave a vivid impression of the actual size of the structures, dwarfing the men working on them. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, it was not possible to show some of the stunning views of a once-in-a-100-year storm, on the Frigg field in the Norwegian Sector in 1981, which recorded wave heights of 25 metres and wind speeds of 120 km. The rigs were evacuated by helicopters, leaving only essential personnel on board in such extreme conditions. His final words? Divers and riggers working on these platforms, particularly in the North Sea, can be paid up to \$600 per day. "They need it," he says, "as they have to be mad to put up with such conditions and long hours."

Alan Williams



FUNCTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Alan Farmer & Robert Dun



May

A day trip, May 20, to **Eureka Tower** with a pub lunch at a Williamstown hotel followed by a self-guided tour of the Spotswood Pumping Station. I am delighted to let you know that this is a combined exercise with Ricketts' Point and Beaumaris Bay clubs with whom we are co-operating to make this trip together. If successful, it may well be the beginning of something great. Cost: \$46 pp. Each club is restricted to 15 participants, so it's first in, first served.

The Eureka Tower visit should be fun. Those who are challenged by heights have no need to do more than view it from the room with the glass floor. We believe it is quite a stimulating experience. On the other hand, the Pumping Station is one of the most important industrial heritage sites in Australia. It was built in the late 19th century and was classified by the National Trust in 1981. To see these gigantic steam pumps— powered by compressed air, gleaming and dripping with oil as the flywheel turns and the pistons pump— is a magnificent sight. Bus departs from the Beaumaris Community Centre at 9.30 am. NOTE: payment to be made at the April Meeting.

June

Candlelight Dinner. Tuesday June 9, 7 pm for 7.30 pm at Furphies restaurant, RSL, Beaumaris. This is a very popular event so your booking should be made as soon as possible. \$28 pp. Payment can be made at our next Meeting, April 21.

July

Visit to **Port of Melbourne**, now Tuesday July 28. This is said to be a fascinating tour, particularly for those of us living here on the Bay which is being dredged to provide services to the Port of Melbourne. Cost: \$46 pp.

Please note the change of date. This is now necessary because the Port of Melbourne no longer offers its tour program on Wednesdays.

August

We are in the process of exploring another combined trip with Ricketts' Point and Beaumaris Bay. More about this as information comes to hand.

October

Tour of wineries on Mornington Peninsula. Several Members have observed that wineries are 'dead' in winter and that a springtime visit would be far more pleasant. As a result, we have decided to move this tour to October — Spring — when the bird is on the wing, and the wing is on the bird, as they say. We thank those who have offered their many helpful suggestions about this activity.

November

King Island Tour - three nights from November 30. This is well-known as a delightful tour - by coach to Tullamarine, plane to King Island with bus tours of the Island. There will be visits and opportunities to sample some of their world famous quality cheeses and dairy products, as well as local breads, salads and other fresh foods.



Cost: \$1055 pp twin share for 15 or more, or \$1080 for 10-14 people. Maximum places available: 26 people.

2010

New Zealand Tour. At our last Meeting we discussed a possible 20-day trip to New Zealand for November this year. However, some Members who indicated an interest at our last Meeting, have suggested that although they are seriously interested in the trip, they would prefer to go next year. In discussion with others on the Committee, including my assistant co-ordinator, Robert Dun, we have decided to defer that trip until March or April next year. I hope this meets the wishes of Members, and apologise for our vacillation on this matter.

Lord Howe Island Report *(with apologies to Rod Murrell)*

Firstly, there was a cruise around the island; on another day, a trip in a glass-bottomed boat with the opportunity to observe the wonders of the reef - both from the boat or by snorkelling, and to mingle with sea-birds nesting on an isolated beach. For the more enthusiastic, there was a climb to the top of Mt Eliza. There was also a bus tour that covered the island from top to bottom in great detail and other excursions on foot, such as one to a Kentia palm nursery, equipping everyone to take full advantage of the free time that followed later in the week.

