



Issue Number 56  
August 2025

# The Hobsonville Probian

Official Newsletter of the Hobsonville Probus Club



| Your 2025 / 2026 Committee |                   |               | Interest Group Leaders                             |                    |              |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--|--------------------|--------------|
|                            |                   |               | <i>For more information about an activity ask:</i> |                    |              |
| <b>President</b>           | Ralph Martin      | 022 600 5730  | <b>Quiz Group</b>                                  | Gene & Don Irwin   | 027 232 0663 |
| <b>Vice-President</b>      | Molly Smith       | 027 373 5835  | <b>Craft Group</b>                                 | Avis Jury          | 09 416 8823  |
| <b>Secretary</b>           | Geoff Hickman     | 020 4161 1973 | <b>Morning Teas</b>                                |                    | 021 992 374  |
| <b>Treasurer</b>           | Linda Smith       | 027 493 3660  | <b>Knitting Group</b>                              | Avis Jury          | 09 416 8823  |
| <b>Membership</b>          | John O'Connell    | 021 457 204   | <b>Movies</b>                                      |                    |              |
| <b>Newsletters</b>         | Graham Macferson  | 021 268 3431  | <b>Cards</b>                                       |                    |              |
| <b>Welfare</b>             | Molly Smith       | 027 373 5835  | <b>Travel</b>                                      |                    |              |
| <b>Speakers</b>            | Carolyn MacDonell | 027 478 1477  | <b>Coffee Mornings</b>                             | Avis and John Jury | 09 416 8823  |
| <b>Past President</b>      |                   |               | <b>Photography</b>                                 | Heini Duensing     | 09 834 8917  |
| <b>Outings</b>             | Chris Doel        | 021 0275 3520 | <b>Sound &amp; Music</b>                           | Keith Giles        | 09 836 5143  |
| <b>Committee</b>           | John Jury         | 09 416 8823   | <b>Website</b>                                     | Graham Macferson   | 021 268 3431 |
| <b>Publicity</b>           | Chris Doel        | 021 027 53520 | <b>Archivists</b>                                  | John and Avis Jury | 09 416 8823  |

| Meetings                                       |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | August 2025   | September 2025   | October 2025  |
|  | Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am  | Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am                                     | Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am  |
| <b>SPEAKERS</b>                                |   |  |   |
| Convenor:<br>Carolyn MacDonell<br>027 478 1477 | James Duncan<br>MOTAT<br>Part 3 of the story behind<br>Auckland's much loved<br>electric trams. | Ian Alexander<br>President, Tiritiri Matangi<br>Supporters Group | Dr Jill Dobbie<br>University of Auckland<br>Machine Learning and<br>Artificial Intelligence |

# The President Prattles

Well, what an excellent third and final session of Trams in Auckland from James Duncan from MOTAT (Museum of Transport and Technology) for our August meeting. James is obviously very passionate about trams having been involved with them from an early age and continues to do so to this day. He still regularly drives the MOTAT trams. In the past 12 months he advised me that he had given 65 presentations (that is over one a week) to clubs such as Probus.

The format for the August meeting was changed to accommodate James due to his 1 hour (1.25 hours) presentation. This proved to work well and who cared if the presentation went over time – it was well worth it.

The layout of the room for the meeting was also changed to make use of the large TV screen and sound system. This was also a success due to the size of the screen and the sound system which I understand even the hearing impaired could hear. We may use this layout in the future if the committee approves.

There were a number of visitors for the August meeting with 6 application forms picked up, 4 of who expressed firm interest.

The Club's committee has now met to review changes to the Constitution and Standing Resolutions as recommended by an independent committee of 4 of the Hobsonville Probus Club members. Following this review by the Club committee the changes have been sent to PSPL (Probus South Pacific Ltd) for approval. Once PSPL approval has been gained we will be going through the process of changing the Constitution and Standing Resolutions. The Club's committee will be also recommending that we become an Incorporated Society.

Further to the Constitution and Standing Resolutions we are having to put in place a Privacy Policy, a Health and Safety Policy, a Disputes Policy and if you are able to advise me of any other policies then please leave them for the next President. We live in a world of covering our backside!!!

