



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

1998 - 1999

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.*
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Holidays over — Probus is on again

On 11 February 1998, by rail, road and rickshaw, members made their way individually to the Gallery of Sport at the MCG.

There they were treated to a conducted tour of the memorabilia and they reminisced about their muddled, flannelled or spiked idols. They lolled in the Long Room, affecting the manners of the cream in their creams, then lunched lavishly in the Sheffield Room on chef-filled sandwiches.

The stamp of approval

On 17 February the hors d'oeuvre was served by our philatelic member, Garth Epstein, talking about his Australian and Island stamp collection. He opened by saying that the hobby is not without its drawbacks, for a valuable collection is too costly to insure against fire or theft and must be kept at the bank, but there is a wealth of knowledge to be gleaned from the literature which accompanies the annual volume issued by Australia Post.

We then heard about Garth's interest in Fiji stamps, originally produced on strips of newsprint in ascending denominations from a halfpenny to a shilling. Such a strip in good condition would today fetch \$100k. The owner of the best collection lost them in the Ash Wednesday fires at Macedon, so briefly Garth occupied the top spot. He went on to tell us about King Cacabu of Fiji, who had his stamps printed in England with the device 1 CR. Being a poor country, Fiji could not afford to reprint as prices rose, so Cacabu had them overprinted locally, often more than once. When Fiji was handed to Queen Victoria, Cacabu had the stock of existing stamps overprinted again — but since there was no 'V' in the local printer's case Cacabu inverted the upper case 'A'.

We then learnt that our Federal Government did not issue stamps until 12 years after Federation, when the decision was made to give the local article

a native emblem, rather than a likeness of George V, thus the kangaroo stamp with denominations ranging from a halfpenny to £2. The pricey ones were used for posting gold from Ballarat, and anyone who had

kept one in perfect condition for posterity would now be wealthy but too old to enjoy it. As a source of pleasure and profit stamps must take a lot of licking.

The Republican debate

It was a coup of no mean proportions to have enlisted the services of Richard McGarvie AC to address us so shortly after the momentous events at Canberra. Richard is the very model of the modern major player in the affairs of state, and he opened by declaring that he was not committed to either side in the republican debate, and that his sole concern was the preservation of the democratic freedoms which we now enjoy. He maintained that it was essential to resolve the differences without delay but with due thought, so as to avoid the ongoing divisiveness which has rent the social fabric in Canada, and to find a solution via a referendum which does not engender lingering resentment on the part of the losing side.

He pleaded with his co-conventionists to put his model to the people at the nation's first opportunity to express its opinion on the rival claims of the republican and monarchist camps. He felt that if the Turnbull hybrid were chosen as the litmus test, it would fail. His model was postulated privately long after the ARM had gained momentum, and support for his vision grew until it gained the second most favoured status in Canberra. It was, he said, the practical, realistic and minimalist option, which had the greatest chance of acceptance. He gave a detailed synopsis of his model, showing how the Queen's residual power would be transferred to a native head of state via a three person Constitutional Council composed according to a formula. Richard kindly presented the Club with a signed copy of his opus.

List of Members at the end of 1997

R M Allan, W H Allan, J W Allen, B C Amond, K J Anderson, G C Appleby, M E Applin, K M Armstrong, R B Ashley, A B Avery, L R Baster, S E Bernhard, B R Bernau, C M Berry, F K Beyer, F Biencourt, J Brimage, J E Burgesson, R E Burnell, D J Burt, R D Butcher, D M Campbell, N Caris, I T Carne, S G Carpenter, N K Christie, A P Cox, P I Crompton, D N Crook, J H Crozier, R Davey, M J Davidson, D J Davis, F Davis, E K Dawson, K E Deller, K M Deutsher, G Dunscombe, J B Eden, J W Elischer, R H Elliott, F S Elson, G L Epstein, P J Epstein, M W Etccl, J R Freer, A M Gamble, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, H F Gowers, W H Grant, R H Gregory, L Hall, J B Hamann, B Hambleton, M Hancock, D T Hannan, E K Hardie, J E Harper, J M Harris, B W Hart, C Henry, J C Hillman, B J Hirsh, W R Hogarth, J R Hunter, N H Ineson, E J Jamieson, D L Jenkins, W H Johnson, D C Keating, J J Kelly, G W Kirton, H K Kruse, R F Le Grand, P J Mahon, G H Mason, R S Matthews, B McAllister, I McDonald, R K McKinnon, C R Meade, E B Montfort, J E Nicholson, D T O'Loughlin, W D Packer, D W Parry, M C Parsons, R Pike, V A Proposch, J G Ragas, D H Reid, J A Reith, K C Reynolds, G Ristrom, H W Robbins, W D Roberts, K N C Rollason, L P Ross, G W Royston, J Schemansky, J W Schulz, W Shepherd, T F Sheppard, D N Skinner, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, J C Tansey, A L Taylor, T Terrill, C M Thomas, B Thompson, K P Thompson, K T Tinkler, R B Trimmer, C A Walker, J E Wallace, J D Warburton, H S Warren, J W Waters, A J Watson, J P West and M H Williams.

Our bowlers compete with six other clubs

On 27 February, as a result of President Geoff's initiative, there was a very successful bowls and social evening at Tulip Street. Six neighbouring clubs were represented and enduring rapport was established.

A regal ramble

On 4 March a minitide of modest mullock mongers motored to Ballarat and sampled the flashpots of Sovereign Hill. The Lodge turned out to be a comfy place to hang a hat; the evening meal was very good and the spectacular sound and light extravaganza was world class, giving a wonderful insight into the dastardly doings at the diggings. A bargain trip organised so well by Des.

A Life Membership for Hugh at 1998 AGM

At the annual general meeting on 17 March Hugh Stevens stepped down from the position of Secretary/Editor which he had filled so ably for just over a decade. Hugh was awarded a Life Membership of the Probus Club of Beaumaris and received a huge ovation from members. He thanked his many friends 'for their unstinting kindness over the years, and for the Life Membership which will be treasured.' He also 'wished his successors great joy in the tasks which lie ahead.'

