



Staying Connected

Issue 75, October 2025

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings.

I hope that you have been able to weather the changing temperatures this month.

This month I would like to share some thoughts on my reflections of the year and how we are progressing as a Club. It has been a year of steady growth of our membership, having the ability to get to know each other better and sharing some wonderful memories.

Our calendar of events this year has been varied and entertaining.

The events our club has organised have been well received, thanks in part to both the Management Committee planning and by the members themselves in participating in the many outings, activities, lunches and monthly meetings.

It has been a privilege to participate in each of our meetings and the conversations over lunch and outings.

The main focus has been to have fun, be respectful and enjoy the times we spend together.

As we approach the end of our year I would like to thank each one of you for your contribution to the club and ask that you consider how you would like to contribute towards the running of the club next year.

Nominations for management committee will be discussed over the next few meetings I would ask you to think about putting up a nomination or discuss with our committee members if you are interested in helping in the coming year.

Regards
Graham Yates
President

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Russell Lea Probus Club acknowledges the Wangal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we meet and we pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

OCTOBER MEETING REPORT

Forty one members were in attendance. There were 23 apologies.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Carmen's updated financial report was presented by President Graham. The proposal has been approved by Club Five Dock, for a grant to fund meeting room costs in 2026. Carmen's efforts in obtaining the grant were applauded.

Membership Report

Membership remains at 67 members.

Activities and Outings

Activities and Outings Officer Megan outlined recent activities, and events coming up in the next month and beyond. These are listed in the "For Your Diary" section of the Newsletter.

Guest Speaker

Shaun Rennie, Associate Director of Opera Australia (and a theatre, musical theatre, and opera director) spoke about "Directing a Musical on Sydney Harbour". A separate report on the complexities of his role is included in the Newsletter.

Guest Speaker Coordinator Toni advised the following speakers for future meetings:

November 2025

Tim Elchah – Leichhardt Chiropractor (see separate report)

February 2026

Charles Fellner - Scam awareness - your best defence

Christmas Lunch

The meeting was advised the annual Christmas Lunch will be held at Angelos on the Bay, Cabarita. Cost will be \$60 for members, excluding drinks.

Succession Planning

Megan advised the meeting that all Management Committee positions will be open for members to nominate in time for the March 2026 AGM and encouraged members to consider contributing.

A new position of General Committee Member will be established at the AGM to provide an introductory step to the different roles of the Management Committee.

Probus Month Celebrations

At the conclusion of the meeting, a brief function was held to acknowledge Probus Month. The function included brief presentations and a 'cutting of the Probus Cake'.

Foundation member, former Vice President and President and long-term Newsletter Officer John Baker was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his contribution to our Club.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday, 29 October 2025

"Kiama by Rail" Opal Card Outing
Leaving Platform 25 at Central Station at 9.27am. See Megan's 17 October email and attachment for further details.

Thursday, 30 October 2025

Fashion Parade with morning tea.
Drummoyne Community Centre. \$10.
Bookings essential at 9719 8102 or
info@dcc.org.au

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

(and every first Tuesday of month)
Let's Talk About Books, 29 Dawson
Street Croydon (to avoid Cup Day crowd
at Canada Bay Club 1:30pm. NOTE
CHANGE OF TIME.

Wednesday, 12 November 2025

Scrabble Club

Friday, 14 November 2025 at 10am

Rozelle Op-Shop Crawl. Meet at Noffs
Op Shop, 704 Darling Street, Rozelle

Friday, 14 November 2025 at 12.30pm

Let's Do Lunch. Sackville Hotel, 599
Darling Street, Rozelle. RSVP via Google
form (link will be in WhatsApp). NOTE
later start to link with Op-Shop Crawl.

Monday, 17 November 2025

(and every third Monday of month)
Walking (9.15am) and/or coffee (10am)
at Carmels, 284 Great North Road,
Wareemba.

Thursday, 20 November 2025

Diabetes Awareness presentation,
including management for seniors, with
afternoon tea. Drummoyne Community
Centre. Bookings essential at 9719 8102

Friday, 21 November 2025

Visit and tour of Vaucluse House,
followed by lunch nearby. Cost \$16.
Details to follow, including transport
options.

