



**A HISTORY  
OF  
THE PROBUS CLUB  
OF  
BEAUMARIS**

**1987 - 1990**

*The first fifteen years*



# Probud Club of Beaumaris Inc.



A basic history of Beaumaris Probud Club since its formation in 1987 — taken from Club newsletters and minutes.

*With special thanks to editors:  
Hugh Stevens, David Davis and John Hamann,  
for freely providing their articles.*

- *Speakers and their chosen subjects.*
- *Club tours and outings.*
- *Membership details and lists.*
- *Past office bearers.*
- *Index.*



Warburton, Stevenson's Falls 7 February 1990



Ready to embus at Howlong 9 August 1991



Golfers at Howlong, 7 November 1996



More golfers at Howlong, 5 November 1997



Trip by river to Flemington, September 1994



After lunch at McKenzies Falls 12 September 1995



Beaumaris Probians on the trip via Adaminaby to Lake Eucumbene, October 1998



Jim Waters in the chair at Altona 8 May 1991



The 'Warburton Heirloom' Trophy



Sunny day at Lakes Entrance, November 1994



Golfers at Howlong, November 2000



All out and walk! Tara National Park 9 Nov 1993



Ready to 'white-water' the Dart NZ, February 2001



A cool day on the Grampians 12 September 1995



Alan and Wally take possession of Mt Cook, NZ

# PROBUS THE BEGINNING

## A Basic History of the Probus Club of Beaumaris Inc.

Compiled from Minutes and Newsletters by Max Parsons

On the third Tuesday of most months 80 to 90 gentlemen converge on the Beaumaris RSL Club to spend several hours of fellowship together. They are members of the Probus Club of Beaumaris and before retirement from PROfessional or BUSiness life they might not have met socially but through the Club have developed new friendships.

Membership is not restricted to the two groups, professional and business – there are no hard and fast rules about membership but there is an emphasis on compatibility. The first half-hour of Probus meetings is devoted to Club formalities and a short address by a member, then thirty minutes for a tea or coffee break and fellowship.

A guest speaker presents the keynote address from 11am to noon when bar facilities are available to members and guests. Usually more than thirty members and guests remain for a convivial lunch finishing about 2 pm.

### **How did the Club begin?**

On 16 June 1987 a founding meeting was held at Beaumaris RSL to form the Beaumaris/Cheltenham District Probus Club. It was a joint community service project of the Rotary Clubs of Beaumaris and Cheltenham, headed by Rotarians Frank Maher, Tim Ive and Terry Mahoney. The meeting was chaired by Bob Lease, President of Cheltenham Rotary Club and guests included the mayors of Sandringham, Mordialloc and Moorabbin.

Brian Powell spoke of the aims of the first Probus Club and mentioned the position of Probus as it was in 1987. Jim Waters (Past President Moorabbin Rotary, PP Moorabbin City Probus and Special District Governor Representative to form Probus Clubs in District 981) also gave an address and answered questions with Stan Port. Jim was described as a 'walking encyclopedia' on Rotary and Probus information.

After much spadework by Rotarians, Jim Waters, John Charlesworth and others, 21 July 1987 saw the beginning of the Probus Club of Beaumaris/Cheltenham – eventually to be known as the Probus Club of Beaumaris.

VIPs, Rotarians, Charter members and other interested persons gathered to hear all about what to many was a new concept. Rotary president Bob Lease welcomed the guests and introduced the Mayor of Sandringham who added an official welcome to the City. Brian Powell gave an address on Probus and was followed by Jim Waters, Past President of Moorabbin City Probus Club.

Questions followed and were ably answered by Jim and Stan Port, President of Moorabbin Probus. Then the important proposal 'to form a Probus Club' was passed and members signed up. Nominations were called for a president and a 6-man management committee who were to form Office Bearers at a meeting the following week.

Jim Waters (seconded by Ken Reynolds) nominated Claus Gloe as President and Kevin Speer, Governor District 981, presented Claus with the Presidential Collar of Office. A further presentation of a "Probus Gong and Gavel" was then made on behalf of both

Beaumaris and Cheltenham Rotary Clubs .

Committee meetings were scheduled and the second such meeting, held on 27 July 1987, was attended by Claus Gloe, Alan Love, George Hault, Bill Hogarth and Frank Maher. The minutes of the inaugural meeting held on 6 July have gone astray but were duly passed.

President Claus Gloe welcomed Hugh Stevens who was appointed to take over editorial and archival duties. Bill Hogarth was appointed vice president and responsible for guest speakers. George Hault (membership); Frank Maher (Probus liaison/club service); Cliff McDonald (functions); Jack Montgomery (treasurer) and Alan Love (secretary).

At the meeting on 18 August 1987, lapel Probus membership pins were presented to about forty members. Bill Maunder's address to the meeting "*A more detailed profile of Probus*" provided a clearer understanding of the Probus movement which had started in England during the 1960s and was being introduced into other countries by Rotary .

The success of Beaumaris Probus may be attributed to the enthusiasm of its members and dedication of its management teams over the years. The continuing presentation of excellent speakers is a feature of the Club and the organisation of 'mixed' functions, trips and other events has developed countless friendships between members and partners.

Although not 'absolutely pukka' we single out one person – life member Hugh Stevens – an exceptional reporter and unique writer for special mention. Hugh produced the minutes and newsletters for more than a decade of the Club's early years and this record has borrowed many of his perceptive comments.

Prior to the August meeting the Club had enlisted over 100 members and as numbers were limited to about 75, Frank Maher was authorised to examine, with Rotary, the possibility of creating a new club. (Later to become the Cheltenham Probus Club).

#### *A hundred members by August 1987*

And they were:

A R Allan, G C Appleby, A B Avery, R F Bathols, W E Beard, F K Beyer, F B Biencourt, W Blackett-Smith, F Bowles, J Brimage, E G Buck, J E Burgesson, S J Burke, F B Burrows, E J Carruthers, L E Champion, J H Charlesworth, N K Christie, G C Coughlan, J H Crozier, J E D'Helin, S W Dacy, M J Davidson, E K Dawson, J Doeg, R G Donovan, G J Duff, G Dunscombe, P J Epstein, A F Flanagan, L G Fox, R A Fox, W J Frost, W G Fry, A H Gasson, E J Glenn, C S Gloe, H F Gowers, J Groves, L Hall, B Hambleton, M Hancock, B W Hart, R L Hart, D Hensher, W R Hogarth, G Hault, R Hutchinson, A E Jackson, N A Jager-Glover, K Johnson, G W Kidman, J M Kirkpatrick, W K Knight, J Knott, H K Kruse, S Lea, A C Love, F J Maher, A H Matthew, W M Maunder, B K McAllister, C J McDonald, I McDonald, J McMillan, W J Mead, R Melevende, D G Mitchell, J A Montgomery, S W Myring, J G Neaves, J Page, M C Parsons, D Payne, E T Payne, L M Powell, V A Proposch, N F Reeman, J A Reith, R Relf, K C Reynolds, G Ristrom, A G Robertson, E P Rogan, L P Ross, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, E W Sunderland, K T Tinkler, A Trethowan, C A Walker, R Walker, J W Waters, R L Waters, G R Webb and M Williams.

On 1 September members lunched at Hancock's Theatre Restaurant and were enjoyably entertained by Judith Durham. At the September meeting the main speaker was Alan Dearn, editor of Special Supplements appearing in the Sun News Pictorial and the Melbourne Herald. Alan valiantly rose from his sickbed to deliver his address but was unable to get far into his interesting talk about his place in the Murdoch empire before being overtaken by the dreaded 'lurgie'.