The man from Edinburgh, Ron Hunter, was elected President and Geoff Mason received his well-earned Past President's badge. Allan Taylor became Vice President, Noel Ineson Secretary, Barry Amond Treasurer, David Davis Editor, Des Hannan Functions Coordinator, Wally Elischer Meeting Coordinator, Andy Watson Almoner, Brian Hirsh Committee and Colin Meade Auditor.

Because of the AGM there was no 10-minute speaker.

The major speaker, Leigh Norman of Telecom, gave us a fascinating trip into future telecommunication in the 21st Century. As Newsletter editor David commented: "*Mind blowing is too mild a phrase to describe what Leigh outlined is heading our way. Leigh, who is married with three children, certainly needs his B.Sc in Genetics and Biochemistry to get a grasp of the Star Trek technology currently being experimented by Telecom.*"

In his first Newsletter David also said:

There's a Chinese proverb which says, "The longest journey starts with a single step." Here's the first issue of my attempt to be your new Newsletter Editor. I 'dips me lid' to Hugh, who has a way with words few could emulate. He is to be thanked mightily for his enormous contribution to both the Newsletter and the Club.

President Ron Hunter, after accepting the position, said:

"Thank you for the honour of becoming the 13th President. I shall do my utmost to continue and enhance the traditions of Beaumaris Probus.

"May I express our thanks to retiring President, Geoff, for the excellent year of meetings, outings and functions, culminating in the fine address from Richard McGarvie: and to our retiring Secretary/Editor, Hugh, for his unstinting devotion to our Club over the past eleven years. Past President Ralph Butcher for his wise counsel, and committeeman Ian Carne for assisting Des with functions earned them their retirement. Our thanks also go to the 'new boys' on the committee for accepting their tasks.

"The club is up to strength with over 120 members; but with 80 attending meetings, and Des having difficulty filling a 40 seat coach, we can clearly accept a few new active members – especially recent retirees who would enhance our club.

Who's who — brief column introduced

Following a suggestion made at Committee level the editor commenced a column 'briefly introducing' members. Because only half a dozen members were introduced before the series lapsed the compiler of this publication decided not to include them.

The Members Register of 2002 provides similar information about the six members.

Eighty-five members attended the 21 April meeting and John Opie was welcomed into the Club.

Yacht ahoy!

The 10-minute speaker was our own member, Ted Montfort, who proved that life on the Ocean Wave is not always as smooth and balmy as the travel brochures usually depict. The landlubbers in the audience were nodding knowingly when Ted described how all hands were needed on deck during a yacht trip from Port Welshpool to Melbourne as the ship foundered in heavy seas.

Fortunately all were saved and it was a great story.

Stacks of stocks and bountiful bonds

The main speaker, Donald Mack, who is assistant General Manager in charge of Investments at Swiss Re Australia gave a valuable insight into the world of investments.

Speaking about trillions of dollars, all ordinaries, risk factors, dividends, benchmarks, indexes, investment portfolios, top-down and bottom-up investments, market neutral and futures, Donald took members on a tour of the world's money markets in great style.

President Ron announced that a Special Interest Group survey was under way with Allan Taylor busy programming his computer to issue the survey of members' hobbies and interests, and to sort and list the results.

It was planned to invite the president of one of the local Bayside Probus Clubs to a Beaumaris monthly meeting with a view to exchanging ideas, and learning of interesting speakers, outings and trips.

It was noted that we achieved an attendance of 40 at the after meeting lunch in April.

Asian highlights and Bayside reflections

The meeting on 19 May attracted 88 members and Jack Warburton presented the brief address which covered the highlights of a most interesting trip around Asia, including bringing an organ through Customs.

Our Keynote speaker was Councillor Graeme Disney, who has just completed a term as Mayor of Bayside. Graeme was a most interesting speaker and an obviously dedicated Local Government representative. His topic "*Bayside Reflections*" gave a wide-ranging picture of his endeavours as Mayor. A fine speech providing members with a depth of knowledge of Bayside Council.

In May our visiting Probian guest was Ralph de la Lande, President of Beaumaris Heights Probus (a mixed club) and both presidents exchanged experiences of interesting speakers, outings and trips.

At the 16 June Meeting President Ron welcomed 82 members and Des Summerton from Cheltenham Probus.

Ossie Obst and Ron Horne were inducted.

The English Language

Who else but Hugh Stevens could deal as well with the above subject in a 10-minute talk. He did not disappoint as he is so expert in his topic. He commenced with the explanation that in 1928 Kemal Ataturk, founder of modern Turkey, abolished the Arabic alphabet in use in Turkey and introduced the Western alphabet but with 29 letters.

Hugh demonstrated the problem those learning English have as they struggle with its two forms – spoken, which is versatile, and written, which is a disaster for them. Using an overhead projector Hugh highlighted our language's problems and then showed how he would change it so that it would be spelt as it is sounded. [Editor David provided a para written by Hugh, in his concept of how English should be written.]

Your job, just for the fun of it, is to see if you can figure out what the paragraph is saying: —

Translate this!

"I sat down on dh kowc. Sumwun brawt mie a blanket. I swung mei legz up, turnd 2 fays dh wawl & luwsnd mei blindfold. Within a few moamentz I woz asliep. I slept fitfoolic. Thru-wowt dh neit I woz konshus ov piepl kuming & goaing. Udhr piepl wur slieping in dh ruwm. Sumwun woz awlwayz awayk. I spent dh hoal ov dh next day blindfolded, siting awr leingi on dh kowc. In dh ievning dh man in dh suwt rieturnd."

[*You can check your translation by casting your eyes down this column]

We thanked Hugh, for a stylish and most informative speech.