Continued

PROBUS DAY CELEBRATIONS

October meeting



Above
Waiting for the cake to be cut

Left
Megan and Barb ready to cut the
Probus Cake

FOR YOUR DIARY

continued

Sunday, 23 November 2025

Theatre Group - Genesian Theatre at 4.30pm. "It's a Wonderful Life".

Purchase tickets at :

<https://genesian.sales.ticketsearch.com/sales/salesevent/141452>

Thursday, 27 November 2025

Monthly Meeting, Club Five Dock at 10.30am. Guest Speaker: Tim Elchal, Chiro/Osteo/Physio "Preventing Falls and Maintaining Mobility"

Friday, 5 December 2025

Christmas Lunch, Angelos on the Bay. Details to follow.

NOVEMBER

GUEST SPEAKER

"Preventing Falls and Maintaining Mobility"

Tim Elchah, Chiro/Osteo/Physio

Tim Elchah is a Chiropractor and Business Owner at Human Movement Co in Leichhardt. The company provides Chiropractic, Physio and Massage all under one roof.

He is "an evidence-based Chiropractor with extensive experience in the diagnosis and management of spinal and peripheral joint injuries. My primary motto is to treat the underlying cause, not the presenting symptom."

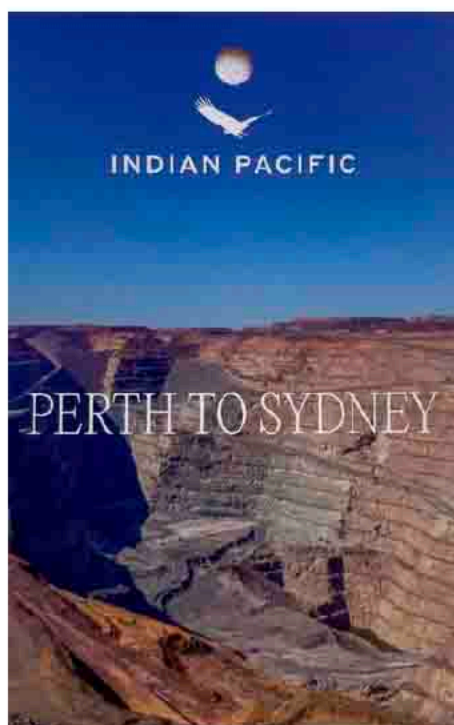
WHERE IS IT?

Clue

A very big and deep hole in WA.

Last month

Monument to Captain Cook's 1770 landing at Kurnell, looking across Botany Bay.



OCTOBER GUEST SPEAKER

Shaun Rennie, Associate Director of Opera Australia

Shaun Rennie's presentation provided members with a unique introduction to the complexities in "Making a Musical on Sydney Harbour".

Shaun has had a major role with the Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour (HOSH), established 13 years ago, to attract a new audience. Since 2019 the program has alternated between Opera and Classical Musical Theatre productions.

With the backdrop of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge and the city, the Harbour venue is one of the world's most spectacular settings, even on a night when it rains (not often).

Some of the statistics behind the annual production over the water:

- 3,000-seat temporary grandstands
- Overwater 'stage' weighing 80 tonnes. It is also twice the size of the largest indoor stage in Australia, so planning and execution are completely different and challenging
- The sound system requires 223 speakers, due to the large outdoor setting
- Around 330 people are involved in a production, from cast, crew, technical support, to hospitality etc
- For 'The Phantom of the Opera', which returns in March-April 2026, there will be a cast of 45 and a wardrobe team of 50. Shaun is already auditioning for talent and described the process.

Shaun then used his role as Director of "Guys and Dolls" to take members through the 14 steps in a production, from assembling the Creative Team, including developing concepts to suit the production, auditioning 1,500 people (including 200 face-to-face), building props and the site, rehearsals, through to Opening Night and more.



Guest Speaker Shaun Rennie



With proud parents and Probos members Toni and Col

FAMOUS QUOTE

"I have assessed my happiness ratio and this is the result. I am totally content whenever the ones I love are happy about something little, big, insignificant, whatever."

Diane Keaton In her 2011 autobiography "Then Again"

AUSTRALIA POST MAILING DEADLINES

Australia Post has advised cut off dates for Christmas parcels, letter and cards. Personally I would allow more time than they suggest, especially as the deadlines are based on major metro hubs; more time is needed for regional and remote areas.

