



PROBUS

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

Issue No. 225

August 2008

Next Meeting: 10 am Tuesday August 19 at Beaumaris RSL

Keynote Speaker: Ms Jill Koolmees

Author of the book, *My Desert Kingdom*, Jill is an accomplished and entertaining speaker about life in Saudi Arabia - the heartland of Islam and the single most important country in control of the world's oil supply. She will speak about her experiences as a reluctant expat wife in Saudi Arabia and about Saudi women struggling for freedom.

10-Minute Speaker: John Ragas A VIKING ADVENTURE

Investment Group: Meets 9 am before the main meeting - all welcome.
Focus on issues such as the banks, climate change and the slowing economy.

— Office Bearers, 2008 —

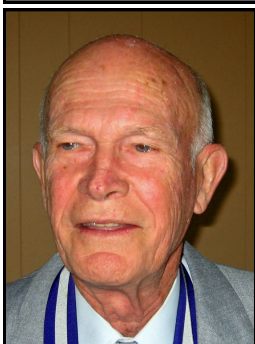
President:	Noel Ineson	9589 5263
Vice President:	Geoff Wade	9588 2593
Imm/Past Pres:	Bill Davis	9592 5982
Hon Secretary	Roy Petch	9589 5757
Hon Treasurer:	David Robertson	9551 1930
Functions Coord:	Alan Farmer	9598 2791
Functions Asst:	Robert Dun	9589 5456
Meeting Coord:	Don Lobb	9598 5546
Meetings Asst:	Eric Slater	9589 3526
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
"Grape vine" :	Keith Beyer	9888 3152
Bowls :	Ted Montfort	9589 5949
Prisms:	Bill Davis	9592 5982
Art:	Paul Crompton	9583 1310
Transport:	Roy Spalding	9589 5608
Speakers' Corner:	Alan Williams	9598 7550
Archivist:	Keith Beyer	9888 3152
President's Table:	Bill Green	9596 1548

FROM THE PRESIDENT



No doubt, we are all experiencing some concern about the direction of the share market over the past year where an overall drop of about 30% has been experienced. It is interesting to look at previous significant market crises. For instance, in the 1929/30 market collapse, stock prices dropped about 50% over two years and it took five years for them to recover. After the 1987 property boom, the world share prices also collapsed by about 50% in three months and it took seven years for them to recover. However, the overall market share price index over the last, say, 25 years has risen from about 700 to 5000 - a rise of over 8% per annum. This trend has existed since the end of the 39/45 war. What direction the market takes from here is anyone's guess but, clearly, it would be prudent for us all to maintain a reasonable cash position.

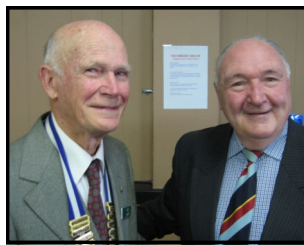
Keynote Speaker: Identity Theft

When Bob O'Brien thanked our July Keynote Speaker, Percy Cooper, he described his address as "entertaining but chilling". Percy's fascinating talk on Identity Theft was very entertaining, but an undercurrent of concern became apparent when he informed us that 200 cases of identity theft and fraud are reported to the police every month. Everybody is a target, even Percy himself.

Percy Cooper is a private investigator and forensic accountant who has worked for 45 years in the superannuation industry. In 1985, he was a Credit Union director and had all his personal information recorded in the Credit Union files stolen and used to steal his identity. The criminal proceeded to spend \$116 000 using Percy's name. While the bank eventually made good the loss, by the time the guilty party was apprehended, Percy's reputation had been compromised and he had to endure seven years listed as a defaulter and a bad credit risk. Apart from internet, phone and mail scams, the major source of risk is our mailbox, he said. Stolen mail can

include bank statements, dividend details, chequebooks, company proxy forms, annual reports and other key documents which provide private information for those criminals especially interested in capturing our identity.

Percy Cooper and the President



The best advice he can offer is that all documents consigned to wheelie bins should be shredded first as this receptacle is one of the most important sources of information for criminals. For example, in one street in Malvern, at least 48 residents had their mail stolen by a pram-pushing girl on drugs. As a result, their identities were compromised. But there are further warnings: Don't respond to any surveys (including from Australia Post), ignore all unsolicited e-mails and letters - and be aware that Lagos University in Nigeria runs courses on how to cheat fools in the Western World!

