



TOOWOOMBA RANGE PROBUS

Newsletter

Issued 23 July 2025

Management Team 2025-26

President	John Randall
Vice President	Mike Butt
Imm Past Pres	Tony Mullen
Secretary	Tony Mullen
Treasurer	Ken Stephenson
Program Director	Rob Catto
Trips/Outings	Floyd Wilson & Paul Barrett
Welfare Officer	Rob Catto
Newsletter	Bruce Hinchliffe

Next General Meeting: 10a.m. Tuesday 29 July 2025

At the Ballymore Room,
341 Hume Street, Toowoomba

Guest Speaker: Senior Constable Jason

Burrows. A police officer since 1998 and member of the Toowoomba Highway patrol since 2007, Senior Constable Burrows has been involved in many road safety campaign initiatives that relate to education of drivers of varying ages

His topic next Tuesday: Driving Licences and Road Rules of Interest to Elderly Drivers.



***Please remember . . .
If you're unable to attend a
meeting, it's important that
– for catering purposes –
you tender your apologies
by text to Secretary Tony
Mullen on 0408 238 091 or
email him at
rangeprobus@outlook.com***

Next Outing: 6.30pm Tuesday 12 August 2025



To the Empire Theatre for
The Play that Goes Wrong

Co-Tours and Outings director Paul Barrett has reserved 40 tickets for the performance, but is confident more can be accommodated if necessary. Cost is \$89.90 p.p.

Well Done, Horst!

President John Randall presents member Horst Brosi with his 20-year service pin. Horst was inducted into Range Probus on 27 January 2004, a red-letter day for the club!



**A call for starters
will be made at
the July meeting.**

Promotional material for the play says it's "a hilarious hybrid of Monty Python and Sherlock Holmes, things go from bad to utterly disastrous when The Cornley Drama Society performs a classic murder mystery."



Largest biological invasion in history cost millions



Introduction of rabbits to Australia resulted in the largest biological invasion in history.

That was the opening message of a most interesting and informative talk to Toowoomba Range Probus at its meeting on 24 June.

The speaker was **Craig Magnussen**, Chief Executive Officer of the Darling Downs and Moreton Rabbit Board. He said rabbits existed in plague proportions in Australia from the 1860s until the release of the Myxoma virus in 1952.

Plagues rendered farmland useless, pushed native species to extinction, and cost the agricultural sector in the order of \$200 million annually in lost production and control costs.

But rabbits also helped shape Australia; they were the source of cheap meat during Depression years and also created employment. Intentional introductions in Queensland in the 1870s gave rise to the *Rabbit Act 1880*, which prohibited the introduction and keeping of rabbits.

The Queensland Government built about 1,000km of rabbit-proof fencing along the Queensland-New South Wales-South Australian borders in 1886-1891 - too late to stop rabbits entering Queensland, but saw millions perish on the fence as they continued

their push north from the southern States.

The *Rabbit Boards Act 1891* saw Rabbit Boards erected across most of Queensland, giving Boards the power to levy monies from stock owners to build rabbit-proof fences.

The Darling Downs Rabbit Board built the first 304km section of fence, between Dalveen and Warra in 1893-1898. The Leichardt Board completed 592km in 1897. The Darling Downs fence was extended east to Wilsons Peak in 1903-1906 and further to Mt Lindesay in 1906-1908, then to the Tweed River in 1915. A 40 km unfenced stretch in "such rugged and mountainous terrain; impossible for rabbits to penetrate" was fenced as rabbits indeed passed through. It was completed in 1928.

In 1906, 22 million frozen rabbits were exported, earning more than the export of frozen beef.

A Royal Commission in 1930 saw all Boards abolished except for the

Darling Downs, Moreton and Leichardt Boards.

Myxo was released in 1952 and resulted in a 99% reduction in rabbit populations. Rabbits quickly recovered due to their inherent ability to breed and develop resistance.

The *Rabbit Act 1964* amalgamated the Darling Downs, Moreton and part of the Leichardt Boards to form the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board. The board's job was to maintain 350 miles of existing rabbit barrier fence.

Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV; calicivirus) was released in 1996 amid escalating rabbit numbers nationally. As with Myxo, there was a massive crash in populations, followed by recovery with developing resistance.

DDMRB today maintains 555km of fence, maintained in its entirety on a weekly basis. It has an operational area of 28,000 square kilometres across eight local government areas. It has 15 staff, and a board of six directors (Councillors drawn from the eight Councils).

The speaker said: "Science tells us that the fence works: The fence has effectively prevented rabbit incursions into and beyond the DDMRB area."

He concluded with the quote from the Elsworth report of 2022: ***The fence prevented entry, and compliance stopped the spread.***



Mike Butt introduced the guest speaker, Craig Magnussen, and presented him with a handsome, newly released Probus pannikin



Visit by Toowoomba Range Probus Club

15-22 July 2025

A party of 28 members, wives and guests are back from a seven-day sojourn on beautiful Norfolk Island enjoying its charm, history, and natural wonders



Getting to know the friendly locals on fabulous Norfolk



In historic St Barnabas Chapel on Norfolk



Morning tea near iconic Norfolk Island Pines

Majella Wilson was able to make it to Bruce Hinchliffe's 90th birthday party last Saturday (July 19) after brain tumour surgery in Brisbane on the previous Monday. She and Floyd had to reluctantly cancel plans to join the Norfolk travellers.





Our intrepid travellers, dwarfed by a giant Moreton Bay fig on Norfolk Island



The fascinating history of Norfolk Island explained to Range Probus visitors at Hilli Goat Farm



The Barney Duffy barbecue is not to be missed on Norfolk. Barney was a convict who escaped confinement on Norfolk Island and lived for nine years in a hollow tree before authorities found him. He was later hanged.

The Norfolk travellers arrived home last night and reported the trip was "fantastic" - largely due to the expertise of tour guide Lauren Roby, Senior Travel consultant at Uplift Tours and Travel. **Thank you, Lauren!**