President Ralph

**Pun of the month:** I'm not getting older, I'm just becoming a classic.

# The Old Mill at Riverhead

Only a short distance from Hobsonville Point as the crow flies, but a little further by road, lies the historic village of Riverhead which played a large part in the European history of Auckland dating back to the 1840's. The Riverhead area had several natural advantages; it was readily accessible from Auckland by sea when road access was very limited, it had an ample supply of fresh water from the Wautaiti Stream, and there were large Kauri forests in the area.



The Riverhead Mill during its days as a paper mill

- **1844:** European settlement began with the establishment of a *kauri timber mill*, taking advantage of Riverhead's strategic location at the head of the Waitematā Harbour. Fresh water for driving the mill machinery was conveyed from the stream to the mill site via an overhead wooden aqueduct.
- **1860s:** The timber mill was converted into a *flour mill*, which became the largest in the wider Auckland region. This transformation helped Riverhead develop into a thriving community.
- **Late 1800s:** The site evolved again — this time into a *paper mill*. By 1895, it merged with two South Island mills to form the New Zealand Paper Mill Company Limited, aiming to survive fierce competition.
- **1923:** Operations were consolidated and the Riverhead mill was closed, with production shifting to Mātaura in the South Island. At its peak, it was New Zealand's second-largest paper manufacturer.



Today, while the original mill structures are long gone, the legacy remains embedded in Riverhead's identity — a town shaped by timber, flour, and paper.

The remains of the mill foundations are located on the banks of the river adjacent to where the road bridge crosses the river, and there is a public path leading from a reserve and under the road to the mill site. The mill area itself is fenced off because of the dangerous nature of the mill foundations, but the structure can be readily discerned.



# Club News

## **Website and Email Address:**

Remember to check our website:

[www.probusouthpacific.org/microsites/hobsonville](http://www.probusouthpacific.org/microsites/hobsonville) (or just Google Hobsonville Probus Club) for details of or Club activity, including new announcements that are posted from time to time.

The website administrator is Graham Macferson [graham.macferson@gmail.com](mailto:graham.macferson@gmail.com) .

Our email is [hobsonvilleprobusclub1@gmail.com](mailto:hobsonvilleprobusclub1@gmail.com) .

This goes to our secretary. The email for the Probian and website editor is [hobsonvilleprobusclub3@gmail.com](mailto:hobsonvilleprobusclub3@gmail.com) .

## **Treasurer**

Account name: Hobsonville Probus Club

Account Number: 03-1730-0050493-000

Put your SURNAME and SUB (or other purpose) as references so you payment can be identified.

## **Welfare**

Please advise Molly, our Welfare Coordinator, or anyone on the committee, if you know of a member who would benefit from a message of support while incapacitated.

Ph. 027 373 5835

Contact Team:

Coordinator: Molly Smith

Summerset: Helen West & Gayle Doel

Waterford: John & Avis Jury

Ryman: Ralph Martin & Geoff Hickman

Others: Margaret Harness, Paula Graham, Gay Henderson

## **Coffee Club**

The August Coffee Club meeting will be at the Waterford Village Lounge on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August at 10:30 am.

## **Quiz Night**

The next quiz night is 8<sup>th</sup> September at 7 pm in Waterford Retirement Village lounge.

If you have not attended before you are very welcome to come along. Note however that this is not for serious quizzers. Teams are randomly selected, and It is intended to be a fun evening with most of the questions being multiple choice. If you are interested please contact Gene and Don Irwin on 027 232 0663, or email at [penoandpolyp@hotmail.com](mailto:penoandpolyp@hotmail.com) .

## **Craft Group**

Avis Jury.

The craft group is operating very successfully. If you are interested in joining this group please contact Avis on 09 416-8823 for details.

### **Outings**

Chris Doel.

#### **NZ Rum Refining Co**

A group of 8 members 'men and women attended the visit to **the NZ Rum Refining Co** . A very interesting History of origins and background to the Industry of Rum manufacture was given by the proprietor Ron O 'Connell with an explanation of the processes and bottling required to produce a range of Rums and Gins .