The function on 6 October was a visit to Fibre-makers, Bayswater and proved a great success. At the October meeting Jack McMillan accepted the position of auditor, Ray Bathols volunteered to be almoner and Don Hensher was co-opted to the committee. Sixty members attended that meeting and adopted the Club's Constitution which allowed incorporation to proceed. Members heard Rob Adams, manager of Urban Design Architecture for Melbourne City Council, discuss the options for the Regent and City Square development. His presentation

indicated the difficulties and opportunities facing his team, and a slide of his preferred solution gave an insight into the potential for making the heart of our City a pacemaker, if not a world-beater.

On 8 October 1987 a Founding Meeting of Cheltenham Probus Club was held and in November Frank Maher, who had played an important part in the development of the new Cheltenham Club, transferred there from Beaumaris. Resignations were received from Frank, George Kidman, Fred Bowles and several other members left Beaumaris to join the Cheltenham 'offshoot' – reducing numbers to 97 members. Cliff McDonald withdrew from committee for health reasons and John Crozier was asked to be Assistant Functions Director.

Hugh Stevens reported,

*"Fred Biencourt's November address was a 'shear' delight. He pulled the wool over our ears about our ride on the sheep's back. His infectious enthusiasm and deep knowledge of the Wool Industry brought him close to Nixon's philosophy: 'If you have them by the bales, their hearts and minds will follow.'"*

The theatre outing to see *'Two and Two make Sex'* on 27 November was a therapeutic success.

*'Parkdale's plush parterre proffered piquant, post-prandial production. Peeper-popping players pranced promiscuously; profuse, perty provocative patter prompting protracted Probian plaudits. Patrons' pekoe-parched palates placated, pleasurable parley preceded parting.'*  
[Said rep-p-p-p-p-porter Hugh!]

There was no ordinary meeting in December and the year finished with a Christmas Ladies' Day smorgasbord lunch at the RSL on 15 December. The first of many thoroughly enjoyable annual 'mixed' luncheons.

#### *So ended 1987*

The Club's first meeting for 1988 was on 16 February. Des Stroud of RMIT spoke about the 1987 Lasseter's Lost Reef Expedition; one of the world's few remaining great stories of intrigue, courage and fabulous riches. The Expedition covered 4 States and 9,000 km in its 4-week adventure, involving 29 experts and Army engineers. The project cost \$0.5m and raised worldwide interest. Plans were then in hand for a follow-up venture and sponsors, volunteers, PR consultants, legal personnel, helicopter expertise and fuel suppliers were being sought.

Members learned of the deaths of members Cliff McDonald, Les Reynolds and Noel Jager-Glover.

Beaumaris golfing Probian (with a few non-players thrown in) enjoyed fun and games at Cranbourne on 8 March.

The AGM, held 15 March, resulted in several changes to the management of the Club. President Bill Hogarth, Vice-President Jack Montgomery, Secretary/Editor Hugh Stevens, Treasurer John Charlesworth, Functions Director John Crozier, Committeemen: George Houl, Don Hensher. Auditor Jack Montgomery.

Our good friend Vic Proposch earned our gratitude after the AGM for his fine illustrated address on the history of Ancient Egypt. As was the custom at the time Vic was presented with two wine glasses as a memento.

### ***The Club's new lectern christened***

At the 19 April meeting, Vice-President Jack Montgomery was thanked for the magnificent lectern which he commissioned and donated to the Club in time for the April meeting. Jack's generosity and the craftsmanship of the piece complemented the quality of the speakers who have used it ever since. The lectern was christened by Sir Rupert Hamer, whose talk on the Constitutional Reform Commission was most enlightening. The probing questions from the floor showed that members are not just pretty faces, too. 14 members stayed to lunch.

News was received of Allan Love's death. Jack Montgomery gave notice of motion for 17 May of his proposition that: "*The name of the Club be changed to the Probus Club of Beaumaris.*"

Tickets for "*A Pack of Lies*" at Parkdale Theatre were sold at the meeting and Bill Hogarth proposed a picnic raceday at Mornington on Wednesday 6 April in conjunction with Bentleigh, Cheltenham and Moorabbin. Les Hall allowed himself to be co-opted onto the Committee as Assistant Functions Director. Members were advised of the death of Bill Blackett-Smith.

The outing to Point Cook RAAF Museum on 3 May was a great success. Bittersweet memories were evoked by the collection, so lovingly preserved by so few. And in Williamstown, after a counter lunch at pre-war prices, Providence played a wild card. The prearranged guide did not materialise, but lo and behold, from amid the present brethren, up jumped Bruce McAllister. He and Nan grew up 'on the other side' and just happened to have the relevant literature with them. Bruce, the consummate cicerone, took the microphone in hand and gave a travelling commentary which would have warmed the cockles of "William's" heart.

Fifty-two members and 5 guests attended 17 May meeting, President Bill inducted six new members: Bruce Beaver, Norm Gardner, Bill Johnson, Pat Mahon, Trevor Richards and Jack Warburton. Resignations of L Jackson, R Fox and R Walker were confirmed.

Geoff Coughlin and Alex Steinfort accepted the task of assistants to Almoner Ray Bathols. Doug Payne agreed to assist Meeting Coordinator George Houl and Max Parsons agreed to act as assistant Treasurer to John Charlesworth.

The address by Tom Sheehy was a great success as members heard how Tommy Bent gave agriculture, economics, transport and politics a gentle nudge in a tender spot.

The outing on 8 June was memorable. First came an absorbing tour of the cultural heart of the City which is truly '*the state of the art centre for the art of the State*'. Then it was on to Parliament House for a change of style but equal grace. The proportions and craftsmanship of the Council Chamber need to be seen to be appreciated, so if you have not seen it lately, do yourself the favour of a visit.

On Monday 20 June a casual basket-lunch cinema function was held at Brighton Bay Twin Cinema – the film was '*Hope and Glory*'.

At the 21 June meeting, Norman Gardner (Don Hensher), Gordon Armstrong (Kevin Kruse), Geoff Kirton (Loren Ross) and Mac Crane (Hugh Gowers) were inducted.

### ***Memorable address by 'Weary' Dunlop***

The June main address was delivered by Sir Edward Dunlop – he spoke about the medical foundation he had recently set up. The standing ovation to Weary was an indication of the charisma of the man. We who have so much more to be humble about recognise that such wisdom, skill, drive and forgiveness make an indomitable combination.

Ron Catt was inducted at the June meeting.

Fifty-five members and six guests attended the meeting on 19 July. New members Geoff Mason and Wally Elischer were inducted. The guest speaker was Eddie Ratcliffe who delivered an interesting talk about his wartime experiences as a pilot dropping agents behind Japanese lines in Burma, Thailand and Laos. The death of committeeman Doug Payne saddened the members.

On Tuesday 2 August, the outing by 19 members for a guided inspection of the Nissan plant at Clayton was quite an eye-opener for most, and it was very obvious that they all mean business. Secretary Hugh described it this way –

*There's a rittle bit of Nippon  
to the east of Crayton Load,  
Where they tly to impress the Aussie battler  
who'd lather stick with Ford.  
They want to dlive a point home  
in aggressive market mode:-  
Rasers may be sharp but the power of the yen  
is mightier than the sword.*

The meeting of 16 August was announced under the headline of Probus Club of Beaumaris Inc. The Club was now incorporated. Less memorable at the time but familiar to members to this day – was the agreement that a sub-committee be formed to purchase a trouble-free amplification set. At the committee meeting Al Gasson agreed to act as replacement for Doug Payne.