Not for the faint hearted

The Keynote Speaker was Sergeant Stephen Deveson of Police Forensics who spoke to us on his career as a police photographer. Joining the Force in 1975 he spent 5½ years in Bacchus Marsh where his sergeant suggested he take a photo of a drowning that had occurred. This led to an interest in photography which finally led to his current role.

Sergeant Deveson then demonstrated some of the scenes he is required to photograph and only those with a very strong constitution could look at these slides for any length of time. A job that wouldn't be everyone's cup of tea, but someone has to do it. Something of an eye opener (or closer) for club members.

The Solution to Hugh's "English"

"I sat down on the couch. Someone brought me a blanket. I swung my legs up, turned to face the wall and loosened my blindfold. Within a few moments I was asleep. I slept fitfully. Throughout the night I was conscious of people coming and going. Other people were sleeping in the room. Someone was always awake. I spent the whole of the next day blindfolded, sitting or lying on the couch. In the evening the man in the suit returned."

The president announced that a complete program of invited speakers was arranged for the rest of the year and promised "no more gory photos".

Mid year luncheon at Victoria GC

Over eighty members and ladies attended the mid year lunch at Victoria Golf Club on 22 July. It was voted highly successful thanks to Barry, Wally and Des who selected the venue; Angela and staff at Victoria Golf Club who cooked, poured and served. And especially the McGarvies who graced us by their presence and Richard for speaking for ten minutes to update his February talk on the "*Future Head of State*".

Des Hannan and the 'jungle men'

"Des and Marie enjoyed a luxurious, relaxing and inexpensive 3-week holiday in Malaysia and Borneo a few years ago. They flew to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah from Kuala Lumpur, staying at the 500-room Hyatt. Bus tour to Mt. Kinabalu involved a 2-hour rough ride then a 4-hour walk to the top through tropical rain forest; caught glimpses of the mountain through mist and cloud. Visited a memorial to Aussie soldiers of WW2, over the longest suspension bridge in Sabah, then to a fishing village of Muslims living in houses on stilts over the water, great local markets and paddy fields worked by water buffalo.

"Next they stayed 5 days at a luxury beach resort at Tanjung. Then to Kuching, capital of Sarawak where highlights were the Orang Utans ['Orang hutan' in Malay means 'jungle man'] and a trip by longboat down the Skrang River staying in a longhouse with the Ibans – plenty of shrunken heads. Entertained with war dances, singing etc. and buying some hand-crafts. Back to Kuching, then to Damai Beach Resort with luxury cabins. Returned to KL, and took a day trip to Malacca. The Portuguese, Dutch and English all left their mark in this area. A great experience!"

A trip to the Classic Cinema at Elsternwick was held on 5 August at 11 am. The film was "The Apostle" starring Robert Duvall.

At the 18 August meeting Jack Bowen was introduced as a new member. Jack gave a good thumbnail sketch of his life and career.

Life below with the submariners

The 10-Minute speaker, Frank Elson, gave a most descriptive talk on life in submarines. With a 25 year old skipper in charge of a youthful but adventurous crew, Frank gave a clear picture of the conditions on board a submarine and added weight to his talk by closing the curtains, and some clever sound effects which made us all feel as if we were in the vessel.

Well done Frank.

Swaying palms and grass skirts

The main August speaker was Mario Borg, the Director of Tahiti Tourism, who extolled the beauty and serenity of these French Polynesian Islands as a holiday destination. A colour slide and video presentation showed the lifestyle on Tahiti, which is about 6000 km from our nation. He had a little trouble convincing Andy about some of the deals available, but certainly made Tahiti sound like a place to put on our consideration list.

After the meeting the president appealed for help with our microphones, he said, "One day we will catch the gremlin which allowed Frank's talk to be

heard clearly, but refused to transmit Mario. If anyone has expertise in this field please let us know, for we have had the equipment checked and it is in perfect working order. Yet it fails."

[Mario Borg and other speakers would have reason to remember Andy's questions, either for their tongue-in-cheek criticism or humorous content.]

The outing for 2 September proved of interest to even the most learned members and after visiting ScienceWorks everyone enjoyed a two-course lunch at the Customs House Hotel in Williamstown.

Presidents of fellow Probus Clubs continued to be invited to our meetings – we entertained Mrs. June Williamson, of Cheltenham Ladies Probus in August and Jim Bowden of Sandringham Probus Club in September. Ralph Winfield, of Parkdale Probus Club was lined up to follow in October.

On 15 September 74 members and four guests attended the meeting which commenced with a silent tribute to Ken Tinkler who died on 28 August.

The 10-minute speaker, Ralph Le Grand, spent 44 years as Engineering Surveyor for private corporations, the Government, and as a Contractor Consultant. His interesting talk gave us an insight into the important role he played in the control of major infrastructure projects throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Footy can be fun!

"The main speaker was Neil Roberts, former St. Kilda champion footballer, Brownlow Medallist and sports commentator. Neil proved that not only the Irish can tell a good story – his jokes almost had members rolling in the aisles. He provided clearly one of the highlights of the year, giving us a greater understanding of the highs and lows of playing, coaching and following this great game of ours. After his inspiring and entertaining hour with us even the disbelievers may be looking forward to the next year?"

Microphone problems solved!

President Ron had this to say about the mikes, "It's a poor workman who blames his tools". Now we know that the equipment is in perfect working order. The fault lies in ourselves. We have to learn to hold the roving mike horizontally, at mouth level, and with the cord hanging vertically. The clip-on mike has to be positioned centrally, as high up as possible, and switched on!

Ron announced that "Allan Taylor would soon complete a list of members who share common interests. Barry Amond (Investments) and Max Parsons (Computing) have agreed to convene initial meetings of these groups, and others will follow."

From 13-15 October (inclusive) golfers and non-golfers dined and played well at Howlong. Some complained that they dined too well and played poorly! However, Merv Davidson, in his usual fine style, won the big event on the Thursday, and came home with the Warburton Heirloom Trophy.