Parcels

Same state 2.30pm December 22; Interstate or Territory 2.30pm December 19

Express Post

December 23 (22 December for WA, NT AND TAS)

Letters and cards

Same state 18 December; Interstate 15 December.

Check the web site to be sure.

<https://auspost.com.au/sending/christmas-sending-dates>

NOW IN SEASON

Mangoes are now more readily available, prices are better and so is taste. All the main varieties should soon be available – Kensington Pride, Honey Gold, Calypso, R2E2. These are all Australian-developed varieties.

Australian berry production just keeps on expanding. Every week there seems to be at least one berry variety on price promotion, covering blueberries, raspberries, strawberries and blackberries. Check for weekly specials across different retailers, as they do vary.



Navel oranges are still available, although giving way to Valencias, which are the juicing variety. Mandarins keep appearing.

Although the cherry season is about to start, better eating fruit will be available from mid-November. Local peaches, nectarines and apricots should appear soon; buy carefully, as early season fruit can be devoid of flavour.

Rockmelons and honeydew are generally well priced, although I am not sure about flavour.

Avocados remain great value and there should be plenty available over the months ahead.

Asparagus is at its peak and excellent value; other green vegetables such as broccoli, broccolini, zucchini etc are all readily available, as are salad greens.

Not in Season are Potatoes. A national potato shortage is being reported, thanks to earlier extreme heat before winter, followed by extreme frosts in major growing areas. Crops in SA, Victoria, NSW and Qld have been affected.

VISIT CONCORD ROTARY FARMERS' MARKET

Concord Farmers Market is bigger and better than ever, with new artisan food stallholders now participating.

There is a range of fresh and gourmet food plus artisan products, goods and wares available.

Food vendors include fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh meats, fresh poultry, honey, olive oils, cheese, freshly baked breads and cakes, farm fresh eggs, fresh flowers and more. And no good market would be complete without an excellent coffee stall. Bacon and egg rolls are made to order.



For something different, Richard from Knife-Tech is a monthly stall holder, sharpening and repairing knives, garden tool, scissors.

The Market, which is held on the first and third Sundays of the month (except January), is located in the Cintra Park car park near Concord High School.

For more information visit <https://www.concordfarmersmarket.com.au/>

THREE QUESTIONS: IRENE EVANS

Our Secretary Irene, like most of our members, has had a very diverse and interesting life, both personally and professionally.

Tell us about your early life in Gisborne on the east coast of New Zealand's North Island

I was born and grew up in Gisborne, on the East Coast of the north island of NZ (the first city in the world to get the sun). Life in the rural and beachside community was idyllic for children affording much freedom - far too much time spent beachside. Gisborne did not have TV until the late 1950's, so there was ample time for a child to use imagination in their daily life.

Gisborne is, even today, a farming community blessed with an excellent climate. Wool, butter and lamb were regularly exported to Europe in the early days, with a more concentrated effort nowadays on crops. It was once dubbed the chardonnay capital of NZ as there is a large concentration on grape growing. There is also an abundance of the best and freshest seafood.



One hundred and twenty freshly cooked Gisborne crayfish for my sister's wedding breakfast

Continued.....

THREE QUESTIONS: IRENE EVANS - continued

Why Australia and what did you do professionally?

In 1965 I left on a huge adventure to London on a liner, 'The Northern Star', accompanied by a school friend - we lived and worked there for 2 years travelling to Europe when possible. It was there that I married an Australian, (a Pharmacist) and in 1967 came to Australia to live.

My working life in NZ had been with the ANZ Bank so upon arrival in Australia I applied for a position with ANZ - unsuccessfully, as I was married.....I then went on to work in Market Research with Colgate Palmolive in Sydney, then having purchased a pharmacy in Villawood worked there alongside my husband.

As a single mother of three young children I worked from 1981 until 2010 for Westpac in varying roles including one that allowed me to travel extensively throughout NSW and also visited Christmas Island, Indian Ocean on several occasions. This was around 2002 and illegals were arriving by boat fairly frequently - I actually witnessed an arrival - all young men, dressed very well and carrying expensive luggage - their boat was towed off shore and blown up.

What have been some of your life's highlights?

My passion from an early age has been travel and among the 49 countries visited to date one of my favourite places was The Seychelles - such a beautiful group of unspoiled islands with delightful locals - we were fortunate to charter yachts and sail around at leisure.

