



Castle Hill & District Probus Club Inc.

Club No N9004055, Accreditation No 2500, District No 9685

PO Box 321 Castle Hill NSW 1765

January 2026

NEWSLETTER

Vol 14 No 1

GUEST SPEAKER JANE COX - CORRECTIONS SERVICES NSW

Jane started with Correction Services in 1995, at Long Bay Jail. Now at Silverwater, in her 31st year of service, a Senior Assistant Superintendent, Jane shared what life can be like "behind bars".

The focus is on rehabilitation not punishment - solitary confinement is not part of life for those who are "naughty", instead, their privileges are taken away from them (such as tv, shopping privileges or family visits).

A hospital has been established in the jail, a safer and more cost effective way to treat inmates. With truth in sentencing, it means a life sentence actually means for life and older prisoners need Aged Care and mental health issues need to be dealt within the jails.

Many inmates are taught trades, encouraging them to become plumbers, bakers, etc. Inmates who qualify as tradesmen are used in the jails to fix things such as plumbing and electrical problems which can be many, especially with 12,000+ inmates in NSW jails. Thousands of cells have plumbing and electricity that need to be maintained.

Feeding the thousands who are incarcerated each day means a huge number of meals need to be prepared - 3 meals a day - 7 slices of bread per male inmate and 4 per day for female inmates. Thousands of slices of bread daily. A huge undertaking, especially when food intolerances and allergies are taken into account. Inmates trained to become bakers are certainly put to good use. A good deal of the food is grown on jail property such as at Muswellbrook where they have a farm to produce much of the food needed.

Surprisingly, Jane told us that inmates make items such as curtains for Spotlight and also flags, such as we see flying from the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Good to know that inmates are contributing to the community.

Correction Services NSW has about 30 jails, 6000 to 7000 custodial staff with total staffing numbers of around 20,000!

Following her talk, Jane spent time answering a great many questions from our members. A very interesting guest speaker.

Judy Coulson & Anika Corner

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE EDITOR

Sadly, I will be standing down from the position of Newsletter Editor *after the February edition*. I have enjoyed putting together your newsletter but we now need a replacement for the role and if you would like to take a turn at being editor of our newsletter, please let Geoff Redshaw or myself know as soon as possible.

Parliament House Tour Friday January 16

On 16 January 2026 47 of our members met in the immense foyer of Parliament House and waited for our guides (actual Parliamentary Officers). Our first guide took us through the green Legislative Assembly chambers and told us about the history, procedures, traditions and responsibilities of the elected representatives. He was very interesting and quite funny as well. After answering our questions he handed us over to our second (quite young but very knowledgeable and entertaining) guide who took us through the red upper house or Legislative Council. The differences between the two chambers, and those who occupy them, was well explained and I, for one, now have a clearer understanding of our democratic State system.

Next came our amazing high tea. You certainly couldn't complain about the quality, quantity, or presentation of the food, nor the attention of the serving staff. Complete with a display of mist caused by the addition of water to dry ice, it was certainly a spectacular high tea served in our very own Members' Dining Room. I believe the GF options were also delicious. I don't think any of us went home hungry, although Don Spalding was heard to say "but what's for dessert?" Those people attending in February are also in for a treat.

Di Carroll



The Legislative Assembly Chambers



The Upper House - The Legislative Council

the Black Rods used in Opening of Parliament, the chair reserved for the Monarch or his representative, and the Hourglass gifted to our Government by King Charles III in 2024 to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Legislative Council, used to time the ringing of the bells, or divisions.



Parliament House Tour Continued



A very spectacular morning tea served in the Members Dining Room with beautifully presented and delicious cakes & savoury selections with the added dry ice presentation (see the photo on the right) - very special.

The two Di's looked very happy with their special treats!



