



PROBUS CLUB OF MALVERN INC

Victoria Australia

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Supported by the Rotary Club of Malvern and sponsored by the City of Stonnington. The club meets 10am, 4th Tuesday each month, Presbyterian Church House, 163 Wattletree Rd, Malvern and via Zoom videoconference

Malvern Probussouthpacific.org

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FRIENDSHIP, FELLOWSHIP & FUN

Copies of the Bulletin will be available at the Church House Meeting and will be emailed to members. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5170019102>. The Meeting ID is 517 001 9102. By phone - (03) 7018 2005 or attend in person at the Presbyterian Church House, 163 Wattletree Road at 10.00am.

MONTHLY MEETING, 10.00 am TUESDAY 27th JANUARY 2026

President's Report: David Richards

HAPPY NEW YEAR 🎉 AND EVERY BEST WISH FOR 2026



After a wonderful break, 2026 is under way. I hope, like Robin and I, you enjoyed some time out.

Probussouthpacific.org activities are underway. Another thanks to our team members: Richard Uglow for January's Investment meeting; Alan Bayliss keeping the walkers on track; En Plain Air Michael Fitzgerald for brushing the team; Brian Stiebel Golf is underway; Ian Connelly's organisation of "Treasures of the Viking Age"; Richard Middleton arranging the 3rd February Eden lunch; Jeffery Blight taking bookings for the theatre /dinner 25th Feb.; and Chris Begg for music group continuity; not forgetting the unstoppable Georgios Friday coffees. Members who participated throughout the holiday season have continued to share the Malvern Probussouthpacific.org enthusiasm and culture. Great

work guys. Holiday makers return reinvigorated ready to participate in driving the club forward.

Being New Year, it's time to consider what we expect from Probussouthpacific.org; what each of us can contribute to its vitality. Best clubs like ours have members excited and willing to contribute their skills, participating in committees, and leading activities to be shared. I am looking forward to chatting about what changes you would like to bring and see introduced to Malvern Probussouthpacific.org.

I am anxious to learn of your interest and participation in club leadership. The great strength of Malvern Probussouthpacific.org is the team, so many sharing and contributing their skills. I look forward to working with you and sharing your enthusiasm. 😊

Have a great year.

Dave

My neighbour knocked on my door a 2.30 am this morning, can you believe it? Lucky for him I was still up playing my bagpipes.

Guest Speakers

Three Malvern Probus Members will address the meeting as January Guest Speakers.

Guest Speakers **Roger Bourne**
 John Jobling
 Bob Cooper

Chairman of the Day: **TBA**

Spotlight Speaker: **Ian Rosenberg**

MEMBERSHIP

Birthdays in January

Doug Barkley 9 th	John Mckenzie 10 th	Jeff Thompson 18 th	Barry Fenton 22 nd
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The membership as at 20th Dec is 86 (less three Life Members) thus leaving vacancies at 17.

Please let Leigh Machin know, via leighmachin@bigpond.com, if you change your contact details.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: 3rd Feb 2026

ACTIVITIES

Here we go again for another year of Friendship Fellowship and Fun, and lots of animated discussions over coffee. Please watch out for Leigh's emails once into the new year. The following is what is currently planned.

Every Friday morning, Probus Morning Coffee, (except Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day) from 10.00am – 12.00 noon, at Giorgio's in Malvern (opposite the Malvern Town Hall).

Every Thursday morning, The Walking Group meets at 10.00am. Here is your chance to get some *gentle* exercise while solving the world's problems. It's usually a flat route, no steep hills, at a pace that is comfortable. Please contact Greg Thompson, email gregfthompson@gmail.com or 0438 826511 or Alan Hay 0417 677 787

3rd Feb: The First Tuesday Lunch in February 2026 will be at 12.00 noon at Eden Espresso, 115 Glenferrie Rd. Malvern, next door to Australia Post. Just 5 doors North from Wattletree Rd. Malvern. It is quite accessible. Car parking is available in the carpark at the rear. Enter from the carpark door at rear of Eden. Alternatively, there are 2 tramlines almost to the door. Please confirm with Richard Middleton, mobile 0408 328 465 or email. sunbeam@bigpond.net.au

