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## GUEST SPEAKER AUTHOR, PETER KENNEDY



**Peter Kennedy** was our return guest speaker in July. He briefly recapped on early premiers he had known and continued his discussion.

**David Brand (1959–1971)** developed a “let’s have a chat” style of leadership. He acted as the “glue that held government together”, as not all members were team players. He tried to charge up the economy but there was an iron ore export embargo.

**John Tonkin (1971–1974)** taught in Kalgoorlie and in the south-west until 1933 when he entered parliament. He had served as Education and Works Minister. He initiated the Kwinana freeway and Narrows Bridge, looked after people who needed a hand but made no major changes.

**Charlie (Sir Charles) Court. (1974–82)** “my way or the highway” style made things happen. Under his premiership Oil and Gas developments began on the North-West shelf, Dampier to Bunbury Gas Pipeline and expanded iron ore mining.

Mistakes – the Fremantle/Perth railway closure and tough industrial legislation.

He was the only Premier born outside of Australia.

**Ray O’Connor (1982–83)** was a sporty, ex-East Perth WAFL player, business person, well liked but trouble followed him. He was subsequently gaoled following a Royal Commission into WA Inc.

**Brian Burke (1983–1989)** came from a political family. Smart politically, he was only 36 years old. In 1983, when Alan Bond won the America’s Cup, the economy was flourishing. The Bond relationship had many implications for the Premier and made it hard to refuse requests from business interests. His close relationships were with people like Laurie Connell, Alan Bond, Josie Goldberg and Dallas Dempster. Dempster claimed a casino would be preferable to illegal gambling in Northbridge and that gambling tax would bring money to the state’s coffers.

Burke reopened the Fremantle-Perth railway.

He was gaoled in the subsequent Royal Commission into W.A. Inc

**Peter Dowding (1988–1990)** inherited the Burke-lead Rothwell’s rescue following the stock market collapse in 1987. The initial capital injection of \$20m wasn’t sufficient and eventually more money was requested.

**Carmen Lawrence (1990–1992).** Australia’s first woman Premier, started a new wave — currently there are more women than men in the Legislative Assembly. Money became an issue and she bowed to pressure to hold a Royal Commission into WA Inc.

In the 1993 election she was dragged into the “Penny Easton Affair”. Family Court matters are off limits to politicians.

**Richard Court (1993–2001)** won the next election. He was nothing like his Dad, according to his Mum who considered him the least likely of all sons to succeed in politics as “he saw good in everyone”. He quickly learnt the ropes and was not a pushover. He restored WA’s reputation in doing business. Major legacies - Narrows Bridge duplicated, Windan Bridge built, Northbridge Tunnel constructed and also the “Bell Tower”. He was accused by National’s leader Hendy Cowan of being “city centric”. Served two terms as premier.

**Geoff Gallop (2001–2006)** was young, smart and promoted WA well with energy and courage. Controversially, he had children (largely Aboriginal), who roamed the late night streets of Northbridge unsupervised, taken into a safe place. When accused of racism, he maintained it was the safety of the children, irrespective of colour.

A year later, he stepped down, due to mental health reasons. Major legacies are the railway to Mandurah, as well as the first of W.A.'s de-salination plants.

**Alan Carpenter (2006–2008)** a former ABC colleague of Peter's, took over the helm. He was well liked. Some ministers in his cabinet were implicated in a Crime Corruption Commission, including one who had driven without a license, while others had a hotline to Brian Burke despite contrary instructions.

**Colin Barnett (2008–2017)** became leader following Troy Buswell's resignation. He was good for the State, being experienced. His major achievements included the underground airport railway and oil and gas expansion, Elizabeth Quay and the Perth stadium. His plans for Oakajee Port near Geraldton didn't happen. He led government for 8 years but during his second term had to sell off assets as iron ore prices fell.

**Mark McGowan (2017–2023)** was born in northern NSW where his parents ran a squash centre. He studied law in Brisbane and came to Garden Island as a naval lawyer. He stood for local government in 1996.

Interviewed by Peter two months after becoming Premier he told Peter "I don't feel any different", to which Peter responded prophetically "when something to lead comes up, you will feel different". This happened to be Covid. Mark's leadership protected WA giving him a with a 90 percent approval rating. He decided he'd had enough and resigned in 2023.