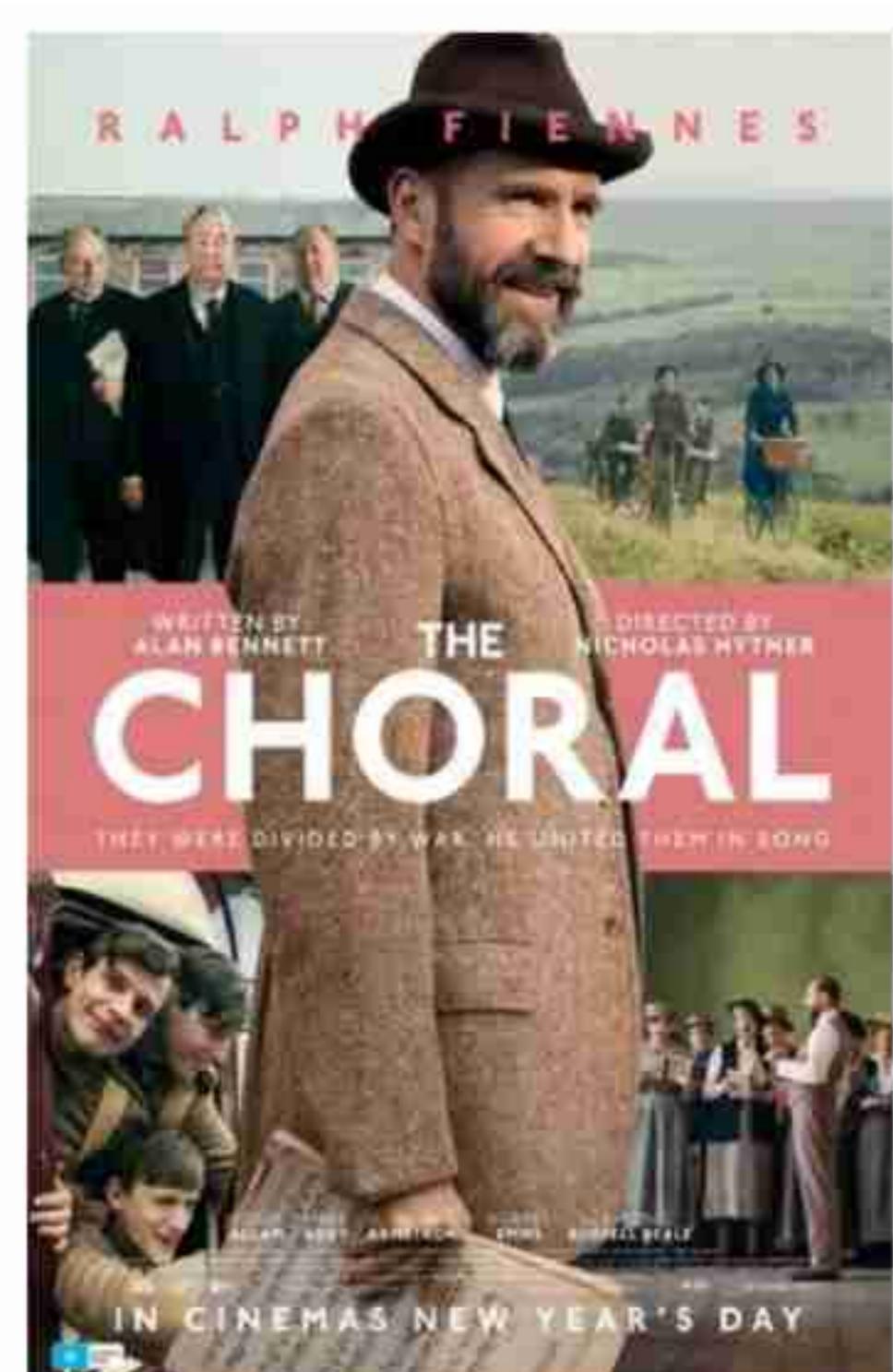
Movie Group

Friday January 2

THE CHORAL

Some huge names in this film. Was expecting a lot and it didn't disappoint, was very impressed with the acting and costumes. Great opening scene with the telegram coming to the door and the lady with her little boy. Probably being told his daddy is dead. The script is very well thought out and extremely moving. A poignant and must see movie.

Diane Hobden



Probus Car/Observation Rally

Thursday January 22



Forty-three intrepid Probus rally enthusiasts in thirteen cars assembled at the Castle Hill RSL for the start of the 5th Probus Rally on Thursday Jan 22, which kicked off at 9 am.

The teams were in fine spirits and soon the route instructions & questions (9 pages in all) were assigned to each car. Once read, we were reminded once again of Chris and Ian's very clever and cryptic style in their formulation of this challenge.

Maria Rosa & I were in car 9, together with our good friends and "expert crew" Beryl and Richard Prideaux. Team Subaru: "The Nineham's@9" soon had GPS maps open, much discussion (at times debate) in the air, free advice flowing (and you know what that's worth!) and even Chat GPT on the go!! The route was very interesting, and I must admit I was very impressed with the quality of the urbanization and new housing developments in places like Stanhope Gardens, Kellyville Ridge and the Ponds, which I hadn't seen before.

The rally was estimated to cover 59 km in approximately four hours. I didn't measure it but we probably covered many more km, given the many "circles" we traversed, U turns and back & forth to clarify answers.

The latter part of the rally to the north of Old Windsor Rd was more familiar. I thought that we were maybe lost again when we came across a small group of kangaroos roaming on a back road, but no, I was assured by our trusty navigator that we were on track and indeed soon finished up at the Glenorie RSL for lunch.*Continued on page 5*

Probus Car/Observation Rally Continued

We had a most entertaining day with lots of laughs and good vibe in the car. To our surprise, we missed out on the booby prize which is currently located in the team trophy cabinet from last year!!

1st Prize was won by the “Bewildered Team” who scored 64/73 and comprised of Margaret Ashfield, Mary Blackburn, Anne Chinner and Gwenda Moon.

The best team name was awarded to “The Left Behinders” comprised of Dot Marshall, Kath Martin, Linda Jackson and Jeanette Joyner.

The team awarded the wooden spoon was “The Desperate Duo” whose names will be withheld to protect the innocent!