Skating and photography made easy

At the 20 October meeting, 10-minute speaker Aub Gamble took us all on a roller ride, when he described the development of Roller Skating. Four wheel models as well as the latest super "In Line" model were displayed along with other memorabilia. From the old metal wheels strapped to each leg to 16 bearing modern models now in vogue, we were treated to a new world of discovery of this exciting sport. Aub still enjoys skating.

"Keynote Speaker Shelton Muller, ably assisted by his wife, gave us a most interesting trip through Egypt. Shelton is a professional photographer (the Editor of Photomaster magazine) and his colour slide presentation was excellent. Shelton also displayed a very good appreciation of Egyptian and religious history. Probably as interesting as the slides was Shelton's enthusiasm for his topic. For the technically minded, Shelton uses either Kodak or Fuji colour slide film using 100 ISO rating. He uses Nikon camera bodies with compatible telephoto or wide angle lenses and always uses a tripod. He usually relies on natural lighting but sometimes uses a reflector or fill in flash for portraits."

The mail from Snowy River

In the newsletter, President Ron reported on the Snowy Mountains trip which members enjoyed from 26 to 30 October - he said, 'It's a long way to the Snowy's, it's a long way to go'. Thanks to Greg, the driver from Fords of Shepparton and Col & Edith, mine hosts at Providence Lodge, our party of 40 had a tremendous 5-day trip to the Snowy Mountains. Col was an excellent guide and raconteur from whom we learned all about the Alpine flora and fauna, including the taste of Alpine pepper, and how each species had adapted to the rigours of Alpine life. We shared an evening BBQ with Neville Locker whose family have farmed the same high country property for six generations and drove home one evening in a snowstorm.

Special Interest Groups commence

It was announced that the first meeting of the Investment Group, convened by Barry Amond, would meet on Tuesday 17 November at 9 am at the RSL prior to the usual club meeting. Max Parsons sent a questionnaire to the seventeen members interested in Computers which resulted in the first "hands-on" meeting of the Computer Group.

They enjoyed a demonstration of the advantages of owning a Scanner. With a view to starting yet another special interest group, Merv Davidson asked for a list of Chess players.

Seventy-one members attended the 17 November meeting - Tony Cross was inducted as a new member of the Club and ten-minute speaker David Davis provided an interesting talk entitled; "The Coonawarra Conspiracy".

The keynote talk was given by Ron Risely, from the Anglican Homes for the Elderly. He gave an in-depth and educational talk on the operation, function and development of Aged Care in Australia.

We received the sad news of the death of Ken Deller - a number of members attended his funeral.

Down by the seaside

Our Christmas Luncheon at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron Clubhouse on Wednesday 9 December was a very happy event with 98 present, and President Ron Hunter in his Kilt and a young Scots bagpiper added to the festive occasion.

List of Members at the end of 1998

R M Allan, W H Allan, J W Allen, B C Amond, K J Anderson, G C Appleby, M E Applin, K M Armstrong, A B Avery, B R Bernau, S E Bernhard, C M Berry, F K Beyer, F Biencourt, J A Bowen, J Brimage, J E Burgesson, R E Burnell, D J Burt, R D Butcher, D M Campbell, N Caris, I T Carne, S G Carpenter, N K Christie, D H Clark, A P Cox, P I Crompton, D N Crook, A M Cross, J H Crozier, R Davey, M J Davidson, D J Davis, F Davis, E K Dawson, K M Deutsher, G Dunscombe, J B Eden, J W Elischer, R H Elliott, F S Elson, G L Epstein, P J Epstein, J R Freer, A M Gamble, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, H F Gowers, W H Grant, R H Gregory, L Hall, J B Hamann, T B Hambleton, M Hancock, D T Hannan, E K Hardie, J E Harper, J M Harris, B W Hart, C Henry, J C Hillman, B J Hirsh, W R Hogarth, R W Horne, J R Hunter, N H Ineson, P W Ingmire, D L Jenkins, W H Johnson, D C Keating, J J Kelly, G W Kirton, H K Kruse, R F Le Grand, P J Mahon, G H Mason, R S Matthews, B McAllister, I McDonald, R K McKinnon, C R Meade, E B Montfort, O J Obst, D T O'Loughlin, J L Opie, W D Packer, D W Parry, M C Parsons, R Pike, V A Proposch, J G Ragas, D H Reid, J A Reith, K C Reynolds, G Ristrom, H W Robbins, W D Roberts, K N C Rollason, L P Ross, J Schemansky, J W Schulz, W Shepherd, T F Sheppard, D N Skinner, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, J C Tansey, A L Taylor, T Terrill, C M Thomas, B Thompson, K P Thompson, R B Trimmer, C A Walker, J E Wallace, J D Warburton, H S Warren, J W Waters, A J Watson, J P West and M Williams.

Changed sub for 1999

In the last newsletter for the year it was announced that there was extensive support for a meeting in January so the Committee agreed to hold a slightly modified meeting on 19 January 1999 and subscriptions would then be payable. Current Assets of the Club had fallen some \$800 or more over the year which gave rise to President Ron advising members,

"It is clear that we can no longer continue with the same subscription that we started with 12 years ago – it will have to increase to \$30. Let's hope we don't get involved with further additional costs because of GST."

President Ron started a bright new year with this message:

"I hope you all had a great time over the holiday season, and now that you have returned the grandchildren to their parents you are ready to relax at Probus on the third Tuesdays. Our house looks rather bare without the decorations, and the tree with the flashing lights has been packed away for another year. We are left with our memories of VCE results, midnight carol services, roast turkey, cold ham and sparkling champagne, barbecues and shiraz, Hogmanay and first footing. All recorded on camera with red eyes from the flash, or the wine.

"I have been considering how to give more members the opportunity of serving on committee and running the affairs of the Club. We could have an unwritten limit of three years in any one office with the Vice President, President and Past President counting as one position. Would more members volunteer if they knew that there was a limited commitment? Or are you happy with the natural changes which occur under the present system?"