10th Feb: Investment Special Interest Group. Held on the second Tuesday of the month at 10.00am in the Church House, 161-163 Wattletree Road Malvern, and on Zoom (Meeting ID=804369746). Discussion topics: Economic trends, Monetary and Fiscal policy, and investment issues generally. Come along and contribute to managing our virtual investment portfolio and the consumption of Tim Tams. Contact Richard Uglow on 0408 574453

11th Feb: Golf Group. The monthly Probus golf outing is on again for 2026. As always, a casual and social nine holes. Keep an eye out for emails from Leigh. It will be held at Malvern Valley Public Golf Course, 1 Golfers Drive, Malvern East. Vic 3145

Tee times need to be pre-paid, with booking opening a week in advance. Getting in as soon as possible gives us the best chance of our preferred time - so, if you would like to play, please transfer the green fee of \$20.50 to the following account by no later than Tuesday 3rd February, either by: Direct transfer to Brian and Mary Stiebel NAB BSB: 083-337 Acc: 519168547, or PayID +61-415484585 (Brian's phone number) and don't forget to include your name in the reference when transferring the money.

Brian will check his account first thing on Wednesday 4th February – and book according to whoever has paid. No need for endless emails / texts / calls – if your money's there – you're in.

12th Feb: Music Appreciation Group. The next meeting will be on February 12th when the theme will be Verdi's "La Traviata". Contact Chris Begg by phone on ckpjbegg@optusnet.com.au or on 0419 105 586. Chris's address is Apt U208, Toorak Place, 28-30 Jackson St Toorak, 3142. Press key #208 at the front door and Chris will let you in.

17th Feb: Our Third Tuesday Outing for February is to the N G V for Westwood-Kawakubo special exhibition of fashion history.

This major international exhibition pairs the work of two of the most visionary and influential fashion designers in recent history; Vivienne Westwood and Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons.

Emerging in the 1970s, both rebelled against rigid social expectations to find artistic and economic freedom through fashion. Self-taught iconoclasts who challenged the 'rules' of dress; their work is grounded in the desire for change. Throughout their careers, Westwood and Kawakubo have reframed ideas of beauty, gender and the relationship between body and garment through their rejection of fashion norms. By experimenting with cut, form and function, each designer has reimagined the traditions of tailoring and dressmaking. Today, their material, technical and conceptual innovations continue to disrupt the status quo and shape the way we dress.

Bringing together over 140 works from the NGV Collection with selected important loans from international museums, Westwood Heritage archive and private collections, Westwood's and Kawakubo's work is placed into dialogue, highlighting how their shared concerns, contrasting philosophies and distinctive design methodologies have profoundly transformed contemporary fashion.

We meet in the foyer at 10.50am for a timed entry of 11.00. Partners Welcome. The cost is \$37-50 pp. Please pay to the Probus account (see below for details) using the advice "NGV" and then please book with Ian Connelly on mob....0419 368 088 or Cadillac.connelly@gmail.com.

There is also an option to hire commentary earphones @ \$7-50

Optional lunch is on the first floor "TEA ROOM cafe "at N G V.

20th Feb: En Plein Air Art Group. For anyone interested in painting, or critiquing, the group will meet at 1.30pm at a venue to be decided. Keep an eye out for Leigh's emails. No experience needed. But where possible bring your seat, and tools of trade. Contact Michael on 0408 286797 or Michaelfitzgerald54 @bigpond.com to discuss.

25th Feb: Malvern Theatre/Dinner presents "the Tin Woman" by Sean Grennan. Malvern Theatre Company is delighted to present this poignant, life-affirming story about the threads that bind us together.

Joy has Jack's heart – literally. She received it as a transplant. But rather than finding peace in the new opportunity she has been given, Joy spirals into despair. Why has she been given more life? Whose heart now beats in her body? Meanwhile, Jack's parents and sister grapple with the sudden loss of a deeply loved young man.