The president inducted two new members – Bob Matthews and Fen Gerrand. The guest speaker for August was practising solicitor, Jim McCarthy – the topic of his address was “*Problems of the Criminal Justice System*”. Jim, a member of the Crimes Compensation Tribunal, delivered an interesting talk about life behind the scenes in the courts of law in Melbourne.

### **Club's table plaque mounted**

President Bill had the Club's table plaque cast and mounted as a token of his belief in the ideals of Probus and lovingly coloured the logo himself. He was warmly thanked by the members. Until this time the Club had been presenting guest speakers with a pair of wine glasses bearing the Probus logo. The Committee decided that it would be fitting to order some more, decorated with the Club name. At the same time a couple of dozen carafes similarly embellished were ordered, so that the speaker could choose either carafe or glasses.

Our speaker on 20 September was the recently retired Senior Executive Engineer of the Underground Loop. Richard Wegener's address was much appreciated by all who heard it. It must be a great satisfaction to him to know that he was so deeply involved with the Loop, which has given the City's heart a timely bypass. Our newsletter editor thought it was a half a gigabuck very well spent!

### **Coal Creek and the pioneers**

On Wednesday 5 October the day trip was to Coal Creek Historical Park, Korumburra. Hugh described it this way,

*“The trip was enjoyed by the select band of thirty who took a quantum leap into the past, and came away grateful for the date on their birth certificate. What would those sombre faces in the sepia photos have thought of the direct telecast of the Olympics? They'd probably imagine that all those records were broken because the runners were anxious to get the race finished before the next commercial break. Anna Bullock-Steerhide's grandmama wouldn't have been found in such compromising places, either. And the pine ears had more sense than to throw cocktail parties in the streets.”*

Once again we turn to Hugh's description of Bob Cooper's talk at the October meeting.

*“It was a revelation to most of us. His tunneling group, which is working round the clock to complete the Western Trunk Sewer within the next five years, is taking the long and winding road to Werribee. The details of the task went a long way to explaining the size of our MMBW rate bills – the thought of an MCG-ful of blue-stone chips so that we can have a sedentary, push-button society is a sobering thought. But it would not be the first time that hard rock has filled the arena. The good news is that the equipment will be much sought after when the job is finished.”*

John Charlesworth was obliged to tender his resignation as Treasurer due to ill health and later Max Parsons was appointed Club Treasurer. Jack Yelland and Bill Philp were inducted into the Club.

John Crozier was congratulated on his choice of Tahbilk and Mitchelton as the venue for November's outing. *“The stir of spring on Goulburn's bed, the light blue haze of a welcome lunch; the tannic cool of oak-bound red, the laughter of a mellow bunch”* – so sang our newsletter scribe.

David Craven's address to the November meeting was much appreciated. He spoke about the small army of S E S volunteers ready to pay for the privilege of helping their fellow-person in times of stress. The year 1988 ended with the Christmas lunch at the RSL on Monday 12 December. By popular demand (at this end) George Hoult returned from the Philippines just in time to host the event again.

Members listed at the end of 1988 were: —

A R Allan, G C Appleby, L G Armstrong, A B Avery, R G Bathols, B R Beaver, F K Beyer, F Bien-court, J Brimage, E Buck, E J Burgessson, S J Burke, F Burrows, E J Carruthers, R M Catt, L E Champion, J H Charlesworth, N K Christie, G C Coughlin, N W Crane, J H Crozier, S W Dacy, M J Davidson, E K Dawson, J E D'Helin, J Doeg, R G Donovan, G Dunscombe, J W Elischer, P J Epstein, L G Fox, J N Gardner, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, E J Glenn, C Gloe, H F Gowers, J Groves, L Hall, B Hambleton, M Hancock, B W Hart, R L Hart, D Hensher, W R Hogarth, G Hoult, A E Jackson, W H Johnson, G W Kirton, J Knott, H K Kruse, R H Laughlin, P J Mahon, G H Mason, A H Matthew, R S Matthews, W Maunder, B McAllister, I McDonald, J McMillan, J A Montgomery, S W Myring, J G Neaves, J Page, M C Parsons, E T Payne, W C Philp, L M Powell, V A Proposch, J A Reith, R Relf, K C Reynolds, T F Richards, G Ristrom, A G Robertson, E P Rogan, L P Ross, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, E W Sunderland, K T Tinkler, C A Walker, J D Warburton, J W Waters, R L Waters, R G Webb, M Williams, J B Yelland.



### *In 1989 the Club was well-established*

The old year went out with the expected conviviality. George Hoults's team made the Christmas lunch a very festive occasion. There was no meeting in January but sixty-eight members and ladies broke the ice by going to see Torvill and Dean on 12 February at the Tennis Centre.

Five members were welcomed at the 21 February meeting: Bill Varcoe (Wally Elischer), Andrew Watson (Hugh Stevens), Bill Allen (Graham Dunscombe), Ian Carne (Robby Robinson) and John Hamann (Alan Reith). There was then room for another ten or so to bring the strength up to the hundred mark. Gordon Appleby agreed to step into the breach as Assistant Treasurer and the meeting approved a \$5 increase in the annual sub to \$25.

The talk by Ralph Butcher was very well received. Ralph talked about the life and times of his father, Ben, who served as a missionary in Papua from 1912 until WWII. Hugh Stevens reported:

*"His father, Ben, must have been one of those larger-than-life missionaries who helped to keep so much of the map pink in the days when a new guinea was as good as an old one. Ben knew that his two predecessors had been eaten, and yet he was willing to take the message to the headhunters who had made both ends meat. Anyone who could build a 40-foot motor launch from jungle timber deserves a respected place in history, and Ralph helped to keep that story alive. It is not clear whether the natives gave up cannibalism, but at least they say grace now."*

On Tuesday 14 March, 70 stalwarts made the trip to Point Nepean National Park. Once again Hugh described the trip which required a coach plus a small bus to accommodate the number attending.

*"The favoured forty-eight pampered their silvertails in contoured recliners while they were whisked along in whisper-quiet elegance. The lesser mortals, by cruel contrast, endured the rigours of vinyl benches and spartan coachwork - when the revolution comes the big wheels will be rolled!"*

*"At the defences we saw why Melburnians could sleep easy in their beds while wars and rumours of wars came and went. Rust had ensured that the disappearing gun met the maker's specification and the maze of expensive tunnels was a mute memorial to man's instinct for self-preservation (c.f. "The Source" by James Michener). It's easy to be cynical about such labours, but fortifications are a bit like All Bran — the more you have the less you need."*

The minutes of 21 March noted that the only nominations for the new committee were the official candidates and financial members duly approved: Jack Montgomery (President); George Hoults (Vice-President); Hugh Stevens (Secretary), Don Hensher (Assistant Secretary & Calligrapher) [Don Hensher as calligrapher inscribed name badges for members and partners]; Max Parsons (Treasurer), Gordon Appleby (Assistant Treasurer); Les Hall (Functions Director), John Crozier (Assistant Functions Director); Al Gasson (meeting Co-ordinator) and Hugh Gowers (Assistant Meeting Co-ordinator).

