

PROBING THE BRIDGE

October 2026

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Combined Probus Club of
Northbridge Inc

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From the President

We were all saddened to hear of the recent passing of Frank Cousins. He and his wife May were loyal members of Northbridge Probus. A number of Probus members attended his funeral at which he was spoken of as a kind and gentle man with a sense of humour. He will be sadly missed, specially by May who has moved to BUPA in Willoughby.

The committee has accepted Judith Dunstan's resignation as Vice President and thanked her for her efforts as Vice-President. We invited Linda Lockett to fill the casual vacancy. Linda has accepted the nomination and is our new Vice President. To help members get to know Linda, her profile is printed elsewhere in this newsletter. We wish her well.

I know many members attend the Ensemble Theatre. Its current production "The Year in Tatters" is an absolute hoot. In the style of the Wharf Revue, it is a sketch comedy type show and satirises politicians, attitudes, current affairs, personalities etc. My ribs were aching from laughing as I exited; I strongly recommend this show.

One sketch was a song "Things Were Better in My Day" where anything current did not cut it. It sent me on a nostalgia trip and I wondered if any of these things would ring any bells?

When you went to school you sat in desks screwed to the floor. The desks had an inkwell and you learnt to do copperplate writing with pen and ink using blotting paper (tough for left handers). You learnt your tables by rote and learnt to read mostly by phonics. Popular games were skipping, marbles and British Bulldog and you played with Dinky-Toys, Meccano and dolls. There were few cars and street cricket was very popular. We would assume the roles of famous players like Keith Miller and Ray Lindwall.

The only electronic media was the radio and it had much to offer in those days. "Blue Hills" or "When a Girl Marries", the Argonauts, Superman, Green Arrow and Hop Harrigan were my favourites. In the evening it was Jack Davey or Bob Dyer or a radio play or the Quiz Kids. The radio actors of the time were brilliant – remember Queenie Ashton, Leonard Teale, Don Crosby, Ray Barrett and Neva Carr- Glynn. From the UK came the "Goon Show" and "Take it From Here"? Broadcasts of the Test Cricket were very popular, with Alan McGilvray and Johnny Moyes, not to mention the Davis Cup matches with Adrian Quist and Ellis Blain.

People took Aspros or Bex powders and very little else for analgesics and Vicks-VapoRub cleared your congestion.

They dressed up to go to the city; men wore felt hats and short back-and-sides haircuts and women wore their Sunday best including gloves.

Life was not necessarily better in those days – just different.

President Gordon

Our next meeting will be held at Northbridge Golf Club on Monday, October 19 starting at 10am sharp. If you can't attend, please phone or text Heather Skeen 0412 611 399 before the meeting. Bev Adcock will be five-minute speaker.



Our newest member

Tamela (Tami) Casey was inducted at our September meeting. She is pictured (left) with her proposer, Membership Officer Judy Smith.

Here is Tami's story.

After 48 wonderful years in Annandale, I moved to Northbridge with my husband, Paul, in October last year. We have two daughters and three grandchildren, all living in Sydney, so family remains a very important part of our lives.

I originally came to Australia from the USA in 1972, intending to stay for just two years to teach. Those plans changed when I met Paul! We married, I became an Australian citizen, and Australia has been home ever since. My career began with the NSW Department of Education, where I worked for five years before moving to TAFE. I taught Hospitality and Catering at East Sydney Tech and later moved into curriculum development and policy roles.

In 1999, I joined SOCOG for the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Working as a staff supervisor in the Olympic Village was certainly a career highlight — and I may even have crossed paths with some fellow Probud members

who volunteered during the Games! For the remainder of my career, until 2022, I was self-employed as a vocational education consultant, working across a diverse range of industries including childcare, banking, allied services, disability and aged care. For the past 12 years, I have also been a volunteer coordinator and Primary Ethics teacher at Allambie Heights Public School, a role I continue to enjoy.

Outside work and volunteering, I love anything on a stage — opera, symphony, ballet and theatre — as well as the Sydney Writers' Festival and Sydney Festival. I'm also a keen cook and entertainer and enjoy cake decorating and reading.

Right: Several Probud members enjoy a joke over a cuppa at Inner Cravings, Northbridge Plaza during the recent long weekend. The meeting is a regular activity on the first Monday of each month except December.

Looking out for each other

If you are aware that a fellow member is unwell or in need of support, please let Kerrie Williams, the Welfare Officer, know so she can contact them. You can call Kerrie 0407 914 699 or email her at rogerwills@optusnet.com.au



Dates for your diary

Friday, October 23

Tour of the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

The \$25 cost includes morning tea – scones with wildflower jam. Lunch will be at Tastebuds Nursery cafe, Terrey Hills (own cost). Our coach will leave the Golf Club at 9.45am, back about 2.30pm. Ten places are still available.

October 31 – November 10

Probus anniversary cruise with Trade Travel

Departing Sydney on the Celebrity Solstice, visiting Eden, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Kangaroo Island (Penneshaw). Nine Northbridge Probus members have registered to do the cruise. The tour is now fully booked.

Monday, November 2

Coffee catchup, 2.30pm

Join an informal gathering of members for coffee at Inner Cravings at Northbridge Plaza. It's hosted by Kerrie Williams and there is no need to book.