Can a meeting between Joy and Jack's family bring the possibility of acceptance and peace to all? Based on a true story, Sean Grennan's humorous heart-warming play explores the challenges of moving on, and the joy of a second chance.

Optional dinner from 6.00pm at the Racecourse Hotel, 895 Princes Hwy (Service Rd. Malvern East).
Followed by a short 5 minute walk to the Theatre at 29 Burke Rd Malvern East.

Please contact Jeffery Blight on 0437 665 234 or email: jeffery.a.blight@gmail.com
Please note the ticket price for the 2026 season has increased to \$27.00

17TH Mar: A forward announcement for a special 17TH March outing to Bishopcourt Historic Mansion and Gardens starting with Morning Tea.

Bishopcourt East Melbourne is the home of the Anglican Bishop & all Bishops since 1853. We have a residence tour plus heritage garden tour starting at 10.00am, with an enjoyable morning tea/coffee in beautiful east Melbourne, finishing around noon. Please note! Book early since we have a maximum booking of 20 people. Partners & guests welcome.

Please book with Ian Connelly on 0419 368 088 or email Cadillac.connelly@gmail.com and pay \$30.00 pp via the Probus bank account below using your surname and "Bishopcourt".

Activity Payments. When paying via bank transfer for Probus activities, please ensure that you enter your surname under "Description or Remitter" and indicate for which activity or purpose.

Account Name: Probus Club of Malvern Inc. BSB: 633000 Account Number: 158555409
Alternatively, you can tender cash to our Treasurer Mr Stuart Nicol.

December Guest Speaker

Since there was no December Guest Speaker, I take this opportunity

Paddy says "Mick, I'm thinking of buying a Labrador" *really* says Mick, have you seen how many of their owners go blind?

A man calls 000 and says, "I think my wife is dead". The operator asks how does he know? He says, "the sex is the same, but the ironing is piling up".

My girlfriend thinks I'm a stalker.....well she's not exactly my girlfriend yet.

And some thoughts to get you through any crisis.....

Indecision is the key to flexibility

There is no substitute for a genuine lack of preparation

Sometimes too much drink is not enough.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING.

Malvern Probus Meeting, 10.00am February 24th 2026

Guest Speaker: Sean Murphy

Topic: The Cranbourne Meteorite

Chairman of the Day: Dean Nelson

Spotlight Speaker: Noel Cunningham

There was a serious absence of photos submitted this month. But fortunately, Ian Connolly wrote of the trip to the Viking Exhibition. And Richard Uglow's new headgear demonstrates a newfound sartorial flair.

Our recent trip to see the Viking Exhibition had some fierce looking visitors



Our first Probus monthly outing for 2026 was to the Melbourne Museum to view the Viking Buried Treasures discovered this century in rural Scotland. Buried around AD 900, now called the Galloway hoard, it comprises silver, gold & other materials with a total weight of over 5 kilograms.

The hoard contained items from Europe & the Orient suggesting the Vikings were trading over a vast area a thousand years ago.

All items were painstakingly restored and this exhibition has videos showing these precious items coming back to life after their centuries underground.

Our group of 16 people including some partners & guests. After the exhibition 9 members enjoyed a long convivial lunch at the Mercury restaurant inside the museum featuring an excellent view facing the Melbourne Exhibition Building.

At the feet of the master..... from our En Plein Air group



From the Office

It's many years since we all retired from those long days at the office. While reminiscing the other day I thought of all the retorts I had heard, some of which our Ex PM Paul Keating would be proud of. So given this our January edition is short on Probus content, and given the parlous state of the world, I thought we could do with some levity. By the way, if you have a joke, witticism, anecdote, just send them in for your fellow Proberians to enjoy.