Japan has also been a favourite as I have family there. It is wonderful to live there as a local and experience many aspects of life that the tourist does not get to see.

One other travel highlight was to charter a canal boat and travel from Narbonne on the Mediterranean in southern France to Castelnaudary then return. An idyllic way to see the countryside at a leisurely pace.

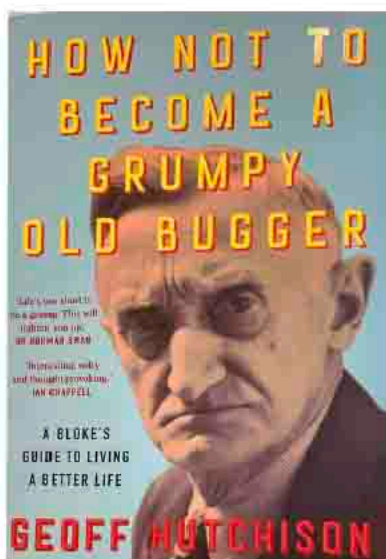
I am fortunate that most of my family live close by so am blessed to have a life filled with family events and to be part of my daughters and grandchildren's lives. This is indeed a blessing.



Enjoying the peace and solitude of cruising Seychelle Islands



*At my son's wedding in Japan
2002*



BOOK REVIEW

"How Not To Be a Grumpy Old Bugger" By Geoff Hutchison

Members contributing to *Let's Talk About Books* felt this book deserves a wider audience, via a book review in the Newsletter. So here goes, from an 'unbiased' male Probus Club member.

Consulting a range of experts, as well as his own experiences and that of other men in his life, former journalist Geoff Hutchison devotes 26 easy-to-read chapters on how men can live a happier healthy and less Grumpy life. The book is thought provoking, humorous and practical.

Continued.....

BOOK REVIEW - continued

Each chapter deals with a different topic, such as Take a Look in the Mirror, Your Health, Why We Have to Work at Relationships, Hearing and Listening, What Makes a Life Worth Living and Finding Contentment.

He believes "if we (men) are prepared to open up a little to our partners and kids, if we become better mates with our mates, and if we look after our health and wellbeing with diligence rather than indifference, then we have so much to look forward to."

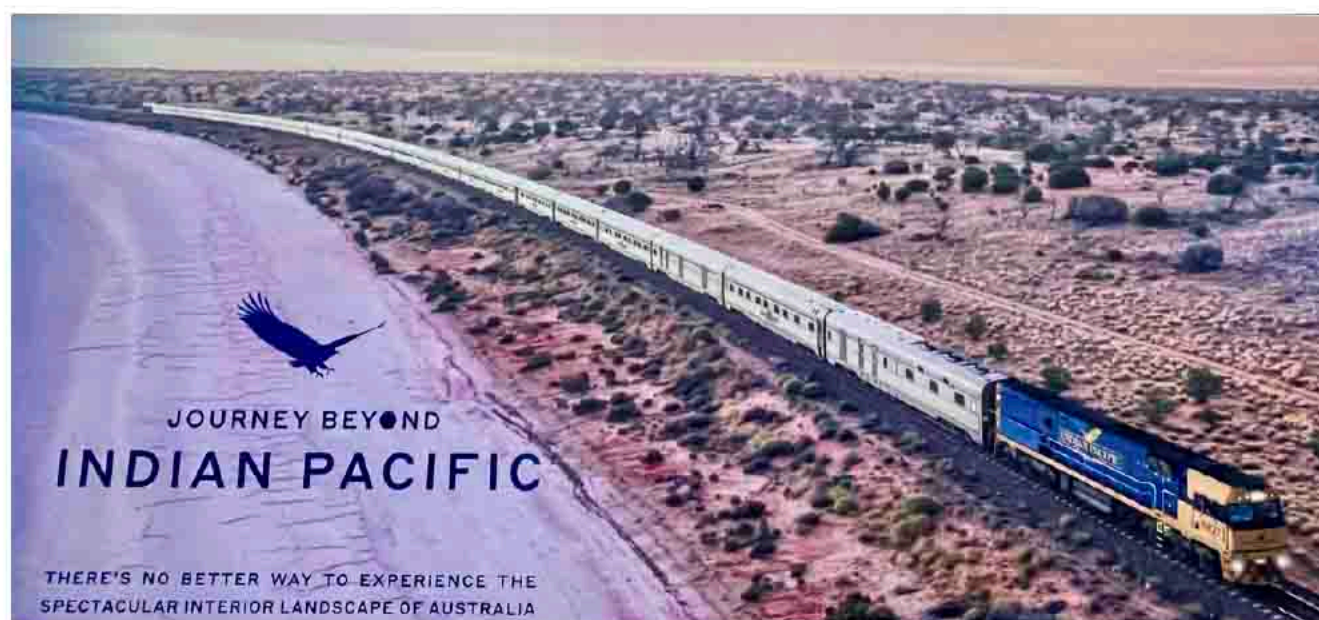
And if your partner chooses to read bits of the book aloud in bed at night, don't get all grumpy and pull the covers over your head. They might just be on to something".