At the end of his delivery, Peter once again sold and signed copies of his book, "Tales from Boomtown"

*By Mary-Helen & Frank Smith*

## EXCITING NEWS SAVE THE DATE!



We have provisionally booked a large 49 seater luxury coach for our Probus Week Excursion on **Monday October 13.**

It will be a full day out instead of our usual meeting and guest speaker.  
We will be leaving from and returning to the GFSC.

Thanks to the diligence of our new Social Secretary helper, Carola Eglinton, who has checked out every suggestion from members at our last meeting.

Some tours don't run on Mondays, some were not suitable for members with mobility issues, some were already fully booked.....However, Elite/Rove Charters Bus company were more than happy to help us out.

The final destination will be put to the vote at our Committee meeting on August 11th.  
One thing that we can be sure of is that there be plenty of

## FUN, FRIENDSHIP AND FOOD

Our club will subsidise the cost for paid up members and morning tea and  
a two-00course lunch will be included in the price

Friends and Visitors are welcome but pay an additional cost (tba).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025

**July 26th**

**10.00am Saturday**

Coffee morning at The Hive, Darlington.

**August 11th**

**10.00am Monday**

Probus Meeting at Glen Forrest Sports Club (tea/coffee 9.45am). Guest Speaker: Talitha Huston.

We are delighted to welcome back Talitha, author of "Birds of the Perth Hills". Talitha has some more of her amazing bird photos and videos to enthral us as well as some from her recent backpacking trip to Peru with her Mum.

**August 30th**

**10.00am Saturday**

Coffee morning at The Hive, Darlington.

### FUTURE EVENT

***Our proposed visit to a local Open Garden (Romancing the Stone) has been postponed until the weather improves. Details tba.***



### **MORNING TEA ROSTER FOR AUGUST**

Please let Elaine know if you are able to provide morning tea for the August and September meetings.

***We need at least six members volunteering to supply food at each***



**PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR  
YOUR BADGE  
TO ALL MEETINGS  
AND OUTINGS.**

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**President:** Helen White

0409 293 819 [helenwhite@iinet.net.au](mailto:helenwhite@iinet.net.au)

**Vice President:** Wilma Achterkamp

0409 292 565 [wachterkamp45@gmail.com](mailto:wachterkamp45@gmail.com)

**Secretary/Social Media:** Robyn Cain

0417 179 761 [romacain@gmail.com](mailto:romacain@gmail.com)

**Treasurer/Webmaster:** Frank Smith

0411 116 363 [frank@happygardener.com.au](mailto:frank@happygardener.com.au)

**Immediate Past President and**

**Publicity Officer:** Mary-Helen Smith

0412 427 533

[maryhelen@happygardener.com.au](mailto:maryhelen@happygardener.com.au)

**Membership Officer and Bulletin Editor:**

Pat Moxon 0410 651 271

[moxon@iinet.net.au](mailto:moxon@iinet.net.au)

**Social Secretary:** Sue Burton

9299 7046 [mh.burton@bigpond.com](mailto:mh.burton@bigpond.com)

**Liaison Officer:** Ian Forrest

0405 153 231 [Lorraineforrest55@gmail.com](mailto:Lorraineforrest55@gmail.com)

**Raffle and Weekend Coffee Organiser:**

Brian Doubikin

0414 892 855 [bdoubikin@gmail.com](mailto:bdoubikin@gmail.com)

**Welfare Officers:**

Sue Burton

9299 7046 [mh.burton@bigpond.com](mailto:mh.burton@bigpond.com)

Arlene Collings

0447 654 980 [gwaliagold@gmail.com](mailto:gwaliagold@gmail.com)

**Committee members:**

Sharryn Turrell

0448 723 118/9295 2961

[sharryn.turrell@gmail.com](mailto:sharryn.turrell@gmail.com)

**Helpers:**

**Roster Wrangler**

Elaine Reynolds

0419 936 740 [ereynolds51@icloud.com](mailto:ereynolds51@icloud.com)

**Kitchen Organiser**

Eileen Davis 0449019700 [ejdavis16@gmail.com](mailto:ejdavis16@gmail.com)

**Welcomers**

Arlene Collings

0447 654 980 [gwaliagold@gmail.com](mailto:gwaliagold@gmail.com)

Joe Sweet

0409 373 886 [miridiya8@bigpond.com](mailto:miridiya8@bigpond.com)