"Please let me have your thoughts."

First January Meeting

Judging by the attendance (74 members), it must have been a popular decision to schedule a meeting on 19 January. The Investment Group met before the club meeting got under way.

Alan Nash was inducted as a new member of the Club before the ten-minute speaker — our own Garth Epstein — presented a continuation of his previous talk on "Philately."

Garth would never be accused of being unenthusiastic about Stamp Collecting. In his allotted time, Garth expounded the virtues and delight of collecting Australian stamps. He spoke of rare stamps, specimen stamps, stamps with mistakes and of a stamp worth \$3-million.

Newsletter reporter (and editor) David said this of the keynote speaker: —

Alternative Energy Sources

"Ian Henke of SECV spoke about renewable energy sources. The rest of the newsletter could be filled outlining Ian's extraordinary address on this vital topic. Ian clarified the reason why at present we are reliant on fossil fuel and the "Star Wars" future of alternative energy sources which are being developed. He convinced all of us that the lights won't go out when the last of the fossil fuel is exhausted. And all of this without the pollution of present energy."

Members agreed that Ian Henke's address was excellent — superbly delivered and without notes .

Special Interest Groups

In February three subjects were introduced in the Computer Group and, as the meetings were held around a home computer, numbers were restricted at each session. *Excel*, *Internet*, *Scanning* and *Word* were demonstrated by Tony Cross, Jack Warburton and Max Parsons.

The Investment Group established a regular timetable for meetings at 9 am before each regular Club meeting.

No feed back was received from the idea floated in January for a time limit on office bearers, so it was decided to continue with the present "natural changes" system.

President Ron advised that our constitution needed to be upgraded to include some of the "modern" clauses required by the Incorporated Societies Act. Ron said, "his view was that 'if it aint broke, don't fix it' — but legally we have to."

Bushrangers and retailers

Eighty-two members attended the 16 February meeting. The 10-minute speaker was Ted Montfort who gave us an excellent outline of how his grandfather was involved in the capture of bushranger Henry Power.

The Keynote speaker was Peter Morgan from Coles Myer who gave a most detailed and interesting discourse on "*Trends in Retailing*" — a top speaker who totally captured members' attention with retailing in the past, present and for the future.

Peter was a former director of Coles Myer and Managing Director of Liquorland, Katies, Red Rooster, Officeworks and Fosseys, as well as Target and Kmart, so it was hardly surprising that he knew his subject.

The 'House Full' sign was put up for the 3 March tour of the GMH Engine Plant followed by lunch at the Cricketers Arms. Members then called in on Newman's Chocolates — something for everyone!

'We have blackout'

Alan Nash answered an appeal for 'blackout curtains' for the windows behind the projector screen – he not only supplied the curtains but arranged the making up and fitting as well.

The AGM

Seventy-eight members and three visitors attended the AGM on 16 March. New member Ken Reed was welcomed into the Club.

Ron Hunter gave a comprehensive report on his year as President highlighting the key events in another successful year for Beaumaris Probus. During the year 7 new members were welcomed. He invested Allan Taylor as President for the ensuing year. Ron was presented with a framed Certificate of Appreciation for his service to the club as President and many years on the Management Committee.

Allan thanked the retiring members of the committee – Wally Elischer (Meeting Coordinator) and David Davis (Newsletter Editor) and welcomed new committee members – John Hamann (Editor) Frank Elson (Meeting Coordinator) and Ken Dawson (Committee).

Brian Hirsh was installed as Vice President, Des Hannan Functions director, Noel Ineson Secretary, Barry Amond Treasurer, Andy Watson Almoner and Colin Meade Auditor.

Matters affecting retirees

The Keynote speaker, Paul Melling, gave a very polished presentation on retirement planning. The main emphasis was on strategies for reducing income tax, minimising capital gains tax and maximising social security benefits. He also outlined the impact on these strategies of recent changes. These strategies were recommended for people prior to or in the early years of retirement.

On 19 March, our bowlers joined eight other neighbouring Probus Clubs in a tournament at Sandringham Bowls Club in Tulip Street.

Eighty four members and guests attended the 20 April meeting; Lindsay Simpson President of Wangaratta Probus Club was one of the guests. New member, John Lindsay was inducted into the Club.

Trivia and Ancient Knowledge

Allan Small's 10-minute talk was anything but 'trivial'. He traced the history of astronomy and the theories and findings of famous astronomers throughout the ages. It was extremely interesting.

Our Keynote speaker, Vic Proposch, started on a hypnotic note but fortunately he did not trip during his fascinating address. He spoke fluently for 50 minutes without reference to notes!

Vic's interest in archaeology led him to research incredibly accurate maps of the Americas and Antarctic published well before known surveys of these regions. He also talked about the amazing knowledge of ancient mathematicians and the astonishing constructional skills of the builders of the Great Pyramid of Giza. The extensive voyages of the ancient mariners which he recounted just added further to the mysteries. He quoted dates, names and places as though it happened yesterday.

Club outings well attended

Des Hannan provided a great range of functions which pleased members.

In April, the trip to Point Nepean National Park was a great success. It was an ideal day, great scenic views of the coastline and a very interesting walk around the ruins of Fort Nepean.

On 5 May members visited Goona Warra Estate winery at Sunbury for a tour of the winery and lunch. The vineyard is young but the bluestone buildings date back to 1880. It was a beautiful day, good sampling and an excellent lunch.

In June a visit to Crown Casino was arranged and this included a free lunch with no strings attached. However the pokies took their toll on some of our members.

At the meeting on 18 May George Fabiny was welcomed as a new member by the 83 members present. The brief address was given by Frank Davis who told us how he grew up with the family laundry business and described the new equipment they imported and the innovations they introduced. The benefits from co-operation between the old family laundries disappeared when they became public companies.

