



Issue Number 58  
October 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			
	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
	Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am	Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am	Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> 11:30am
<b>SPEAKERS</b>  Convenor: Carolyn MacDonell 027 478 1477	Dr Jill Dobbie University of Auckland Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence	Scott Point School Performances.	Christmas Luncheon Hobsonville Bowling Club, 1 Memorial Park Lane.

# The President Prattles

Writing this months Presidents Prattles is no different from other months – what the heck to have to write about. And besides this English was my worst subject at school and beyond. At least I can now use spell check which is a bonus and of course now I can use ChatGPT or Copilot to write what I ask it to do. However, to date I have not been brave enough to use these new means of writing. So, it was of interest to myself and obviously to all of you members to listen to Dr Jill Dobbie on her presentation of AI. I thought it was an interesting way of hers to start the presentation by fielding questions from the floor so she could gauge the interest and knowledge of those present.

Our Probian Editor Graham Macferson has caught onto this new way of AI where he has used it to provide articles on local history for the Probian. Well done Graham, we live in awe at you keeping up with modern trends.

The November meeting will be an important one for the Clubs future. PROBUS South Pacific Limited (PSPL) has for the last few years been working on updating the Constitution and Standing Resolutions to conform with the latest laws and practises. A committee was recently appointed to review the proposal from PSPL and report back to the Probus Club of Hobsonville. This was done with the further changes being made. The final draft was then sent to PSPL who have approved the changes. The final version is to voted on at the November meeting.

The Probus Club of Hobsonville committee will also be recommending to the Club to register as an Incorporated Society. Although this will provide a little extra work for the committee becoming a member of the Incorporated Society, it gives legal protection to individuals in the Club which is the main basis of the committees argument for joining.

President Ralph

## Seniors Wellness Expo

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

10am – 2pm

Sutherland Lounge

Cinema Road Hobsonville

The Probus Club of Hobsonville will be having a stand at this Expo so please come along and support us. If you are able to assist for say an hour please contact President Ralph. [ralph.martin@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ralph.martin@xtra.co.nz)

# Welcome

A very big welcome to **Elsie and Jan Eelman** who have just recently joined Hobsonville Probus.

**Pun of the month:** They say with age comes wisdom... but sometimes age just comes alone!

## Clark House, Hobsonville

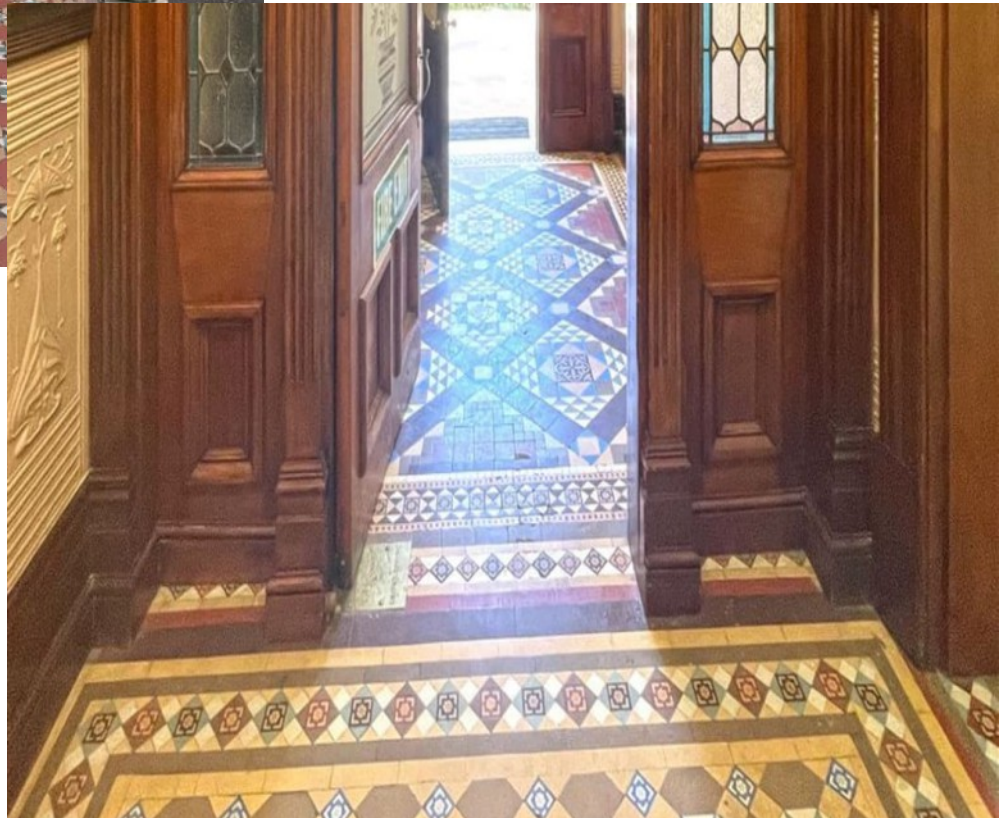


- Clark House is an early-20th-century Italianate villa at **25–29 Clark Road, Hobsonville**, built for the Clark pottery family. Construction began in the late 1890s and the house was finished around **1902**.
- It was designed and built by members of the Clark family (Rice Owen Clark II and his sons) and is notable because its walls and foundations were made from **hollow glazed ceramic blocks** produced by the family firm — an experimental technique pioneered by Thomas Edwin Clark. That glazing and block technique is what makes the house technically and historically significant.
- The interior features originally included a curved staircase, stained glass, Art-Nouveau dado panels, decorative tiles and kauri timber joinery — all high-quality period features that reflect the family's ceramics/finish expertise.
- After remaining in the Clark family for decades, the Crown (on behalf of the Royal New Zealand Air Force) purchased the property in **1950**; it was used by the RNZAF for aviation-medicine and Cold-War era meetings (SEATO) and remained in Defence use until 2016..