I don't work here - I'm a consultant.
It sounds like English, but I don't understand a damn word you're saying.
Ahhh. I see the screw-up fairy has visited us again.
I like you. You remind me of myself when I was young and stupid.
I can see your point, but I still think you're full of s%*\$t.
I don't know what your problem is, but I'll bet it's hard to pronounce.
How about never? Is never good for you?
I see you've set aside this special time to publicly humiliate yourself.
I'm really easy to get along with once you people learn to see it my way.
I'm out of my mind at the moment, but feel free to leave a message.
You are validating my inherent mistrust of strangers.
I have plenty of talent and vision - I just don't give a damn.
I'm already visualising the duct tape over your mouth.
I will always cherish the initial misconceptions I had about you.
Thank you. We're all refreshed and challenged by your unique point of view.
Any connection between your reality and mine is purely coincidental.
What am I? Flypaper for freaks?
I'm not being rude. You're just insignificant.
Yes, I am an agent of Satan, but my duties are largely ceremonial.
And your cry-baby whiny assed opinion would be?
Do I look like a f..king people person to you?
This isn't an office. It's Hell with fluorescent lighting.
I started out with nothing and I still have most of it left.
Sarcasm is just one more service we offer.
If I throw a stick, will you leave?
Errors have been made. Others will be blamed.
Whatever kind of look you were going for, you missed.
Oh, I get it. Like humour. Only different.
Too many freaks, not enough circuses.
Chaos, panic and disorder - my work here is finally done.
I'll try being nicer if you try being smarter.
Wait a minute - I'm just trying to imagine you with a personality.

High Tech in the EXTREME

Most of us appreciate the amazing advances in technology that leading edge scientists and engineers are making. But if you think you are across modern technology, just copy the following into your google search engine and be prepared to have your mind explode. This video discusses how the worlds most advanced, complex and foundational machine came about.

<https://youtu.be/MiUHjLxm3V0> Note this video is 55 mins long and requires your serious concentration.

So, this is the point in this Bulletin where the comedy stops, wonderment of man's expertise stops, the mundane ceases and a highly intelligent Politician (yes an oxymoron) provides a dose of reality. It may not impact Proberians' lives now, but it will seriously impact our children and grandchildren's lives.

THE WORLD AS IT IS, NOT WHAT WE WOULD LIKE IT TO BE.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney gave a forceful speech recently at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on the "New World Order". It is happening NOW.

The speech was delivered against a backdrop of rising geopolitical tensions between great powers like Russia, China and the United States, and as U.S. President Donald Trump threatens allies with tariffs and pushes to acquire Greenland from Denmark, a member of the NATO military alliance.

This is a speech which calls out reality. With the world great power being run by a fool (I declined to use lots of expletives) Carney is dealing with reality, facing the future and nominating a path for survival. I only hope our timid politicians read, digest, and understand what faces Australia. Even then would they actually do anything?

Below is the full transcript of the English parts of Carney's remarks. (he also spoke in French)

It seems that every day we're reminded that we live in an era of great power rivalry — that the rules-based order is fading, that the strong can do what they can, and the weak must suffer what they must.

And this aphorism of Thucydides is presented as inevitable, as the natural logic of international relations reasserting itself. And faced with this logic, there is a strong tendency for countries to go along, get along to accommodate, to avoid trouble, to hope that compliance will buy safety.

Well, it won't. So what are our options?

In 1978, the Czech dissident Václav Havel, later president, wrote an essay called "The Power of the Powerless," and in it he asked a simple question: how did the communist system sustain itself?

And his answer began with a greengrocer.

Every morning, the shopkeeper places a sign in his window: "Workers of the world unite." He doesn't believe in it. No one does. But he places the sign anyway to avoid trouble, to signal compliance, to get along. And because every shopkeeper on every street does the same, the system persists — not through violence alone, but through the participation of ordinary people in rituals they privately know to be false.

Havel called this living within a lie. The system's power comes not from its truth, but from everyone's willingness to perform as if it were true. And its fragility comes from the same source. When even one person stops performing, when the greengrocer removes his sign, the illusion begins to crack.

Friends, it is time for companies and countries to take their signs down.

For decades, countries like Canada prospered under what we called the rules-based international order. We joined its institutions, we praised its principles, we benefited from its predictability. And because of that, we could pursue values-based foreign policies under its protection.