Alan Williams



Geoff has this fine example of his marquetry hobby on full display in his front hallway and several others on walls throughout his home

MONTHLY PROFILE

Geoff Wade

Vice President Geoff has been a member of Beaumaris Probus since 2002 and for a number of years was editor of the Newsletter. He has three children and four grandchildren, and has been an active golfer at Southern for 23 years.

Geoff spent 21 years with the Air Force in Melbourne, Adelaide, Wagga, Canberra and finally back in Melbourne as an education officer, mostly involved with the management of training. During his nine years in Canberra, he was involved in officer training, preparing officers for promotion to Squadron Leaders and, later, on the staff of the Staff course, training Squadron Leaders and Wing Commanders for senior appointments. He also spent three years in Air Force Office where his work included responsibility for some of the non-financial conditions of service such as resettlement to civilian life and integrating RAAF members into the Army Health Benefits scheme. As a result of initiatives in this area, he was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in the Military Division in June 1983. In 1984, he was transferred back to Melbourne as the Project Officer for the establishment of the RAAF College at Point Cook.

When he retired from the Air Force, he took up a position as manager of first aid training with the Red Cross for almost three years and then a similar position with St John Ambulance for more than five years, later running his own VIP lawn mowing business in the Beaumaris area. "I finally saw the light, got out, and now play golf and travel the world," Geoff says. In his spare time, he pursues an unusual hobby: marquetry. This involves creating pictures from veneers of multi-coloured wood (see photo), each of which could take as much as 200 hours to complete. A lot of work. Why? "I can't draw or paint and I'm not a great carpenter. But being able to produce a pleasing finished article, such as this that looks good on a wall, gives me considerable pleasure," Geoff says.

Eve of Gerik



Roy Petch told an intriguing rags-to-riches story of a young girl living in the Kinta Valley, in northern Malaya (as it was then), at the time of the communist insurgency known as the Malayan Emergency, 1948 - 60. The prospects for young Ah Moi were bleak. Having had only elementary schooling and obliged to work as a tin mine labourer, she had little to look forward to, like so

many others.

When communist terrorists came to the village looking for recruits, she was persuaded to join them. Along with other comrades, they set off on a special mission across 120 km of mountainous jungle in mainly unpopulated territory. Eventually, the party became lost and could not replenish its food supplies. Ah Moi, facing starvation, ate poisonous berries and fainted, only to be abandoned by her 'comrades'. Quite by chance, a young PWD engineer, doing the survey for a new road through the jungle, found her naked and unconscious on a river bank near the village of Gerik (hence "Eve of Gerik"). He took her back to civilisation, where she gave up her ambition for revolution and became useful to the other side by encouraging terrorists to surrender and take no further part in the insurrection. Some years later, Roy heard that she had married a wealthy Singaporean Chinese and had become the owner of a string of successful race horses - a lucky lady indeed!

Alan Williams

Sandringham Probus

We were delighted to welcome Committee Members from the Probus Club of Sandringham to our July meeting and luncheon. They were Fred Wall, President; Jack Fitts, Vice President & Day Outings; John Kelly, Secretary & Editor; John Bishop, Treasurer; and Trevor Turnor, Recruiting. Both our clubs are experiencing some difficulties recruiting new Members and obtaining sufficient numbers for social outings. A reciprocal visit to them is planned for August when these issues can be discussed.

NI



Five visiting members of Sandringham Probus with President Noel Ineson at the July meeting

A Word About Petrol Prices

\$1.60 per litre. So you think petrol is expensive? Think again. Can of beer: \$2.95 per 250 ml. That makes \$11.80 per litre. Cough mixture: \$9.95 per 200 ml. That makes \$199 per litre. L'Oreal Revitalift Day Cream: \$29.95 per 50 ml. ie. \$599 per litre. Bundy Rum: \$51 per 1250 ml. That makes \$40 per litre. Eye Drops: \$5.69 per 15 ml. That makes \$379 per litre. Britney Spears Fantasy Perfume: \$29 per 50 ml. \$580 per litre. Evian water: \$2.95 per 375 ml. That makes \$7.85 per litre. But the worst? Computer printer ink. \$1040 a litre. Ed.

FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

September 24: Australian Animal Health Laboratory, Geelong.

We have a very special opportunity to observe the vital role this laboratory plays in maintaining the health of Australia's livestock, aquaculture species and wildlife. It is one of the most sophisticated laboratories in the world for research on the safe handling and containment of animal diseases. This is achieved through a number of research programs to develop the most sensitive, accurate and timely diagnostic tests critical to the success of any maintenance and virus eradication campaigns. The public is not routinely allowed into this facility, but through the good offices of John Howe, we are indeed privileged to have access. His special assistance in arranging this visit is gratefully acknowledged.

Cost: \$40 pp includes luxury bus transport. Lunch and sing-a-long at Sphinx's venue in Geelong.

Departure: 9 am from Beaumaris Community Centre. Returns about 4 pm. Bookings and Payment will be required at August (next) meeting.

(If insufficient Members apply for this trip, rather than cancel - for those who wish to go - an invitation will be extended to the members of Sandringham Probus to join us. This would be experimental, but it is anticipated that the combination would make for a very jovial party.)

November 19: Corio Bay Cruise aboard MS Freedom and Geelong Tour

Tour includes: Geelong Town tour, lunch at Smorgies. One-hour scenic tour aboard *MS Freedom*. Luxury Bus travel. Departs Beaumaris Community Centre 9 am. Returns about 5 pm. Cost: \$56 pp. Firm bookings and payment would be welcomed at our next meeting.

Russia and Scandinavia Tour 2008

March 2-9 2009: Lord Howe Island

It is essential for Members to *indicate their interest and firm intention* and confirm immediately with a \$300 deposit if they wish to join the group of 12 Members already making the Lord Howe Island trip. Balance to be paid in full by the November meeting. The Lord Howe trip has been described as for those who are moderately fit and like to walk or swim, or for those who are happy just to sit and appreciate beauty.

The tour includes: Transport from Beaumaris to and from Tullamarine. Return economy class ex Melbourne, including pre-pay taxes (subject to any airfare variations). Return airport transfers on Lord Howe Island. 7 nights in a studio room at Leanda-Lei. Full buffet breakfast daily at Coral Cafe. Six dinners at local restaurants, including transfers and BBQ dinner. Ronnie's Ramble guided walk. North Bay picnic lunch. Chase & Thyme tour. Guided nursery tour. Boat cruise around the island.

Cost: \$3089 pp (Single Supplement \$274)

Sept 3-20: Croatia and Slovenia, including Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Copies of the tour brochure will be available at the next meeting, or a copy can be emailed to you by Robert Dun at rbdun@bigpond.com.au. The tour:

- ☐ is a small group tour, maximum 25 people
- ☐ includes a 5-day chartered cruise of Dalmatian Islands
- ☐ is fully escorted by a professional tour leader
- ☐ is a First Class tour in English only
- ☐ is exclusive to the Australian and New Zealand market
- ☐ includes gratuities.

Cost: Main Deck \$7700 pp single, \$5900 pp double/twin. (2008 prices, expect about 10% increase for 2009.) Air fares are not included and may well rise considerably in the coming months. Currently, 10 Members interested.

Future Events and Functions

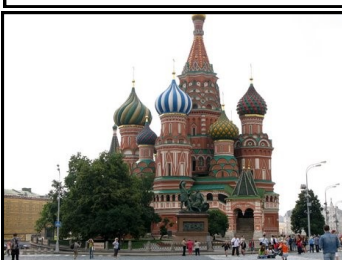


We are now planning for next year. We would appreciate your suggestions and comments (via response sheet at the August meeting) to assist us compile a list to put before Members and wives for your selection in the following Newsletter.

