



Issue Number 57  
September 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			
	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025
	Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am	Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am	Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am
<b>SPEAKERS</b>  Convenor: Carolyn MacDonell 027 478 1477	Toni Ashton  Tiritiri Matangi Supporters Group	Dr Jill Dobbie University of Auckland Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence	Scott Point School Performances.

# The President Prattles

The guest speaker Toni Ashton who spoke on the history and restoration of Tiritiri Matangi Island gave a very good insight into the damage early Europeans did to the island and the subsequent restoration. I myself was somewhat surprised to learn of the number of native birds that have been released on the island and other natives such as skinks and tuatara's. Also surprising was how few Probus members have visited the island. I myself planted trees in conjunction with my daughter and other students from Pakuranga Intermediate about 1990. I returned to the island about 2015 and was amazed to see the incredible change that had occurred. An abundance of bird life was evident although there was no tuatara's to be seen probably because it was during day light hours.

The September raffle prizes to the value of \$340-00 were donated by New World Hobsonville. This was a fantastic donation so I am sure the lucky winners are appreciating the contents of the prizes. Many thanks to New World Hobsonville.

Our new Constitution and Standing Orders have now been approved by PSPL (Probus South Pacific Limited). However, members of the Probus Club of Hobsonville have to approve these 2 documents so before the end of the year you will all receive notification to discuss and vote on these items. At the same time you will have to vote whether to become an Incorporated Society. The committee will be recommending that the Club becomes Incorporated. You will receive details of why the committee is recommending that the Club becomes Incorporated. We live in changing times which means we have to protect ourselves legally.

The Hobsonville Bowling Club has installed a large screen which we are now in a better position for presentations by our guest speakers. This also allows the morning tea to be set up at the other end of the room without interference from the drop down screen that we previously used. This has proved to be a far better arrangement and allows for more professional presentation. The only problem last Monday was the level of the sound – this was due to the sound system not functioning as expected.

President Ralph

**Pun of the month:** I'm aging like fine cheese—sometimes sharp, occasionally crumbly, but always appreciated.

# The Gumdiggers of Riverhead



In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Riverhead—nestled at the head of the Waitematā Harbour—was a bustling hub for kauri gum digging. This golden resin, buried in the soil where ancient kauri forests once stood, was prized for its use in varnish, linoleum, and other industrial products. Riverhead’s swampy terrain and proximity to Auckland made it a strategic site for gum extraction and trade.

Gumdiggers came from all walks of life. Māori, British settlers, and Dalmatian immigrants (often called “Austrians” at the time) worked side by side in the muddy fields. Armed with spades and gum spears, they dug deep into the earth, often knee-deep in swamp water, searching for the hardened amber treasure. Life was tough—diggers lived in rudimentary huts, braving the elements and enduring long hours of labour. Yet the camaraderie and resilience of these communities left a lasting imprint on New Zealand’s cultural fabric.

Riverhead’s gumfields eventually gave way to forestry and agriculture. From 1929 to 1933, the Riverhead State Forest was planted over 5,000 hectares of poor gumland, marking the end of an era. Today, the legacy lives on in place names like Gumdiggers Lane in Riverhead, and in the stories passed down through generations.



# 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 Orion Point MetlifeCare Village Lounge on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September at 10:30 am.

## **Quiz Night**

The next quiz night is 13<sup>th</sup> October 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.

### **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 .

This visit is currently planned for Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> September. Please get in touch with **Chris Doel 02102753520 email [cjdoel@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cjdoel@xtra.co.nz)** if you are interested in attending.

## **SPEAKERS CORNER**

Carolyn MacDonnel - Speaker Coordinator.

As mentioned by our President in his “prattle”, the September speaker was Toni Ashton who is a volunteer guide on Tiritiri Matangi Island, which is just off the tip of the Wangaparaoa Peninsular. She outlined the history of the island starting from the time when it was open countryside with a manned lighthouse, the conversion of the lighthouse to an unmanned one, with the previous lighthouse keeper became the first ranger for the island. She described the conservation efforts on the island to create an open sanctuary that anyone could visit. The efforts undertaken included the planting of the native trees to cover the entire island, the eradication of pests including rats and stoats, the introduction of threatened bird species and others such as Tuatara onto the island. The group are very proud of the fact that they have accomplished all of the goals that they had set out to achieve back in 1980.

Tiritiri Matangi is open to the public and community groups, with ferries leaving from Auckland City and Gulf Harbour. For further information see the website at [www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz](http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz) .

It was a most fascinating talk. Here are several photos from her talk.





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

MONTH	SPEAKER
October 20	<b>Dr Jill Dobbie, UoA</b> 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.  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.
November 17	<b>Scott Point School Performances</b>
December 8	<b>Christmas Lunch</b>

### **Christmas Lunch**

The Christmas Lunch will be held this year on 8<sup>th</sup> December at the Hobsonville Bowling Club. The cost will be \$30 per head, with the catering done by New World Hobsonville. See the next page for details.





## **Probus Hobsonville Christmas Lunch 2025**

Monday 8 December 2025 | 11.30am-3.00pm  
Hobsonville Bowling Club, 1 Memorial Park Lane, Hobsonville

### **Menu**

#### **Main Course**

Turkey Roll with Cranberry Jelly  
Ham on the Bone with Dijon Mustard  
Fish Bites with Tartare Sauce  
A selection of Salads

#### **Dessert**

Meringue Nests with cream  
Chocolate Sponge Roll  
Christmas Mince Tarts  
Strawberries  
Ice Cream

#### **Refreshments**

Tea & Coffee  
Cash bar will be available

### **Payment**

Registrations and payment by 24 November  
Avis - [aaandej@gmail.com](mailto:aaandej@gmail.com)  
\$30 pp to 03-1730-0050493-00

*Catering by New World Hobsonville*

## September Birthday Corner



Rae Cox

Dara Crawford

Liz Davis

Gaye Henderson

John Jury

Jewel Laloli

Wendy Macferson

Jeanette Stanton

*You will see some advertisements in this Probian.* These are paid entries and in keeping with our intention to promote Hobsonville professional businesses. Please support these advertisers if you can. Please don't print out the adverts at the end of the newsletter if you are concerned about the number of pages. You can select the pages you want to print when you initiate the printing.

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.