Touring Group (From left): Rex, Marg, Gwen, Garth, Val, Alan, Robyn, Ros, Peter, Les, Barry, Noel, Lou, Rod



Rex, Marg, Gwen, Garth, Val, Alan, Robyn, Ros, Peter, Les, Barry, Noel, Lou, Rod



The King is Dead Long Live the King

Not quite the way it happens with royalty; nevertheless, the 2009 Annual General Meeting saw the handing over of robes of office and responsibilities from President, Noel Ineson, to new President, Geoff Wade. President Noel's Annual Report is enclosed with this Newsletter.

THEATRE GROUP

MORDIALLOC THEATRE COMPANY

The second play *Rabbit Hole* is on May 6 at 64 Parkers Road, Parkdale, at 8 pm. We have 52 starters - tickets available at the April Meeting.

The third play *Murdered to Death* is on July 8.



This hilarious best traditions

spoof in the of Agatha

Christie is set in a country manor house in the 1930s, with a cast of eccentric characters guaranteed to delight. The play introduces the inept and bungling Inspector Pratt, who battles against the odds to solve the murder of the house's owner. It soon becomes clear to all that the murderer isn't finished yet,. But will the miscreant be unmasked before everyone else has met their doom, or will the audience die laughing first?

Payment must be made by the May meeting.

MISS SAIGON

The Cheltenham Light Opera Company's first musical for 2009 is at the Alexander Theatre, Monash University, on Sunday afternoon May at 2 pm. So far, 23 starters. Tickets available at the April Meeting. Allan Taylor

NOTICEBOARD

Little-Known Facts

Most densely-populated countries (in order):
1 Monaco (16 754 per km²) 2 Singapore (6 336)
3 Gibraltar (4 654) 4 Vatican City (1 866) 5 Bahrain (1 454)
New cars on Beijing's roads daily: 1 000.

Music & Opera Groups



The Opera Group will meet on Wednesday 29 April at the new time of 7 pm. Note the new time. Please let me know if you would like to attend. The next Music Group evening will be on Wednesday 24 June, also at 7 pm. BA

New Address

For John Howe: jrmehowe@optusnet.com.au
For Ed Hilliard: e-mail edhilliard63@gmail.com
16 Waterdale Place Aspendale Gardens 3195
Mobile: 0425 786 711

Investment Group

This month, the group will look at the decision to stay fully invested in the model portfolio and the high dividend versus the capital growth strategies in the present market recovery opportunities.

Members' Register

It is hoped that the 2009 Members' Register for the Club will be ready for distribution at the April meeting. Please collect yours and also that of any other member whom you know is absent and you can deliver.

Water from Tasmania

Anyone interested in more information on Geoff Croker's idea of bringing water to Melbourne from the north-east of Tasmania should Google *Geoff Croker* for transcripts of interviews Geoff has given and newspaper articles. A Melbourne engineer, he says the water would be much cheaper than that produced by both the desalination plant and the northern pipeline the State Government plans to build. Geoff has had experience designing pipe sizing for the flow of solids and water for many of the former CRA's largest mines, including Bougainville Copper.

Howlong Golf



We still have a couple of rooms available for the Howlong Golf Trip from 26-30 September. Please see Geoff Wade if you have not booked and would like to attend. Also, there is a small number of intended attendees who have not yet paid their deposit - \$70 per couple. Please pay this as soon as possible so your room can be confirmed.

Tastes

We have now settled on Sabatini's restaurant, Beach Road Black Rock, which is prepared to offer an Italian-style menu at a reasonable price (\$45 a head). In line with our schedule, the next night out will be Thursday, May 7 at 7 pm. There will be a set menu with some choices: antipasto, pasta, secondi piatti, to be followed by coffee and biscotti. The two wines to be sampled will be available at minimal cost at the restaurant (and tasting notes). To confirm your interest, you will need to pay Geoff Wade in full at the next Meeting (Tuesday April 21).

WHERE: Ristorante Sabatini 305 Beach Road Black Rk
WHEN: Thursday, May 7 TIME: 7 pm

NOTE: Only the first 30 can be accepted.