We knew the story of the international rules-based order was partially false, that the strongest would exempt themselves when convenient, that trade rules were enforced asymmetrically, and we knew that international law applied with varied rigour, depending on the identity of the accused or the victim.

This fiction was useful, and American hegemony in particular helped provide public goods, open sea lanes, a stable financial system, collective security and support for frameworks for resolving disputes.

So we placed the sign in the window. We participated in the rituals, and we largely avoided calling out the gaps between rhetoric and reality.

This bargain no longer works.

Let me be direct. We are in the midst of a rupture, not a transition.

Over the past two decades, a series of crises in finance, health, energy and geopolitics have laid bare the risks of extreme global integration. But more recently, great powers have begun using economic integration as weapons, tariffs as leverage, financial infrastructure as coercion, supply chains as vulnerabilities to be exploited.

You cannot live within the lie of mutual benefit through integration when integration becomes the source of your subordination.

The multilateral institutions on which the middle powers have relied — the WTO, the UN, the COP, the very architecture of collective problem-solving — are under threat. As a result, many countries are drawing the same conclusions that they must develop greater strategic autonomy in energy, food, critical minerals, in finance and supply chains. And this impulse is understandable.

A country that cannot feed itself, fuel itself or defend itself has few options. When the rules no longer protect you, you must protect yourself.

But let's be clear-eyed about where this leads. A world of fortresses will be poorer, more fragile and less sustainable.

And there's another truth: if great powers abandon even the pretense of rules and values for the unhindered pursuit of their power and interests, the gains from transactionalism will become harder to replicate.

Hegemons cannot continually monetize their relationships. Allies will diversify to hedge against uncertainty. They'll buy insurance, increase options in order to rebuild sovereignty — sovereignty that was once grounded in rules but will increasingly be anchored in the ability to withstand pressure.

This room knows this is classic risk management. Risk management comes at a price, but that cost of strategic autonomy, of sovereignty, can also be shared. Collective investments in resilience are cheaper than everyone building their own fortresses. Shared standards reduce fragmentations. Complementarities are positive sum.

The question for middle powers like Canada is not whether to adapt to the new reality — we must.

The question is whether we adapt by simply building higher walls, or whether we can do something more ambitious.

Now, Canada was amongst the first to hear the wake-up call, leading us to fundamentally shift our strategic posture. Canadians know that our old, comfortable assumptions that our geography and alliance memberships automatically conferred prosperity and security, that assumption is no longer valid. And our new approach rests on what Alexander Stubb, the president of Finland, has termed value-based realism.

Or, to put it another way, we aim to be both principled and pragmatic. Principled in our commitment to fundamental values, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the prohibition of the use of force except when consistent with the UN Charter and respect for human rights.

And pragmatic in recognizing that progress is often incremental, that interests diverge, that not every partner will share all of our values.

So we're engaging broadly, strategically, with open eyes. We actively take on the world as it is, not wait around for a world we wish to be.

We are calibrating our relationships so their depth reflects our values, and we're prioritizing broad engagement to maximize our influence, given the fluidity of the world at the moment, the risks that this poses and the stakes for what comes next.

And we are no longer just relying on the strength of our values, but also the value of our strength.

We are building that strength at home. Since my government took office, we have cut taxes on incomes, on capital gains and business investment. We have removed all federal barriers to interprovincial trade. We are fast-tracking \$1 trillion of investments in energy, AI, critical minerals, new trade corridors and beyond. We're doubling our defence spending by the end of this decade, and we're doing so in ways that build our domestic industries. And we are rapidly diversifying abroad.

We've agreed to a comprehensive strategic partnership with the EU, including joining SAFE, the European defence procurement arrangements. We have signed 12 other trade and security deals on four continents in six months.

In the past few days, we've concluded new strategic partnerships with China and Qatar. We're negotiating free trade pacts with India, ASEAN, Thailand, Philippines and Mercosur.