On behalf of the forty-three participants, once again congratulations to Chris an Ian for a superb event. A great day was had by all.

Derek Nineham

Men's Group Christmas Lunch

The Men's Group Lunch was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion, bringing together 30 members for good food, good company and plenty of festive spirit. The lunch provided a relaxed opportunity to celebrate the years activities, share stories and enjoy the camaraderie that is at the heart of Probus.

Adding to the fun was the prize for the best Christmas Shirt, which sparked plenty of friendly competition and colourful attire. From classic festive pattern to more creative designs, the standard was high and laughter plentiful. Congratulations to Geoff Redshaw whose outfit truly captured the Christmas spirit.

Our Attendance Award for 2025 went to Peter Debreczeny with Ken Carroll one meeting behind.

Overall the Lunch was a great success and a fitting way to round off the year, leaving everyone in high spirits and looking forward to the year ahead.

John Cowpe



Men's Group Christmas Lunch Continued



Walking Group November 2025

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ARTARMON TO NAREMBURN

It turned out to be a glorious spring day for the walk. This month's walk was also a fair bit easier than last month. So, I think the combination of these two things resulted in a good number of walkers turning up. It was good to see Don & Joy back walking. We started out by catching the metro and train to Artarmon Station then walking through Artarmon Reserve (see photo).



Our first stop was at the Gum Nut Sculptures (see photo). In 2006, council staff used chainsaws to create 3 large replica gum nuts that represent 3 indigenous trees found in the area. We then walked under part of the Gore Hill Freeway. Can you remember it being constructed between 1988 and 1992.



We then arrived at Henry Lawson's Cave. We sat in the amphitheatre that overlooks the cave (see group photo). Lawson lived in Naremburn for short periods between 1907 and 1922 and would occasionally sleep in the cave after a night at a local pub composing a poem in return for a drink. Anika was kind enough to recite one of Lawson's poems for us and it was just on 11am so we played the 'Last Post' and had a one minute silence in remembrance.

We then walked around Bicentennial Reserve (named after the 200yr anniversary of the arrival of the 1st fleet and finished up at the old incinerator (see group photo in front of the incinerator). The incinerator was built in 1934 and finally closed in 1965 due to smell and smoke complaints from neighbours. However, rubbish continued to be dumped and burnt in Flat Rock Gully up until 1985.

Rehabilitation of the gully and the creation of Bicentennial Reserve took place between 1988 and 1997 and in 2001, the old incinerator building was restored, and a café and community arts space created.

We finished our day by having lunch outside the Incinerator Café (see photo). It was a lovely setting; the food was good as was the service. Everyone really enjoyed this place as could be seen by its popularity. We then caught a bus and metro back to Castle Hill to finish our day. *Ian Landon-Jones*



Walking Group November Continued ...



Walking Group

January 13 2026

The Probus Walking Group enjoyed a 3.6Km walk along the Parramatta River, walking from Rydalmer Wharf to Parramatta Wharf then onto the Blackbean Café for morning tea.

We started at 9.00am to beat the heat, although the day was quite pleasant and 13 Probians enjoyed the scenery, varying from the backs of industrial businesses, along mangrove lined shores and past the Female Orphan School & the Orphan Hospital.



Keeping left on the pathway essential to avoid the speeding cyclists, overall they were well behaved.

After a pleasant morning tea, six of the walkers chose to walk back ensuring they met their 10,000 steps for the day. Four members elected to take the Ferry back to see the sites from the water and others made their way home from Parramatta.

The February walk will be back in Ian's capable hands.

Brian Rose

Club Calendar

School holidays are shown in blue

NSW Public holidays are shown in green

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1 Brunch Group 9:00am Fiddler Rouse Hill	2	3 Monthly meeting 10.00am	4 Mahjong Group 10am Baulkham Hills Sports Club	5	6 Movie Group	7
8 Pavilion Theatre	9 Choir Group The Hills Club 12:30pm - 2.00pm Women's Coffee & Cake Group 9.30am Frankies Café Flower Power Glenhaven	10 Walking Group ----- Men's Interest Group 9:00 am	11 Management Committee 10.00 am == Mahjong Group 10am Baulkham Hills Sports Club	12	13 Lunch Group Seven Hills RSL	14
15	16 Craft Group 10.00 am	17 Ten Pin Bowling 11.00 am	18 Mahjong Group 10am Baulkham Hills Sports Club	19 BBQ/Picnic Group Heritage Park Castle Hill 4:00 - 7:30pm	20 Parliament House Tour and High Tea	21
22	23 Book Club 2.00 pm	24 Men's Interest Group 9.00am ----- Card Group Baulkham Hills Sports Club 12:30pm	25 Sightseeing & Photography Group --- Mahjong Group 10am Baulkham Hills Sports Club	26 Coach Outing Illawarra Light Rail Museum	27 \$2.50 Club High Speed Rail Hub Newcastle	28 Chinese New Year Fortuna Gardens Winston Hills