Bill Hogarth was congratulated for his term as President. His relaxed and congenial authority had ensured the Club's continued prosperity and reputation. New members were welcomed — David O'Loughlin, Mervyn Berry, Bob Crawford, Bob Elliott, Snow Leeks, Cliff Thomas, Harold Warren, Bill Gregory and George Royston.

The main speaker at the March meeting was Claus Gloe who spoke about his experiences in Thailand. He discussed the development of Thailand's brown coal deposits. As our reporter said, *"It must be a source of great satisfaction to Claus knowing that he played an important part as consultant geologist to the scheme which has forged such strong regional 'Thais'. Even their backswings are generating more power, thanks to Claus."*

A proposed trip to Canberra was cancelled due to lack of numbers. Treasurer Max and his wife Linda headed off on a world trip and Gordon Appleby took over the finances for three months.

At the 18 April meeting the keynote speaker Ron Austin, author of *The White Ghurkas*, was well received by the largest meeting of the Club so far. Ron spoke about the tragic chapter of events which had come to be known as Gallipoli - the bold gesture, the heroism of the lowly, the ineptitude of the mighty, the lost opportunities and the humiliation of defeat. But most of all, the lesson was of the futility of conflict, the poignancy of wasted youth and the grandeur of reconciliation.

Harold Warren, Bill Roberts, Bob Davey, Bill Shepherd, Jack Sercombe and Frank Elson were welcomed to the Club.

On Monday 8 May the outing was a trip on the Harbour Trust launch to view the Melbourne docks. An enthusiastic guide pointed out the many splendours of the largest port in the Southern Hemisphere. In the newsletter Hugh commented,

*"The overwhelming impression was of inactivity and yet we were assured that the volume of trade is greater than ever. This must be where invisible exports are handled by quiet achievers."*

*The ghost of Batman would agree that Victoria Dock is a good place for a village if we are awarded the 1996 Olympics, but much cleaner water will have to flow under the bridge by then."*

On Tuesday 16 May the meeting was addressed in a relaxed and light-hearted manner by John McDermott on the topic of 'Measuring the Upper Air.' John traced the evolution of techniques to measure the upper air, from kites in the twenties to radar reflective sondes which now detail velocity, direction, temperature and humidity.

George Simpson (Fen Gerrard), Fred Barry-Brown (George Ristrom), Ray Trimmer (Kevin Kruse) and Maurie Etccl (Don Hensher) were inducted into the Club and members learnt of the death of Bill Philp.

The 45th anniversary of D-Day was celebrated with an outing to the Wallace cheesery. Hugh described the pre-luncheon tasting,

*"We regaled ourselves with honey, wine, cheese and chat until it was time to settle into our customary genteel feeding frenzy."*

Norman Geschke's address on 20 June lived up to the great expectations of everyone present. The State Ombudsman proved to be a man of wit, compassion and stature. How refreshing it was to learn that the qualifications needed by an Ombudsman are not the esoteric niceties of law but common sense and grace.

The following new friends were welcomed to the Club on June 20:- John Fagan (Don Hensher), Tom Brown (Jack Montgomery) Bert Rogers (Jim Knott) Jack Hillman (Ray Bathols), Bob Taylor (James Waters) and Jim Mason (Hugh Stevens).

#### ***Ladies welcomed to 'mixed' meeting***

The meeting on 18 July was a departure from the norm. Members were invited to bring along their ladies at 10 am, join the meeting, hear a talk by Clive Canning about his adventures flying a home-made plane then stay for a three-course lunch and midyear festivities. Those staying for lunch pre-paid \$15 per head. As Hugh reported later:

*"The July meeting was a tribute to President Jack's [Montgomery] vision of Probian delight - fellowship, discovery and festivity. Clive Canning amazed us with his tale of skill and high adventure, building such a beautiful plane and flying it to England and back.*

*"How a man could overcome the odds imposed by physics, prognostics, politics and tropics was a mystery to us lesser mortals. How he could remain so modest after such an achievement was an inspiration to us all.*

*"Nello excelled himself to provide a lunch worthy of the occasion and the wine flowed like water off a duck's back. Then there was the fun of solving the pictorial song titles which Dorothy Hoult had so painstakingly prepared. Dorothy Williams had the best eye for music and was the winner with a near perfect score. It looks as if the President has set a far-sighted precedent and we are very grateful for his presbyopia."*

August '89 started with a tour that was not without its problems as our editor wrote in the newsletter:

*"On the second of August an intrepid bunch embarked on a mystery tour of Victoria's vestigial volcanoes. After a copious lunch at Macedon, the travellers set out for Melbourne unaware that a wicked fairy had reversed the polarity of their compass. The long day's journey into night via Ballarat ended in good spirits, but the story goes that when the driver was sweeping out the coach the next morning he found several pumpkin seeds under the back seat."*

#### ***Projection Screen installed***

After obtaining approval from the RSL the Club committee ordered an Australux roller screen to be permanently installed for slides and overhead projections. Members at the 15 August meeting agreed that it was a great improvement and \$500 well spent. It was decided to obtain quotes on curtains and blinds for the doors to further improve visual presentations.

Keith Anderson (Cliff Thomas), Eric Field (Bob Crawford), John Nolan (Alex Steinfort), Darrell Cranch (Jack Montgomery), Howard Dunn (James Waters), Colin Meade and John Eden were inducted.

George Hoult spoke on the topic of his experiences as resident advisor to the Indonesian Government in matters of technical education. He told how the imperial Dutch had kept the huge populace unschooled as a matter of policy, how the Swiss had tried but failed to graft western technical training onto a recently independent nation and how Aussies had had a measure of success in breathing life into the dormant monster to our north. The map and slides gave a clear impression of the scale of the problem, the financial constraints and the cultural resistance to be overcome.

The September outing was to the Police Academy and Hugh reported it in the newsletter thus:

*"On 4 September forty-eight Clubmen and their ladies boarded a coach for the short trip to Mount Waverley where they saw and heard what it takes to impart a little muscular sensitivity to the long arm of the law. Everyone was very impressed with the magnificent chapel and the*

facilities for academic and athletic pursuits, all agreed that their complex had no hint of inferiority. The only trouble was that even the Chief Superintendent looked so young.

"Then it was once more aboard the mighty Merc for a leisurely meander through the Dandenongs where the rhodies and jonquils were immodestly bathing in the spring sunshine. Soon we glimpsed the Sherbrooke Celeste, venue for the festive chomp. But the gateway was the eye of a needle and the Merc was a pregnant camel. Jim the driver, nay, captain, coaxed and caressed, to'd and fro'd from lock to lock till cheers announced that the tail had cleared the pillars of rock with a hair's breadth to spare on either flank.

"After a little preprandial society we settled to a welcome lunch. A small flock of lambs had paid the ultimate price on the rack that we might swage our appetite, and their sacrifice was justified by the commendations on their tender and reasonable nature. The homeward journey was prefaced by a repetition of the reciprocating manoeuvre to negotiate the exit without loss of face or Duco and the bonhomie was enhanced by the afterglow that comes from carafes."

On Tuesday 19 September Nick Caris (Pat Mahon) and Ken Dobson (Bill Hogarth) were welcomed to the Club and Mayer Page's talk was about the Bicentennial Yacht Race around Australia – Hugh said:

"Mayer Page amused and enlightened us with his account of the round Australia yacht race. He and his erstwhile friend took a fifty footer designed for a complement of ten from Sydney to Sydney via Cairns, Darwin, Broome, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Hobart, a feat which taxed the Australian Pacific and its crew. This modern mariner showed that the spirit of adventure is alive and well, even though one of the contestants was swept to his death on the first night out.