We're doing something else: to help solve global problems, we're pursuing variable geometry. In other words, different coalitions for different issues based on common values and interests. So on Ukraine, we're a core member of the Coalition of the Willing and one of the largest per capita contributors to its defence and security.

On Arctic sovereignty, we stand firmly with Greenland and Denmark and fully support their unique right to determine Greenland's future.

Our commitment to NATO's Article 5 is unwavering, so we're working with our NATO allies, including the Nordic-Baltic Eight, to further secure the alliance's northern and western flanks, including through Canada's unprecedented investments in over-the-horizon radar, in submarines, in aircraft, and boots on the ground — boots on the ice.

Canada strongly opposes tariffs over Greenland and calls for focused talks to achieve our shared objectives of security and prosperity in the Arctic.

On plurilateral trade, we're championing efforts to build a bridge between the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the European Union, which would create a new trading bloc of 1.5 billion people.

On critical minerals, we're forming buyer's clubs anchored in the G7 so the world can diversify away from concentrated supply. And on AI, we're co-operating with like-minded democracies to ensure that we won't ultimately be forced to choose between hegemonies and hyperscalers.

This is not naïve multilateralism, nor is it relying on their institutions. It's building coalitions that work issue by issue with partners who share enough common ground to act together. In some cases, this will be the vast majority of nations. What it's doing is creating a dense web of connections across trade, investment, culture on which we can draw for future challenges and opportunities.

Our view is the middle powers must act together because if we're not at the table, we're on the menu.

But I'd also say that great powers can afford, for now, to go it alone. They have the market size, the military capacity and the leverage to dictate terms. Middle powers do not. But when we only negotiate bilaterally with a hegemon, we negotiate from weakness. We accept what's offered. We compete with each other to be the most accommodating.

This is not sovereignty. It's the performance of sovereignty while accepting subordination.

In a world of great power rivalry, the countries in between have a choice: compete with each other for favour, or combine to create a third path with impact. We shouldn't allow the rise of hard power to blind us to the fact that the power of legitimacy, integrity and rules will remain strong if we choose to wield it together.

Which brings me back to Havel. What does it mean for middle powers to live the truth?

First, it means naming reality. Stop invoking rules-based international order as though it still functions as advertised. Call it what it is: a system of intensifying great power rivalry where the most powerful pursue their interests using economic integration as coercion.

It means acting consistently, applying the same standards to allies and rivals. When middle powers criticize economic intimidation from one direction but stay silent when it comes from another, we are keeping the sign in the window.

It means building what we claim to believe in, rather than waiting for the old order to be restored. It means creating institutions and agreements that function as described, and it means reducing the leverage that enables coercion.

That's building a strong domestic economy. It should be every government's immediate priority.

And diversification internationally is not just economic prudence; it's a material foundation for honest foreign policy, because countries earn the right to principled stands by reducing their vulnerability to retaliation.

So, Canada. Canada has what the world wants. We are an energy superpower. We hold vast reserves of critical minerals. We have the most educated population in the world. Our pension funds are amongst the world's largest and most sophisticated investors. In other words, we have capital talent. We also have a government with immense fiscal capacity to act decisively. And we have the values to which many others aspire.

Canada is a pluralistic society that works. Our public square is loud, diverse and free. Canadians remain committed to sustainability. We are a stable and reliable partner in a world that is anything but, a partner that builds and values relationships for the long term.

And we have something else: we have a recognition of what's happening and determination to act accordingly. We understand that this rupture calls for more than adaptation. It calls for honesty about the world as it is.

We are taking a sign out of the window.

We know the old order is not coming back. We shouldn't mourn it. Nostalgia is not a strategy, but we believe that from the fracture we can build something bigger, better, stronger, more just. This is the task of the middle powers, the countries that have the most to lose from a world of fortresses and the most to gain from genuine co-operation.

The powerful have their power. But we have something too: the capacity to stop pretending, to name realities, to build our strength at home and to act together.

That is Canada's path. We choose it openly and confidently, and it is a path wide open to any country willing to take it with us.

Thank you very much.