An excellent read for men (and their partners) and an ideal Christmas present to digest and share around.

As the subtitle suggests, this is 'A Bloke's Guide to Living a Better Life'.

THE INDIAN PACIFIC EXPERIENCE

By John Baker



Several members have asked Jacquie and me about our recent experience travelling on the Indian Pacific from Perth to Sydney. In keeping with the format used last year to provide feedback from members who had travelled on The Ghan, we have used the same format. We hope you enjoy reading our thoughts on the highlights and tips if you are planning a similar experience. Many are similar to comments from The Ghan travellers (see the August 2024 Newsletter).

What were your top four highlights?

1. The complete package is top of our list. e.g. On-board: food, wine, service, very friendly and helpful staff, entertainment. Off-train: many options for experiences – Kalgoorlie, Nullarbor at night, Barossa, Broken Hill Sculpture Park, Blue Mountains, entertainment.
2. Wine tasting/food matching, dinner and entertainment at Seppeltsfield Winery in the Barossa
3. Coming to grips with the enormity of the Super Pit in Kalgoorlie.
4. Meeting new people from around Australia and around the world.

Continued.....

THE INDIAN PACIFIC EXPERIENCE - continued

What tips do you have for future travellers?

1. Book early
2. Choose your level of travel that best suits – Gold, Gold Premium and Platinum – all detailed on the web site.
3. Travel Perth to Sydney (5 days and 4 nights), rather than 4 days and 3 nights Sydney-Perth. This direction gives a bigger and better choice of off-train experiences, such as the Barossa dinner and Kalgoorlie.
4. Book for the last half of September/Spring, with comfortable temperatures and an opportunity to see WA's famous wild flowers, even if only time for half day at the annual Wildflower Festival in Kings Park, Perth
5. Minimise cabin luggage, as space is limiting, except in Platinum. Larger luggage can be checked in.
6. In Autumn, Winter, Spring be prepared for warm days/cool nights

In one sentence, how would you describe your overall experience?

An amazing experience across our vast and varied land, so if you have the opportunity - just do it, and book early.

Web site: <https://www.journeybeyondrail.com.au/indian-pacific/>



Broken Hill Sculpture Park



Nullabor entertainment



Seppeltsfield dinner

WASHING IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Continuing extracts from "Outback Heritage", featuring memories of Goodooga (my outback home town) this month the focus is on washing in the Good Old Days.

"When Grandmother did the washing, it was a special day. The copper had to be lit to boil water for the wash. A scrubbing board was used to remove dirt from the clothes and the clothes were then boiled in the copper.

In many cases there were no washing tubs, only tin tubs. Some people had a hand wringer to wring the water out of the washed clothes. Most people, however, did this by hand.

To keep clothes white, they were placed in clean water with a knob of 'blue'.

Clothes lines consisted of a length of wire strung between two posts. This was held up by clothes props.

Continued.....

WASHING IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS - continued



Metal irons heated on the stove were used for ironing.

Bathrooms were archaic - generally a tin basin and a tub. Many people only chose to bathe when going to town or on special occasion.

One woman from Goodooga once went to Sydney to stay with a friend for three weeks, when her host suggested that she would run a bath for her. This woman declined this kind offer by saying her husband would have the copper boiling for her when she got home in a week's time. I wonder what brand of cologne she was using during her stay!"

Next month, we wrap up with description of the main household pests and how they were treated.