"Despite being storm-tossed and becalmed, fatigued and bored, chilled and almost incinerated by an exploding gas cylinder Mayer arrived third in his class and was amazed to find that after fifty-two days of competition all the finishers were within eyeshot. But the cabined, cribbed confinement took its toll on the relationship of skipper and crew and the next time he will not sail with Albert Ross."

The Committee requested that nametags and pins be worn to all meetings and decided to encourage compliance with this entreaty by providing the host of the day with a slotted tin. It was suggested that

"this blatant revenue-raising exercise could only be circumvented by a timely phone call to the Secretary ordering a new tag or pin or alternatively to come convincingly disguised as somebody else".

### ***It's Curtains for the RSL***

Al Gasson announced that the Club had the good fortune to have suitable curtains donated and George Hoult accepted the task of installing them.

"On 4 October thirty-eight thrill-seekers travelled through time and space to the Ballarat of the eighteen fifties when competition was in tents. On arrival they were treated to a conducted tour of the sanitised mine. With benefit of headroom, dry feet, electric lighting and ventilation they saw a convincing reconstruction of a day in the life of a gold miner one hundred and thirty years ago. The thought of sixty hour weeks kneeling with pick in hand, the constant fear of rockfall and, worst, twenty-minute lunch breaks was enough to stir the gastric juices of those who had not had a bite in seventy odd miles.

"So it was the 'salivation army' which emerged in search of sustenance on the dusty streets of Sovereign Hill. Social Darwinism came into play, guiding nature's gentlefolk into the shingles bar of the timber hostelry, while the also rans settled for a humble 'pine source' gazing at the soup herb gardens of the simple cottagers."

### ***Humour from the Magistrate's court***

On 17 October Andrew Watson's whimsical address was received with great enthusiasm by a packed house. Andy is living proof that justice is an acquired commodity and his tales of brushes with authority in three continents were an object lesson. He did not say that he is a trained volunteer worker at the Magistrates' Court, helping those less fortunate than himself to cope with the rigours of being found wanting in social skills. The Club is lucky to have as members people of such wide and deep experience who can be called on to inform and amuse.

President Jack Montgomery inducted Ralph Butcher and Barrie Reaby and 35 members stayed for lunch after the meeting. Samples of Probus ties were on display and could be ordered @ \$15 in any colour desired so long as it was blue, maroon or brown.

"The morning of November 8 saw ninety-eight conspicuous consumers surge onto the convoy heading for the Flinders Naval Depot. They were conducted on a tour of the installation and admired the gardens, which were ship shape, but the buildings could have done with a touch of the tarbrush. The museum was quite a revelation with its exhibits dating back to the time when Victoria had its own navy.

*"The workmanship in the fittings of HMVS Cerberus was a reminder of what is lacking in these functional days and the weaponry was testimony to the effort and money our species has always poured into the task of perforating our fellow man.*

*"Then it was on to the Westernport Hotel where all got stuck into the complimentary bottle of Hastings and a well presented lunch for \$11 per head. If the decibels were any guide to the level of enjoyment then everyone must have had a ball."*

### A pretty cool talk

At the 21 November meeting Greg Hoffman and Ken Telford told the fascinating story of how Australian Construction Services prefabricate, transport and install accommodation modules for use in the Antarctic. The slides and commentary gave a clear insight into the problems of this specialist field of engineering and it is a tribute to the skill of such people as Greg and Ken that our personnel further down under have somewhere snug to play ice pie through the polar night.

A quote for \$199 for installation of curtains on suitable track was accepted and a vote of thanks was made to Bill

Hogarth for the gift of a magnificent projector stand. It was christened at the November meeting.

*"The Christmas lunch on 12 December [\$16 a head] was a great success, thanks to Nello's way with chooks and George Hault's way with cooks. Vic Proposch dispensed resounding justice to several favourite melodies accompanied by Nell Eaton on the piano, then Clarrie Mahlook amused the guests with his comic songs and patter. Those who came to scoff remained to play. But oh what a delight was Shirley Hart's pictorial record of our outings; the photos taken on the visit to the docks were especially striking because nobody moved. Thanks, everyone, for making the occasion so memorable."*

Most of the Club's newly introduced ties were snapped up at \$15 – the maroon ones being the slowest. Club annual subs remained at \$25 [inc morning tea] for the coming year.

*"On the morning of 7 February a coachload of genial gentlefolk set out on the scenic route Beaumaris to Beaumaris via Healesville, Marysville and Warburton, taking in Steavenson's Falls and Lake mountain. The weather was sunny but cool, the lunch at Marysville Hotel leisurely, copious and good in parts, the company decorous and cordial, the vista proudly vertical. In short, adequate reason to be grateful for the simple joys of our autumn."*

The first meeting of 1990 was held on 20 February and fortunately the committee agreed with the treasurer to withdraw \$1500 then on deposit with Pyramid Society [later they went broke] and deposit same with Bank of Melbourne.

Norman Huon, the Executive Director of the Forest Industries Association, was the main speaker at the February meeting and he spoke of how he saw his organization as having a key role in conservation by applying the policy of planned exploitation of a renewable resource.

He pointed out that by working on a cycle of about a century the industry could provide a much valued building material

at far less cost in energy and pollution than is the case with alternatives such as plastics, metal, brick or concrete. He also indicated that judicious culling of mature timber was advantageous to the environment because the young replacements absorbed far more carbon dioxide than aged trees.

After the meeting 35 members stayed for lunch.

On 6 March a small but great bunch of golfers went down to beat about the bush at Lang Lang. With admirable self denial Cliff Thomas organized but did not participate in a competition for both genders. As if to prove that good things come in pairs, Joyce Anderson and Margaret Hamann shared the ladies' prize.

### 1989 ended with the following names on the members list.

A R Allan, K J Anderson, G C Appleby, L G Armstrong, A B Avery, F W Barry-Brown, R G Bathols, C M Berry, F K Beyer, F Biencourt, J Brimage, T F Brown, J E Burgesson, F Burrows, R D Butcher, N Caris, I T Carne, E J Carruthers, R M Catt, L E Champion, J H Charlesworth, N K Christie, D O Cranch, N W Crane, R J Crawford, J H Crozier, R Davey, M J Davidson, E K Dawson, J E D'Helin, K E Dobson, J Doeg, R G Donovan, H J Dunn, G Dunscombe, J B Eden, J W Elischer, R H Elliott, F S Elson, P J Epstein, M W Etccl, J C Fagan, E G Field, L G Fox, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, E J Glenn, C S Gloe, H F Gowers, R H Gregory, L Hall, J B Hamann, B Hambleton, M Hancock, B W Hart, R L Hart, D Hensher, J C Hillman, W R Hogarth, G Hault, A E Jackson, W H Johnson, D C Keating, G W Kirton, J Knott, H K Kruse, R H Laughlin, L Leeks, P J Mahon, G H Mason, J F Mason, R S Matthews, W M Maunder, B McAllister, I McDonald, J McMillan, C R Meade, J A Montgomery, J Nolan, D T O'Loughlin, M C Parsons, L M Powell, V A Proposch, B E Reaby, J A Reith, R Relf, K C Reynolds, T F Richards, G Ristrom, W D Roberts, A G Robertson, E P Rogan, B Rogers, L P Ross, G W Royston, W Shepherd, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, E W Sunderland, R J Taylor, C M Thomas, K T Tinkler, R B Trimmer, S F Varcoe, C A Walker, J E Wallace, J D Warburton, H S Warren, J W Waters, R L Waters, A J Watson, R G Webb, M Williams and J B Yelland.