We were taken on a tour of the premises and then allowed to sample a range of product and at the end were able to purchase product for our own use .

#### **Proposed trip to Civic Theatre**

Our next proposed visit is to **the Civic Theatre** where we will be taken on a tour of the dressing rooms and behind the scenes to look at what make this historic theatre so interesting ,

As the tour requires a reasonable amount of fitness it is not possible to visit if you require crutches or walkers as there are approximately 300 stairs to navigate

Cost [depending on numbers ] is \$46 to \$49 each.

Time approx. 1.5 hours

Assembly time is 9.15 am tour behind the scenes at 9.30am

Please contact Chris to confirm that you wish to join our group and he will organize and advise of the date if we get enough. **Chris Doel 02102753520 email [cjdoel@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cjdoel@xtra.co.nz).**

#### **Proposed trip to the POLICE Helicopter Base at Mangere .**

This is a no cost visit to an operational helicopter base where we will be given an informative talk on the background to the formation of the Helicopter police, an insight into the current operations, and view some incidents which have been recorded showing the effectiveness of the unit. This will be followed by questions and answers, and finally by a visit to the hangar where all the helicopters are housed .

### **SPEAKERS CORNER**

Carolyn MacDonnel - Speaker Coordinator.

As mentioned by our President in his "prattle", the August speaker was James Duncan who presented the third and last part of his very excellent series of talks on the history of the Auckland trams.

Carolyn has arranged the following speakers for the next several months.

| MONTH        | SPEAKER  |
|--------------|--|
| September 15 | <p><b>Ian Alexander, President, Tiritiri Matangi Supporters Group</b><br/> <a href="#">The sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi would not be what it is today without the dedicated team behind it - past &amp; present.</a></p> <p>Ian has been member of Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi for 25 years, regular weekly guide for 13 years, involved with various Biodiversity projects, and presenter to many Auckland service clubs and community organisations on Tiritiri Matangi conservation efforts. His career has been at senior management level in Local Government and Public Companies, holding many roles from Company Secretary to CEO. Experienced in management, governance, finance, marketing, HR, property and relationships. Ian has a doctorate in Business Management, am a Winston Churchill Fellow, and a member of the Institute of Directors. Outside of my career, my involvement has been in community organisations, including periods in excess of 35 years in both Scouting NZ and NZ School Trustees Association. Ian has held office bearer positions in these and many other groups at local, regional and national level including as treasurer, auditor and president. Ian is willing to provide the governance leadership this role requires and to contribute to the continuing successful conservation efforts on Tiritiri Matangi Island.</p> |
| October 20   | <p><b>Dr Jill Dobbie, UoA</b><br/> At school, I excelled in Sciences and discovered my love of Computer Science. I went on to study Applied Engineering at undergraduate and postgraduate level, with a focus on computing and process control. After my undergraduate degree I spent a couple of years in industry working for PEC, programming in assembly language. My PhD research addressed theoretical aspects of database systems. I was one of the first women to complete a PhD in Computer Science at the University of Melbourne.</p> <p>My current research focuses on machine learning, in particular data stream mining and adversarial attacks. My research group creates algorithms that can be used in various application areas, such as predicting peaks and troughs in COVID-19 cases, predicting dementia using routinely collected data, monitoring critical and/or remote sensors, and detecting and defending against various adversarial attacks.</p>   |
| November 17  | <b>Scott Point School Performances</b>   |
| December 8   | <b>Christmas Lunch</b>   |

## August Birthday Corner



|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Gayle Doel       | Sandra Harrod     |
| Glenda Hylton    | Raymond Moore     |
| John O'Connell   | Joy Riddell       |
| Aileen Serjeant  | Eric Smith        |
| David Sutherland | VanKan Wilhelmina |

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Hobsonville Probus Club acknowledge the generous sponsorship of Ryman Healthcare Keith Park Retirement Village, with their support of the hall hire for our monthly meeting.