Alzheimer's

Don Russell, the Keynote speaker, a volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association Victoria spoke from personal experience of the problems of being a carer of someone with dementia. The quiet intense interest with which members listened to his talk emphasised that this was a very relevant topic. Don divided his talk into three parts.

The origins and services provided by Alzheimers Association Victoria. — The different types of dementia, risk factors, myths associated with dementia and the vast differences in the behaviour of sufferers. — The personal problems of carers.

The disturbing conclusions from Don's talk were that there is no cure, early diagnosis is not easy and that the biggest risk factor is age. Our thanks to Don for giving us a clearer understanding of this distressing condition.

Ten-year pins

President Allan announced that the committee had taken action on an earlier suggestion by Ron Hunter that long-term members of the Club should be recognised in some way. After discussion it had been decided to approach the Regional HQ of Probus with the view of creating an official 10-year Probus pin.

Allan said, "The concept and our design has now been approved and the pin is available to the general Probus community – congratulations Ron on having your initiative officially adopted. We have over 40 current members who joined our Club prior to the end of 1988 and we plan to present their 10-year pins during our July luncheon at the Victoria Golf Club. A further 20 current members joined during 1989 and their pins will be presented at our Christmas luncheon to be held at the Brighton Savoy.

"Thereafter members will be individually presented with their pins at the monthly meeting which is the 10th anniversary of their joining. As the 10-year pins cost in excess of \$4 each, we would be grateful if the recipients returned their original pins for recycling to future new members."

Seventy-five members attended the 15 June Meeting – one of two visitors was John Harris from West Lakes Probus Club, Adelaide.

'That dirty rotten rat'

The 10-minute speaker was Alan Nash who recounted his experience repairing a boiler on a Shell tanker in the Gulf in 50-degree C heat. After the repairs were completed they sailed through the Suez Canal just before the start of the 1956 war. As an incidental story he told us about a rat which grew in size at every sighting. It was caught and served to the Master on a plate. A rat-tling good yarn.

An old timer with a Green Thumb

Keynote speaker Ian Nicholls of Berna Park Nursery, after training at Burnley Horticultural College, began work on the greens at Victoria Golf Club. The course was built with 10 men and 7 horses. He then went on to describe what the area was like in the 20's and 30's. Dairy farms, market gardens, unmade roads, no garbage collection or sewerage. Delivery vehicles being bogged 2 or 3 times a week and broken springs were common.

We expected Ian to talk about plants and how to improve our gardens; instead he gave us a very informative history of the area and VGC, based on his lifetime of residing in Park Road and his many childhood escapades. It was a nostalgic journey in time told with great humour. Questions on gardening were answered expertly in his radio talk back style.

On a chilly 23rd June morning 23 masochists (also called golfers) assembled at Victoria Golf Club confident that they would "burn up the course". After playing 18 holes in beautiful weather on an immaculate course (marred only by trees and bunkers which magnetically attracted golf balls) we all returned to the clubhouse with reputations in tatters to be revived by an enjoyable lunch.

Those who played less badly than the rest were Alan Reith (winner), Doug Clarke (runner up) while David O'Loughlin and Ralph Butcher teamed well to win the 4-ball-better-ball event. The competition was ably organised by Kevin Kruse.

The Investment Group has 36 members and continues to meet before the main meeting. Most members (average age 73) have Australian share portfolios and are interested in discussing all aspects of trading. They use a surprisingly large number of different brokers and fund managers.

Annual Luncheon in July

The President's mid-year luncheon at Victoria Golf Club was attended by 49 members and 45 ladies. President Allan commented,

"From the feedback I have received, the mid-year luncheon was thoroughly enjoyed by the 94 present. The venue and meal at the Victoria Golf Club was excellent in all respects. The highlight of the day was the presentation of 10-year pins to 24 of the 43 current members who joined prior to the end of 1988. A brief outline of each member's contribution to the Club was read by Secretary Noel and thanks are due to him and Hugh Stevens for researching this information – it added a nice touch to the presentation."

10-year pins and 50 years at the Age

On 17 August President Allan welcomed 76 members and guests and presented A further 13 members with 10 year pins.

In his 10-minute talk, Les Hall gave a resume of his 50 years at the Age and described the evolution of the newspaper production process. He spoke of the constant necessity of meeting deadlines and the impact world events, such as the assassination of JFK, had on those deadlines. Thank you Les for a brief insight into the newspaper world.

Underwater tubs and tubes

The Keynote speaker was our Frank Elson who spoke of his very personal experiences in the Silent Service. His initial medical examination and in depth training (no pun intended). His first misadventure occurred during deep sea escape trials. We learnt of new uses for torpedo tubes as storage containers and how to suspend a sub by its mooring ropes.

Frank spoke of his time at the shore base in Colombo and his good fortune to be taken off a mine laying sub a week before it was lost and his elation, on arrival in Fremantle, at the abundance of fruit available. He graphically described how he fixed a faulty 21-inch torpedo tube and gave some fascinating details on the development of subs from 1578 to the current nuclear monsters and revealed details of a top secret torpedo that should be fitted to the Collins Class submarines.

Members interested in home computers attended a special group meeting on Tuesday 24 August at Beaumaris RSL. The group discussed use of PCs, software problems, knowledge sharing and future directions for the group. Talent ranging from pedestrian to perfection was displayed enthusiastically by the dozen members attending.

The Film Luncheon at the Dendy Brighton on 1 September was well patronised by members but we are not sure if it was the film "Runaway Bride" or the 6 point sandwiches, ice-cream cake and tea or coffee – all for \$9 that attracted the members.

At the September meeting 79 members were pleased to welcome visitors Fred Wall (President of Sandringham Probus) and Warwick Andrews. New member Graham Wearne was inducted and as he had worked for many years for Parke Davis he described himself as a "drug pusher".