Geoff Kirton and David O'Loughlin shared the men's trophy with 20 Stableford points each in nine holes. Geoff was also nearest the pin. Bob Matthews won the longest drive.

The 20 March meeting was addressed by member Doug Keating. Doug's long and distinguished career with the PMG and Telecom spanned the period when phones metamorphosed from the basic wall-mounted hardwire job with a crank handle for making the operator drop a stitch into the cellular pocket number with ISD and fax facilities. Doug regaled the members with anecdotes and his relaxed style ensured a warm reception. A firm believer in the efficiency of Telecom as an instrument for public benefit, he provided figures to support his claim that telephonically speaking Australia is the lucky country.

The members learned of the deaths of Jack D'Helin and George Simpson.

### *Les Hall produced special outings*

Hugh, ever grateful to functions co-ordinator Les Hall, said this about the April outing:

*"On 4 April an expectation of Probonauts boarded a bus for a mystery tour on the bucolic byways of Gippsland in search of the elusive whatsname. We resisted the temptation to stop at the Pakenham Inn because it sounded pretty crowded, we expected morning tea when we drew in to Drouin but kept on rolling till Warragul, where we disembarked for a hands-on spin of the water cycle. Then came a climb up the Strezleckis, with scenery from horizon to horizon and sunshine to boot.*

*"At Mirboo North we were told that we had reached our secret goal and a young local entrepreneur gave us a guided tour of the township. He also turned out to be a partner in the recently founded Grand Ridge Brewery where we stayed for a passable lunch and a glass of the Mirbootique beer, which was available in strengths up to 8.5% alcohol. After lunch there was a short course in the principles and practice of the brewer's art followed by a meander homeward. A splendid way to spend a golden day of Indian summer."*

On 20 April 1990 the AGM went off without a hitch the new committee being as follows:

President - George Hault; V/P - Bruce McAllister;  
Sec/editor - Hugh Stevens; Assist - Don Hensher;  
Treasurer - Max Parsons; Assist - Gordon Appleby;  
Functions co-ord - Les Hall; Assist - Cliff Thomas;  
Meeting co-ord - Al Gasson; Assist - Hugh Gowers;  
Almoner - Ray Bathols; Assist - Alex Steinfort;  
Ex-officio - Jack Montgomery; Auditor - Colin Meade  
(replacing Jack McMillan who had resigned from the Club).

Sixty-eight members at the AGM (20 April) meeting were addressed by Simon Watts on the art and science of photography. First there was a short history of the camera; Simon summoned up images of the cumbersome prototype with its polished rosewood, burnished brass, hand ground lens and plates of glass — made by Victorian artisans for the gentlefolk who could afford to dabble in the potting shed after a few rounds of croquet and/or cucumber sandwiches. Then he moved down the years to the compact user-friendly single lens reflex with its automatic focusing and foolproof exposure, motorised wind-on and fill-in flash which relieves the modern photographer of all the technical burdens but leaves him with the perennial problem of how to compose a picture which merits a second glance. Simon screened a series of demonstration slides which illustrated clearly whether the picture or its author deserved to be shot. And they all underlined the aesthetic rules which the Greeks used to preach two thousand years before Louis Daguerre stumbled upon silver iodide.

Hugh joined the outing on May 2 and later had this to say:

*"A groovy group of grizzlepates zoomed up the Hume to sample the delights of the Seven Creeks Estate. The huge shearing shed and appurtenances were originally situated further inland and were in use until the fifties. They were dismantled and brought down to Euroa where they were restored as a tourist attraction when the Victorian Government suffered a paroxysm of entrepreneurial prodigality. The project is now privately owned and expecting a by-pass operation to restore its viability. We were encouraged to wander in wide eyed wonder through the temple of type 'A' Australiana, the comeliness of whose artifacts was marginally impaired by the incongruity of the continent of their conception and the island of their birth. But we did our devotions at the shrine to the Muse of the plastic arts while the proprietors cooked up a storm in the kitchen and their efforts deserved a creditable 7.2 on the Beaufort scale.*

*"The more compassionate members of the party made a liberal contribution to John Elliott's sinking fund and after lunch the in-house shearer treated us to a demonstration of how to disrobe a catatonic wether while an accomplice provided angular momentum to the wide comb handpiece, coming perilously close to indecent exposure and unauthorised rabbinical practice. Then the resident potter conjured handfuls of clay into coffee mugs which sprang like time lapse stalagmites from the wheel."*

The 15 May meeting was addressed by John Caulfield from OTC who gave everyone a good insight into the workings of our international telecommunications network. The theme was in harmony with several presented lately, emphasising the dramatic advances which technology has brought about since the first phone call to London in 1930. The going rate per minute at that time was one and a half weeks average income, whereas today one can direct dial via one of the 120,000 channels of intelsat at a cost of nine minute's average earnings. And that is just a start, for the new laser driven fibre optic cables will soon deliver so much data that we'll be able to watch each other as a means of saving money. But nature has a way of cutting us down to size, and satellites slowly drift out of our most preferred orbit as they wave farewell with an entropic smirk to mice and men.

Four new friends who had graced the waiting list with patience were welcomed: Keith Deutsher, Stan Carpenter, Bruce Gotz and Laurie Baster.

Once again we borrow from Hugh's newsletter —

*"On the forty-sixth anniversary of D-Day a heuristic horde of hardcore hedonists set off for a pilgrimage to the temple of mammon. The note printing branch of the Reserve Bank is at Craigieburn, and the coach meandered through parts of our Metropolis rarely glimpsed by genteel eye. Our attention was drawn to the captivating features of the new Remand Centre, which took longer to consummate than the Taj Mahal, thanks to the BLF. They regularly withdrew their members at the crucial moment until Norm was excommunicated for the wanton practice of concretus interruptus.*

*"The massive coach set us down at the perimeter of the impregnable installation where we were met by a keen guide who led us through a splendid native garden into the hushed inner sanctum where the sweat of brow and swink of brain are crystallized and transmuted into negotiable instruments of walletable proportions. The upper concourse was the setting for a static display of notable designs past and present and it afforded a birdseye view of the mighty Intaglio at work. We witnessed the printing of \$50 notes, 32 per sheet, two sheets per second as they passed in a blurred torrent of reseda; and if it worked round the clock for two years and eleven months it would print our national debt — but only on one side of the paper.*

*"From there it was on to the Goonawarra Winery at Sunbury for a taste of spatlese, an introductory talk by the hostess and a delightful lunch of roast lamb and apple pie. It seems that*

*Goonawarra is the aboriginal word for 'the resting place of the black swan', not to be confused with Coonawarra, which means 'honeysuckle'. Must have caused headaches for the bush telegraph Interflora."*

### **Members are popular speakers**

Despite the chilly weather, seventy-eight members attended the meeting on 19 June and they were invited to join Bern Hart and picture a voyage on the tracks broad and narrow through the railway systems of Europe. In the next newsletter Hugh had many reaching for the dictionary to check on some of his words —

*"Bern claims not to be a 'puff puff buff', but the lilt of his voice and the glint of his eye betrayed more than a passing fancy for the tame monsters wrought of steel and wreathed in steam. We were taken back to the days when men could wager on a race between the horse and its coal-fired adversary, when thrill-seekers risked life, limb and dough on a few circuits of the cast iron plateway in a fenced enclosure. Bern showed us the museums where a dynasty of daedal dinosaurs stave off decay, embalmed in gleaming enamel and polished with soft oily rag, their proud names redolent of the Boys' Own and featured in everybody's favourite set of cigarette cards.*

*"We were escorted up the steep and narrow Ffestiniog track to the slaty baldness of Snowdon; down the continuous rails of the TGV in a ballistic blur from Paris to Lyon; up to the rarefied air of Switzerland, where natural selection and national sentiment have not favoured the stilted textacoot or the lesser spotted razorbill which plague our network; then over the borders into Tyrolean Italy and Austria to rejoice in the bedizened rusticity of stock and station. A comfortable morning's vicarious travel in good company, free of care and free of charge — thanks to Bern."*

New members Doug Crook, Keith Holdsworth and Alan Penaluna were welcomed into the Club.