- Clark House is **Category I** listed by Heritage New Zealand for its outstanding historical and technological significance (the first known NZ residence built of hollow ceramic blocks).
- The property gained wider public attention in recent years (including media coverage when it was marketed), and it was reported sold in 2025.

Note: ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot AI were used in the preparation of this article and in the search for photographs.



# Club News

## **Website and Email Address:**

Remember to check our website:

[www.probussouthpacific.org/microsites/hobsonville](http://www.probussouthpacific.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 Coffee Club meeting is normally held on the last Thursday of each month, and hence the October meeting will be at the Waterford Retirement Village Lounge on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October at 10:30 am. All members are very welcome.

## **Quiz Night**

The next quiz night is Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 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.

#### **Trip to the POLICE Helicopter Base at Mangere .**

Chris recently led a very interesting and successful visit to the base for the NZ Police helicopters in Mangere. The visit included a talk on the background of the helicopter police, an insight into the current operations of the unit, and a



visit to to their hangars to inspect the helicopters close up.

Here are some photographs of the visit.



## **Proposed Trip to Pukekohe**

Chris has proposed a day trip by public transport to the delightful rural town of Pukekohe. This would be by free public transport (for us Gold Card holders using our HOP card). It would entail a ferry boat trip from Hobsonville Point starting at about 9:30 am, followed by a short walk of just a few hundred metres to the Britomart Train Station and a ride of a little over one hour to Pukekohe where the train station is only about 500 metres from the town centre, and where there is a very good café for coffee or a lunch. The return trip uses the same transport in reverse, arriving back at around 4 pm. There is no fixed date for this trip at this stage, but would probably be in the first half of November.

If you are interested in this trip please contact Chris Doel on 021 0275 3520 or by email at [cjdoel@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cjdoel@xtra.co.nz).


## **SPEAKERS CORNER**

Carolyn MacDonnel - Speaker Coordinator.

As mentioned by our President in his “prattle”, the October speaker was Dr. Jill Dobie, a Professor of Computer Science at Auckland University. Her talk was rather unusual because it started with asking for questions from the audience, and continued as a question and answer session for the whole of her talk. She had a few slides showing the statistics for the degree of concern in the USA for the future in an AI dominated world. The questions asked showed the same high level of concern from Probus members, and, although she tried to allay these fears, I am not certain that she was entirely successful.

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

MONTH	SPEAKER
November 17	<b>Scott Point School Performances</b>
December 8	<b>Christmas Lunch</b>
Jan 2026	<div></div> <p><b>Chub Roberts – Delivery of the first Andover aircraft from England to New Zealand in 1976.</b> Born in Lower Hutt &amp; educated at Hutt Valley High School. Joined the RNZAF in 1961, graduating as a navigator in 1963. Posted to No 14 Squadron (Canberra aircraft) at Ohakea serving in New Zealand, South Pacific and South East Asia until 1970. Then posted to Navigator Training School at Wigram as a navigation instructor until 1973. Then posted to Air Staff, Defence Headquarters for 2 years before posting to No 1 Squadron (Bristol Freighter and Andover aircraft) until resigning in 1977 to become an Air Traffic Controller. Spent 2 years at Ardmore Aerodrome as a controller before posting to Whenuapai where I served for the next 28 years being promoted to Senior Air Traffic Control Officer (SATCO) in 1990.</p>

Feb 2026	<p><b>Graham Macferson - THE NORTH HEAD TUNNELS</b></p> <p>Graham spent a large part of his career working as a scientist for the New Zealand Defence Force where he worked in a variety of areas including underwater acoustics, electronic signal processing, electronic warfare, and later in computer-based simulation, particularly as applied to multi-national operations in littoral naval warfare. As a side-line to his main work, he became involved for a short period in the search for the controversial lost tunnels within North Head on Auckland's North Shore. In this presentation he will talk about the history of North Head and its fortifications, eyewitness accounts of tunnels within the mountain, various attempts to locate any of these tunnels, and his own involvement in the search.</p>
Mar 2026	<b>AGM</b>
Apr 2026	<div>  <p><b>Lindsey Dawson</b></p> <p>Lindsey Dawson is a writer of fiction and non-fiction. She has also worked extensively as an editor, columnist and speaker. She has had a long career in journalism, and she was the founding editor of several high profile magazines, as well as being a long-running contributor. Dawson has published three novels, and a number of non-fiction titles. Her latest book is non-fiction, published in June 2025, by OutLoudPress. Entitled <i>Poisoning on Parker Road: One Family, Two Deaths and all the Secrets in Between</i>, it's about the sudden death of a young English settler in west Auckland in 1892 and delves into what happened to his family down through the next generations. Sir Bob Harvey calls it "relentlessly compelling, simply engrossing".</p> </div>

### **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 \$35 per head, with the catering done by New World Hobsonville. See the next page for details. Note price on flyer is incorrect.





## **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*

## October Birthday Corner



Bob Jessopp

Graham Macferson

Helen Maddren

Lyn Pushong

Roger Serjeant

Linda Wong

*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.