Alan Farmer & Robert Dun



See full report attached



TASTES: WINE & FOOD



Some Members are considering forming a new group based around an interest in Wine and Food. With sufficient support, the group plans to meet in a local restaurant three or four times a year (probably a Thursday evening) and be introduced to a new wine and share a gourmet meal. A Cellarmaster Member would be responsible for selecting the wine to be shared and discussed. The Cellarmaster role would be rotated and the wine and meals would always be moderately-priced. (Total: \$50 a head). Members' wives are cordially invited. Those interested should contact either Peter McGregor or Geoff Wade.

People, Probus and Hobbies

Last month, the President invited Members to contribute to the Club by writing (however briefly) about each of the various hobbies we pursue in our spare time. He even suggested that such contributions in the forum provided by this Newsletter would enrich all our lives. What did he have in mind? Are we really blessed with such diversity?

A cursory glance through the Members' Register reveals a rich vein of hobbies and interests. Most of us have everyday interests such as golf, computers, reading and gardening; others have more exotic interests. For example, Tony Avery lists Indian industry as an interest, Bill Shepherd records that he engages in plant propagation, while Paul Crompton and George Fabiny list U3A – which the internet tells us is the University of the Third Age. Roy Petch undertakes ceramics in his spare time and Warwick Andrews is interested in painting and model-making. Ian Parsonson is one of a number with an interest in researching family history, Alan Nash is a lover of jazz, Allan Small studies physics, the sciences and astronomy, Peter McGregor cooks, Nick Caris is the consummate caravaner, John Howe is an athletics afficianado, while Andy Watson says his main hobby is staying alive and helping people. There are a number of Members who sail and many who walk – though we are not sure where or even why. Ken Rattray is a very experienced long-distance runner and Rod Murrell is into surfing! Bill Davis collects (not sure what) and Frank Elson says he enjoys polemics (though how, where and with whom, he hasn't said). So, you see, in total, we are quite a fascinating lot - but maybe the rest of us would like to know a lot more about many of these things that give Members pleasure. Noel's invitation to respond still stands. Why not, in the words of that famous sporting company, "*Just Do It!*"

NOTICEBOARD

President Ill

We are sorry to report that President Noel Ineson suffered a heart attack on Thursday 7 August. He was operated on that day at Monash Medical Centre to clear a blocked artery and at time of writing was expected to return home in about five days. We all wish Noel a speedy recovery to full health.

Functions & Activities

December 19: President's Christmas Luncheon at VGC. Full details at the September Meeting.

Howlong Golf

We still have a couple of vacancies for our three days of golf at Howlong - 27-29 October inclusive. For those who have already booked, no further action required unless you need a cart. If so, please ring the Pro at Howlong - Anthony Hunter - (02 6026 5822). Full details of program and tee times will be distributed at the October meeting. GW

Investment Group

9.00 am

The discussion this month will revolve around the bank's losses and dividend cuts, climate change measures, falling demand and a possible interest rate reduction. Chair: Barry Amond - while John Brimage is on holidays.

Correction

In last month's Newsletter, in a summary of David Robertson's talk on Antarctica, it reported that there was pack ice "...some as thick as 20 metres..." That should have read, "...some as thick as 2000 metres..." In fact, David says, some of the ice reaches a thickness of 4 000 metres.

September 10-minute Speaker

Next month's speaker will be Geoff Goodwin who will speak on the subject, '*Bits About Plastics*'.

Theatre Outings

CLOCKTOWER THEATRE

A reminder that the third play for the year is on Wednesday Sept 3rd at 8 pm.

HOT SHOE SHUFFLE

The Cheltenham Light Opera Company production of this musical is on Wednesday October 15 at the Alexander Theatre, Monash University at 8 pm. 30 tickets available at \$34. Payment must be made at the August meeting. This is the hilarious story of the Tap Brothers, a madcap dance act who can inherit a fortune if they can reproduce their father's act and also include a sister who hasn't a dancing bone in her body. Full of jazz, swing and blues standards by musical legends such as George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Hoagy Carmichael, Fats Waller and Duke Ellington.

Donation

Treasurer, David Robertson, reports that a small donation of \$63.80 to the Royal Children's Hospital appeal in July was the proceeds of our fines tin.

Jock's Corner

Q: What do bullet-proof vests, fire escapes, windscreen wipers and laser printers all have in common?

ANSWER: All were invented by women.