The Committee decided to follow a similar format to the previous year's President's luncheon in July so members and ladies assembled at 10.30 am to hear an address by Shirley Murray on the topic 'That's Entertainment'. Morning tea or coffee was not served to enable the dining tables to be set. Hugh described the function in this way:

*"Our presidential luncheon with the ladies was the sole event in an otherwise mumpish July. An eager assembly gathered to hear Shirley Murray speak on the broad topic of entertainment.*

We learned that Shirley is gradually coming to terms with her experience as a face in the crowd when Hollywood came to Melbourne in 1959. She came close enough to Gregory Peck and Ava Gardner to give her a life-long interest in showbiz and she has been immortalized in celluloid as a youthful onlooker in a changing world. Another pebble on the beach was Fred Astaire, whose talents sent Shirley into raptures. Nobody has ever accused Fred of having two left feet, but some uncharitable critics have suggested that his ambidexterity did not reach his tonsils and his detractors implied that his acting was subject to patches of dry rot. We are grateful to Shirley for allowing us inside her storehouse of memories.

"After the guest speaker we mingled meaningfully for a few minutes before Nello produced his customary culinary triumph. After lunch we tackled the cryptic clues to Australian place names which Dorothy and George Hoult had so cunningly contrived. There was a trifecta of smarty-pants who tied with an almost perfect score and Bruce McAllister, being an almost perfect gentleman, allowed Joan Baster and June Reith to bag both bottles of bubbly which had been provided in case of a tie. His rain check will be honoured when he returns from the Sunshine State."

On the first day of August a small group boarded the coach and were (as newsman Hugh reported) :

".... whisked over Westgate to Williamstown and a modicum of *deja-vu*, for this was a case of Billsville revisited to those of us who had been on a couple of earlier trips to the sunset side of the City. We saw the newly restored tower where, in days of yore, a falling ball meant that hands could change watches and vice versa. There was a leisurely meander through the stately vistas where the young Ray Bathols and Bruce McAllister crept with their shining morning faces like snails unwillingly to school, and there was the railway reliquary where the restored hulks jostle for the attention of the incommutable ticket holder. Then back to South Melbourne for a counter lunch at which sternutation was counter-indicated. The Bay and Boundary is a recycled pub which retains the charm of its origins and the bill of fare accommodates hoity toity palates.

"From there we embarked for Swanston Street and soon Burt Lancaster flew us to the moon and let us play among the stars, let us see what spring was like on Jupiter and Mars, in other words we went to the Planetarium. However, posterity deserves to know that shortly after Burt had charmed his way through the fourth

wonder of the solar system his mellifluous monologue was subverted by the faint rhythmic cadence of slumber. One of our stalwarts, whose name's entombed behind sealed lips, floated from his recliner into the waiting arms of Morpheus, where he dallied until Monica nudged him back to our planet."

At the meeting on 21 August, President George welcomed 59 members, thanked Ray Bathols for his stint as Almoner and welcomed Alex Steinfort to the position. Ken Ball was also inducted into the Club.

#### **Footy rears its 'ugly foot'**

The guest speaker was member Darrell Cranch and when Hugh heard his story about Aussie Rules from the ground up – he wrote:

"The young Darrell came down from Queensland at a tender age, not dreaming that his love of rugby would be challenged by the southern code, but before long his native faith was threatened and supplanted by the Victorian neology. The rules of the game became his new catechism and he acquired skills on the field which marked him for notoriety and the promise of a distinguished career. But the fickle foot of fortune wore a boot, and the boot bore studs and the studs bore nails and the nails did rend his flesh, such that Richmond and Victoria were bereft of the man while he was yet a stripling.

"That ill wind, however, blew some consolation, for Darrell, knowing the need and having the vision, devised a rubber sole to forestall a repetition of that unkindest cut. The sole was adopted by the VFL, Darrell became boundary and goal umpire, coach and recruiting officer in a life which has enriched the game for sixty years so far. We were also regaled with anecdotes of the great and famous ....."

"On 5 September the monthly outing was to Devilbend reservoir which nestles in the balmy bosom of the Mornington Peninsula. The coach was filled with the expectant clamor of sybarites at bay as the track became more serpentine and the quarry more elusive. After a couple of false scents we rounded a bend and there came into view an overgrown duckpond flanked by a gently sloping absence of trees, the whole vista imbued with delicate shades of brown, framed by lofty Cyclone mesh, garnished with copious coils of barbed wire. This amenity would doubtless elicit a sonnet from a poet if he were sufficiently in need of a drink or a wash, but we did not tarry and wended our way to Arthur's Seat. The breeze up there had just conducted a master class for sword-smiths, so we curtailed our devotions and descended to sea level where we ebbed and flowed until the appointed hour for lunch.

"We were greeted by our host at the Monk's Inn, Dromana, and were ushered into a warm ambience whose promise was fulfilled by the excellent meal which followed. The homeward journey was broken by a short visit to the Coolstore at Moorooduc, where our well heeled souls took pity on the sutlers and emerged from the bazaar laden with finery. Trips like this emphasise so clearly that it is not the recherché destination but the concord of hearts and minds which makes the day."

At the 18 September meeting it was announced that Jack Nolan had agreed to support Alex Steinfort as Assistant Almoner. At the time the Club had 120 financial members — 73 attended the meeting and 31 stayed for lunch.

#### *Young speaker captivates the audience*

The meeting was a great success. Members were treated to a spectacular address by Geoff Fagan, son of member John Fagan, on the marvels of modern technology. Geoff is the young and vital marketing manager for Siemens' communications operation in Australia and he proved himself to be a worthy advocate of that vast company whose world-wide annual budget of fifty billion dollars is equal to those of many national economies. He has high qualifications in both science and business administration, so the tale which unfolded was heady stuff. The electronics experience, since the 1947 invention of the transistor, has been a saga of soaring triumph and the buoyant communications industry is an island of hope in a sea of global despond, for not only is it the engine driving an otherwise sluggish economy, it also provides the international network of information and interdependence which act as a bastion against the abuse of power. It is hard for the human mind to wrap itself around the concept of a silicon flake so powerful that it can do the work of a row of radio valves reaching from Sydney to Perth, but that is just the hors-d'oeuvre of a feast which our grandchildren may live to enjoy in a world of 'microfiche and chips'.

Hugh again: — "On 3 October to mark the reunification of Germany a revelrout of radical rubbernecks struck out in a north-easterly direction. Traversing the outer reaches of the urban turgescence we were greeted by the rash of domestic retreats in the neo-tutti-frutti style which jostle for a piece of Templestowe sky, straining every joist and purlin to levitate above the confines of a suburban block.