The Vikings roved by sea

Our own member, Al Gasson, spoke (for 10 minutes) of the Viking Era which began with the Scandinavian sea-rovers first raid into England in 793 and ended in 1066. During this period they made many forays into England, Europe and as far away as Newfoundland. Though they are remembered mainly as pillagers they made positive contributions to trade and the arts in the countries they raided.

Now huge tankers rove the sea

The Keynote Speaker John Eyre's dramatic description of the "World Merchant Fleet" left the impression that it is safer to travel by air than by sea. The Australian Coast Guard's education program's main focus is "Teach and promote safety at Sea". Tonnage lost at sea now is greater than that lost in the second World War. Almost all those lost were vessels of convenience (*Ships of Shame*). Oil tankers represent more than 50% of the tonnage at sea hence the high incidence of oil tanker accidents.

Pre war 10,000 tonnes was the biggest tanker. By doubling the size, the volume goes up by 8 times so that tankers have got bigger and bigger until we now have 500,000 tonne tankers. These monsters have fewer crew and there are savings in port and other

charges. Safety is being sacrificed in cost reduction – (eg) reduced metal thickness and reduction of the scantlings. Bulk ore carriers are subject to serious corrosion – skin thickness can be halved in 5 years. The crew is so poorly paid that most are from third world countries with little or no education so it is not surprising that accidents happen.

The International Maritime Authority is composed of ship owners, so costly design features such as double bottoms and inert gas systems are slow to be introduced. Shipping is becoming a third world business.

Eighty-five members attended the 19 October meeting and welcomed new member Bill Day.

Travel by container ship

The brief address was by Keith Hardie who told us of his voyage to Japan and back by container ship. Fortunately it was not a "ship of convenience". It carried 1940 containers of which 400 were refrigerated and had a crew of 38 and, on this voyage, four passengers. During the voyage he spent a lot of time on the bridge, taking readings with his GPS. He also wrote his life story during the 45 days on board. At a little over \$100 a day for 3 full meals, travel and accommodation it was a very good deal.

Taxation and GST

"The Keynote speaker was Ian Henke and he gave us another stimulating address. While the subject matter was not exactly what we had expected, *Referendum 99* was a very topical subject. As Executive Director of Taxation Research his research of Government archives suggests that the Referendum is considering the wrong issues and asking the wrong questions. Australia 78 years ago became "A Sovereign and Independent Nation" following the Treaty of Versailles when all the Commonwealth countries received equality with the major powers. The rest of the world recognises Australia as an independent nation.

"He stated that efforts by Professor Blainey and others to discuss these issues at the Constitutional Conference were effectively gagged. He wished there was more honesty in the Republic debate from both sides. As examples of some of the taxation related matters disclosed by his research team he cited the Income Tax Bill of 1936 which was passed when there was no monarch on the throne. The Australian Tax Office in 1973 set up Executive Instruments in relation to taxation but his researchers have been unable to find any record of these or evidence of them ever being gazetted.

"Ian provided plenty of food for thought when he suggested that we are being governed and taxed without formal authority!"

Beaumaris Probus flies overseas!

"On 23 October three small planes took a party of thirty travellers on the first Probian overseas trip — destination King Island! On arrival we were greeted by our genial host Les Honess who was also to be our coach captain for the next three days. From our base in Currie on the West coast we travelled North to Cape Wickham which has the tallest lighthouse in the Southern hemisphere, South to Seal Rocks and East to Naracoopa. Major points of interest were the penguin parade at Grassy Harbour, the calcified forest at Seal Rocks and kelp farming and drying.

"Electricity is supplied by diesel generators supplemented by three wind generators from Holland. Throughout the trip Les gave a non-stop commentary on shipwrecks, pioneer histories and the bird and wild life on the island. There are 270 species of bird life. On the final day President Allan and other members played golf on Currie's scenic and challenging links course while others explored the town. The accommodation and meals were excellent. Resolutions to diet on our return may have to wait until the many purchases of cheese, cream and meat have been consumed. All participants voted this to be a most enjoyable trip."

Plus 8 at Howlong Golf

Fifteen rooms were booked 23-25 November for members and partners attending Howlong. The event was a great success largely due to the excellent organisation by Alan Nash and Jack Warburton where *everyone was a winner*. There were prizes for nearest the pin, best 9 in and out, best 18, below the line (a nice euphemism for a poor score) and even chocolates for the non-golfing ladies.

'The Olde Mug' was won by Betty Mead with a score of plus 8. Great score Betty.

At the meeting on 16 November we learned of the deaths of John West and Claus Gloe. Claus was our foundation President. Proposed by Alan Nash - Tony Hardy, an ex-Shell man, was inducted.

Believing a used car salesman

"For a brief ten minutes, David O'Loughlin gave us a very interesting and amusing insight into the early days of Used Car marketing in Australia. How he started as a backyard dealer, became a valuer and buyer of used cars before starting a dealership. Some dealers even accepted blocks of land or a horse as deposits on cars. He outlined a number of tricks of the trade which he assured us were legal at the time. As one member and a very good speaker said "He would kill for a punch line like David's".

[If you were among the 90 members there on the day you would remember it — otherwise ask David.]

Showers south of the ranges?

The Keynote speaker, Peter Smith gave us a fascinating talk on "Weather Forecasting in the 90s". The World Meteorological Organisation consisting of 185 countries provides an observation network through the free exchange of information.

"Data is received from aircraft, ships, ocean buoys, radar, satellites and in Australia over 500 weather stations. This data is fed into a super computer which cost \$90 million. A series of mathematical models are used to develop forecasts. A 24-hour forecast involves running the mathematical model twice a day. The computer is capable of 104 billion computations a second. He explained why the Bureau, despite all this technology, sometimes gets it wrong.

"We do not know everything about the atmosphere and its behaviour, we cannot measure weather around the globe properly and the models depend on the accuracy of data from the many input points. Despite popular opinion the accuracy of weather reporting has improved greatly in the last 30 years. Forecasting the weather is a very complex exercise."