Friday, November 20

Visit to new fish market, \$50

Our coach will leave the Golf Club at 9.30am, with a tour of the fish markets beginning at 10.30am. Lunch is at own expense; there are lots of food outlets to choose from. The tour is full, with a waiting list.

November 22– 25

On Course coach tour Newcastle, Port Stephens, Hunter Valley, Christmas lights

Travelling to Newcastle, accommodation Rydges Newcastle City. Hunter River launch cruise. Afternoon free time to explore the foreshore area. Next day we visit Nelson Bay and Port Stephens and back to Rydges Newcastle. The following day we visit places of interest in the Hunter Valley and stay at the Mercure Hunter Gardens. After dinner the tour will visit the spectacular light show in the gardens. Thirteen members have registered and single and double rooms have been selected. If you register at the meeting, Carol will try to get single/double rooms. Cost per person \$1819, twin share \$1495 per person.

Monday, December 7

Christmas lunch, details to follow.

Sunday, December 13

Spirit of Christmas, Willoughby Symphony Choir, The Concourse, 2pm

All tickets have been taken. Payment is now due \$70 either by cash at October meeting or by direct transfer into the Probus Tours Account. Make your own way to the Concourse Concert Hall, Chatswood. Parking underneath.

Wednesday, January 13

A Beautiful Noise - Neil Diamond Musical - Sydney Lyric Theatre, 1pm

All tickets have been taken. Details of the transport next meeting.

Thursday, January 21

We'll start the New Year as usual with lunch at Infuzions in Cammeray.

Wednesday, February 24, 2027

Noel Coward's Private Lives, Theatre Royal 1pm.

Cost \$110 including ticket and transport to and from the theatre; six tickets are still available. Pay at October meeting or by direct transfer to the Tours Account.

Please register if you would be interested in the following two tours for 2027.

February 25 to March 1

On Course tour Batemans Bay

Four nights five days. Staying in the Sunseeker Motel Batemans Bay, visiting Bermagui, Tilba, Cobargo and the surrounding area. Approx cost from \$1995.

May 12 - 19

NSW Agricultural On Course tour

Seven nights eight days. Travelling to Port Macquarie, Armidale, Moree, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Narrabri, Quirindi. Unique outback attractions and farm experiences featuring country hospitality. Approx cost from \$3995. Three have registered; there are limited places.

Online payments may be made to Probus Tours Account BSB 062 215, AC 10073196. You still need to register at the desk.

Look forward to our wonderful guest speakers!



Our guest speaker at the October meeting will be beekeeper **Norm Webb**, with the subject “From hive to jar”. Norm is a former schoolteacher who took up beekeeping in 1985. He now has hives in four rural areas around Sydney, where he can extract honey with a diverse range of flavours. He has had considerable success with his honey at the Royal Easter Show and at shows at Castle Hill and St Ives. His wife **Sandra** will have honey for sale at our meeting.

In November, the guest speaker will be **Hans Kunnen**, a former economist, author and educator. On September 11, 2001, Hans

was staying at a hotel situated next to the World Trade Centre Twin Towers. He describes graphically the chaos as the planes struck the towers and how he managed to escape. He is particularly grateful to the people who helped him. His talk is entitled “The kindness of strangers”.

With no meeting in December, at our January 2027 meeting we can look forward to a nostalgic treat with entertainer **Paul Kearney** presenting part of his “History of Rock and Roll” series. The talk will cover the 1950s and include video clips of the artists singing their most popular songs. It should be a real nostalgia trip for all of us.

Welcome to our new Committee member

Linda Lockett

It seems not long ago that I completed my newsletter profile as a relatively new member (18 months membership) of Northbridge Probus. I now find myself preparing to take on the role of Vice President of the club - an important, if slightly nerve wracking, commitment which I look forward to fulfilling to the best of my ability. For those of you who don't know me, here is an updated version of the profile that was published earlier this year.

I moved to Northbridge in 2004, making this the longest period that my husband and I have spent in any place since we were married in 1973. We have lived in Randwick; Austinmer; Perth; Grand Forks, British Columbia, Canada; Adelaide; Brisbane and finally Sydney, where we initially lived in Castle Cove before building in Northbridge. Most of these relocations were related to my husband's career. During the moves I remained committed to my own career as a teacher. I was able to study to broaden my qualifications, progressing from two year trained general primary teacher to a Bachelor of Teaching degree, then later a Master of Education in Teacher Education. Returning to NSW, this academic and professional journey led to a role at Dalwood/ Palm Avenue School where I worked as a teacher supporting rural and regional primary students facing challenges in reading.

Although now retired, I do the occasional casual teaching day at the NSW Centre for Effective Reading, Westmead, which allows me to remain connected to my professional passion, as well as keeping those neural pathways strong.

Alongside my Probus membership, which offers wonderful opportunities for social connection and engaging speakers, I try to maintain an active retirement through book club, seniors' exercise, and a weekly volunteer role at the Australian Museum, working with staff in their citizen-science DigiVol program. I also spend time at Orient Point on the NSW South Coast — a beautiful spot made even more special by the presence of my daughter's family and three rapidly growing granddaughters.

With my Probus role now progressing from member to Vice President, I look forward to working with the committee to help maintain the vibrant and welcoming club that is Northbridge Probus.