"What a contrast to the modesty of the diminutive St Helena church which was our chosen destination! It is a monument to the mettle of our predecessors that they catered so meticulously to their spiritual needs in a country which must have seemed hostile and demanding.

"On a grey and chill morning we made our way among the tombstones which artfully counterfeited human immortality in gilt and polished marble to be greeted by a descendant of Anthony Beale. She told us the history of the chapel which Beale dedicated to his late wife in 1856, seventeen years after their arrival in Australia from the island of St Helena, where he had been paymaster while Napoleon was a guest of the garrison. St Helena has become the unofficial name of the community which is being engulfed by the metropolis; the tiny church has a regular congregation of thirty people and their needs are met thanks to a tapestry of events whose warp was woe and whose weft was weal.

"From there we had a leisurely cruise via the pampered precincts of the Sugarloaf reservoir down to Yarra Glen, where the staff of the Grand Hotel demonstrated why their establishment was nominated the best country hotel in Victoria last year. The decor was elegant, the service impeccable and the lunch splendid. Another day to remember with delight."

When 78 members attended on 16 October they were reminded of a photographic competition which was currently being run by the Club. The photographs were to be judged in three categories: an album, a family picture and a snap taken on a Probus outing. Ken Ball and Don Campbell were inducted into the Club and the members were entertained by Paul Holper of CSIRO who spoke about the problems of 'Ozone Depletion'.

Who else but Hugh would have written this:

"An environmentally sensitive plenum of verdant Probocrats was treated to a peep through the hole in the ozone layer. Paul Holper, a researcher with the CSIRO, revealed how yet another best laid plan has gone awry and made us prey to nature's pawky ray gun.

"Sixty years ago a couple of Americans stumbled upon a group of gases which do not occur in nature and which promised to be the ideal refrigerants, for they were non-toxic, odorless, inert and highly compressible. This Jekyll and Hyde of propellants is known as chlorofluorocarbon and is upwardly mobile.

"When CFC's reach the stratosphere they forget their genteel upbringing and force their unwelcome attentions upon oxygen's triatomic allotrope in its own no-go zone. The result is gross numbers of illegitimate molecules which no longer perform the task of shielding Earth from harmful ultraviolet B. The ozone layer is only a few millimetres thick and the lacuna over our



part of the world has so far accounted for a one percent depletion of ozone, a two percent increase in UVB and a likely four percent increase in skin cancer. The less gloomy side of the coin, however, is that Melbourne still only receives half as much UVB as Brisbane always had; we will cease using CFC's shortly after the turn of the century and the accumulated CFC's will have dissipated in time for our tricentenary.

*In the mean time, fellahs, slip, slap, slop!"*

### **Queenscliff tour proved a winner**

The last outing for the Probus year 1990 was arranged for 7 November:

*"A megaflock of free-range sprung chickens boarded a brace of buses to sample the delights of Queenscliff's fortifications. After we had zoomed over Westgate, through Geelong and down the Bellarine we were greeted by two affable guides who were eager to reveal the story of Melbourne's outer defences. Founded at the time when Britain was locked in mortal combat with Russia in the Crimea, the militia garrison was positioned to thwart any Tsarist incursion into the colonial waters of Port Phillip. W S Gilbert did not write the plot but the huge disappearing gun, which was never fired in anger, had a range of eleven km and gazed fixedly at its opposite number eight km across the Bay.*

*"We saw the underground powder store, the sad cells where boys were imprisoned for being peacelike and the twin lighthouses which guide ships through the Heads. We saw the museum of regalia and weaponry which attest to the armigerous thread which runs through man's fabric and we saw officers of several nations sweating beneath the noontday sun pursuing the red tabs of eminence and we hoped that their esoteric skills would never be put to the test.*

*Then it was time for lunch at the Ozone Hotel, followed by a ferry ride to Sorrento and a leisurely drive up the eastern side of the Bay."*

The 20 November meeting attracted 87 members and 35 remained for lunch. President George inducted Ken Deller and Bill Cust.

The speaker, Regional officer Ron Webb of the Country Fire Authority, gave a fine talk about the evolution of the CFA. Originating on the goldfields as ad hoc bucket gangs, fire control became the task of insurance companies which took responsibility for the buildings bearing their logo.

Later the job was rationalised by the State, and in 1990 the CFA was an army of 70,000 volunteers, trained by 500 permanent officers to save lives and property. Ron made the point that the sort of spirit which keeps so large an organization ready to serve their fellows would not be possible in the City. They risk their lives when the call comes and we owe them a lot.

### **Christmas Luncheon at the RSL**

The only activity for December was the Christmas lunch with the ladies on Tuesday 11th. It was decided to add a new dimension to the festivities by adding an address by member Bill Shepherd who gave voice about the evolution of the calendar. It is a measure of his brilliance as a public speaker that, even though the wine had been flowing freely, a pin would have been heard to drop onto a shagpile carpet.

Bill told us how succeeding technologies from pre-Christian times until the present had brought their calendars into closer and closer sync with our annual orbit around Sol, gradually overcoming the gravitational pull of political and superstitious reaction. He even proposed an adjustment to the present system which would overcome the inconsistencies which give our Gregorian calendar the thumbprint of human frailty, but doubted that we would live to see its implementation. It was a most interesting talk from Bill.

### **Membership list at end of 1990.**

A R Allan, J W Allen, K J Anderson, G C Appleby, L G Armstrong, A B Avery, K A Ball, F W Barry-Brown, L R Baster, R G Bathols, C M Berry, F K Beyer, F Biencourt, J Brimage, T F Brown, J E Burgesson, F Burrows, R D Butcher, D M Campbell, N Caris, I T Carne, S G Carpenter, E J Carruthers, J H Charlesworth, N K Christie, J Cooke, D O Cranch, N W Crane, R J Crawford, D N Crook, J H Crozier, W N Cust, R Davey, M J Davidson, E K Dawson, K E Deller, K M Deutsher, J Doeg, R G Donovan, H J Dunn, G Dunscombe, J B Eden, J W Elischer, R H Elliott, F S Elson, P J Epstein, M W Etcell, J C Fagan, E G Field, L G Fox, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, E J Glenn, C S Gloe, M B Gotz, H F Gowers, R H Gregory, L Hall, J B Hamann, B Hambleton, M Hancock, B W Hart, R L Hart, D Hensher, J C Hillman, W R Hogarth, G K Holdsworth, G Hoults, A E Jackson, W H Johnson, D C Keating, G W Kirton, J Knott, H K Kruse, R H Laughlin, L Leeks, P J Mahon, G H Mason, R S Matthews, W M Maunder, B McAllister, I McDonald, J McMillan, C R Meade, J A Montgomery, J Nolan, D T O'Loughlin, M C Parsons, A Penaluna, L M Powell, V A Proposch, B E Reaby, J A Reith, R Relf, K C Reynolds, T F Richards, G Ristrom, H W Robbins, W D Roberts, A G Robertson, E P Rogan, B Rogers, L P Ross, G W Royston, J L Sercombe, W Shepherd, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, E W Sunderland, R J Taylor, C M Thomas, K T Tinkler, R B Trimmer, S F Varcoe, C A Walker, J E Wallace, J D Warburton, H S Warren, J W Waters, R L Waters, A J Watson, R G Webb, M Williams and J B Yelland.