Christmas luncheon

The only function in December was the popular Christmas luncheon on the 9th at the Brighton Savoy. The gathering of 96 members and ladies approved the random placings at tables which provided an opportunity to enhance friendships and particularly to get to know new members.

Ten year pins were presented to members who joined in 1989.

So ended another Beaumaris Probus year

Management of the Club, the monthly meetings, speakers, Club functions and outings all proved successful. Lost members were replaced from the waiting list, maintaining an average membership of about 125.

Special Interest Groups had proved popular, the Investment Group particularly so — it met at 9 am before each monthly meeting and was well-attended. The Computer Group battled on but had a major problem in demonstrating programs to larger groups than three or four members around a home computer. A Music Group was being examined as a possible fourth SIG and was to be introduced in the following year.

Bowls competitions and arranged games at local golf clubs and the Howlong Golf 4-day event catered for sporting members.

Club finances were in good hands and the committee decided to retain the subscription of \$30 for another year.

A new millennium—or was it a year early?

After all the celebrations on New Year's Eve members could be excused if they rested, so there was no outing in January.

However, a meeting was held on the 18th January and sixty-eight members attended. Retired mechanical engineer and new member George Montgomery was inducted into the Club.

A millionaire for a day

The 10-minute speaker was John Ragas. Through the "International Home Exchange" scheme John exchanged his home for houses in Italy, Spain and the UK. He highlighted his experiences staying in a home at Reggio Emilia, a medieval town in Northern Italy. A very different lifestyle but with modern problems such as finding parking spots. As morning tea was delayed John kindly extended his talk to include his stay in Spain near Valencia and then to Ireland and the UK.

The drug problem

Keynote Speaker, Ian Haigh, from Odyssey House, spoke of their efforts to "create and sustain environments for positive change for those whose lives are affected by drugs and alcohol". The 25 staff, mostly former addicts, care for 85 people ranging in age from 3 to 43. There are 52,000 known illicit drug users in Victoria. Most addicts use several drugs at the same time. This complicates diagnosis and treatment.

Last year there were 309 heroin overdose deaths in Victoria, a 50% increase over the last 2 years - more than are killed in road accidents. Many occur in their own homes. A seriously worrying trend is the number of addicted 12-year-olds. Most suicides are drug related. He discussed a number of other issues such as the "Scared family syndrome" and injecting houses. The former relates to parents' concern with teenage behaviour and problems with communication. If sensible reasonable discussion is impossible seek help from agencies such as Odyssey House, Anglicare or the Salvation Army.

Counselling is a big part of their work and is available to anyone with a drug-related problem.

On a more positive note - of 12,000 who have broken the habit 75% have continued over a long period.

10-year pin tally

After presenting 10-year pins to 9 members, President Allan said "I am delighted with the attendance at our January meeting and the past two years experience indicates that we should continue with a meeting in January.

We have now presented 10-year pins to 57 of our members who joined prior to 1990. Six more members have yet to attend a meeting to receive their pins and a further 5 members will become eligible during this year. This means that more than 50% of our current members have been with us for more than 10 years - we must have been doing something right.

List of Members at the end of 1999

R M Allan, W H Allan, B C Amond, G C Appleby, M E Applin, K M Armstrong, A B Avery, B R Bernau, S E Bernhard, C M Berry, F K Beyer, J A Bowen, J Brimage, J E Burgesson, R E Burnell, D J Burt, R D Butcher, D M Campbell, N Caris, I T Carne, S G Carpenter, N K Christie, D H Clark, A P Cox, P I Crompton, D N Crook, A M Cross, J H Crozier, R Davey, M J Davidson, D J Davis, F Davis, E K Dawson, W G Day, K M Deutsher, G Dunscombe, J B Eden, J W Elischer, R H Elliott, F S Elson, G L Epstein, P J Epstein, G A Fabiny, J R Freer, A M Gamble, A H Gasson, H J F Gerrand, H F Gowers, W H Grant, R H Gregory, L Hall, J B Hamann, B Hambleton, M Hancock, D T Hannan, E K Hardie, A J Hardy, J E Harper, J M Harris, B W Hart, C Henry, J C Hillman, B J Hirsh, W R Hogarth, R W Horne, J R Hunter, N H Ineson, P W Ingmire, D L Jenkins, W H Johnson, D C Keating, J J Kelly, G W Kirton, H K Kruse, R F Le Grand, J D Lindsay, P J Mahon, G H Mason, R S Matthews, B McAllister, I McDonald, R K McKinnon, C R Meade, E B Montfort, A W Nash, O J Obst, D T O'Loughlin, J L Opie, W D Packer, M C Parsons, R Pike, V A Proposch, J G Ragas, K J Reed, D H Reid, J A Reith, K C Reynolds, G Ristrom, H W Robbins, W D Roberts, K N C Rollason, L P Ross, J W Schulz, W Shepherd, T F Sheppard, D N Skinner, A W Small, P M Smith, A W Steinfort, H A Stevens, J C Tansey, A L Taylor, T Terrill, C M Thomas, B Thompson, K P Thompson, R B Trimmer, C A Walker, J E Wallace, J D Warburton, H S Warren, A J Watson, G Wearne and M H Williams.

Fish and chips on the Yarra

On Wednesday 2 February 40 members and partners went by ferry to Williamstown — fish and chips were served on the way. At the destination we had an hour to explore. A simple but pleasant outing.

Drama at the February meeting

On 15 February attendance nearly broke the 'ton', 99 members and guests attended. The advertised speaker was Neil Roberts back for a second serve — his previous talk almost had members rolling in the aisles — so the record attendance was not unexpected. However, the worst possible scenario (for the chairman of any meeting) was about to happen.

John Hamann provided a delightful ten minutes — his talk was entitled "Is it feasible?" Morning tea was over and members were bubbling with anticipation but Neil Roberts didn't turn up!

However, President Allan Taylor stepped forward [it wasn't far to step for he was already standing at the lectern] and presented an excellent hour talk — off the cuff!