The Collective Spirit

Brought to you by the Members of George's Hall Probus Club.

Issue 82 - 1 February, 2026



President's Report

Welcome back everybody to a bright new 2026. It's been a very quiet time over the past few weeks and it hasn't been much fun battling all that very hot weather. It was great to see everybody back at our meeting this week looking bright and cheerful. We don't have a guest speaker in January, but as usual had a fun time with trivia. Thanks to Cathy Dice for her hard work in developing and presenting the trivia. Who knew that giraffes never yawn!

Over the break, our committee members have been hard at work. Jan Brown has come up with an intensive program of activities for 2026 and these are spelled out later in the Newsletter. Denise Ericsson continues to work tirelesssly to provide interesting speakers for our meetings and has almost completed her list for 2026. Thank you Denise and Jan.

But it is with great sadness that we have learned that we have lost two more of our treasured Probus members. Tony Burgess passed away in December, a few weeks after losing his wife, Mavis. And Val Newman died in Liverpool Hospital just this week.



It was very sad to hear of the passing of Tony Burgess. In recent years Tony had devoted himself to looking after his wife Mavis who was suffering with dementia. He looked after her at home for so long before it got beyond him. Finally, the time came and he had no choice but to put Mavis into care. No sooner had this been done when he became aware that he had stage four cancer and he was put into palliative care and passed away aged ninety-four.

Tony joined our club in July 2001. During this time, he held numerous roles on our club committee, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Welfare Officer and he compiled the old style newsletter until 2009. He was made a life member of our club in March 2022

In days gone by, Tony was also a particularly good joke teller and he would have our meetings in stitches after one of his specials. One thing we remember about Tony.

For somewhere near thirty-five odd years Tony drove a red Ford Laser that had seen better days, not sure if the air conditioning still worked. In the past twelve months he purchased a brand-new car. He never did really get to enjoy his new vehicle and enjoy all the bells and whistles that cars now have.



Tony rest in peace

Val Newman is only a recent member of Probus, she joined in 2023, but has been an active member from day one, taking part in everything and always being cheerful and a lot of fun.

We will miss you Val.

At our November meeting, our proposed new constitution and standing resolutions were discussed and copies made available to interested members. The formal adoption of these was proposed at our January General Meeting and was passed with a show of hands. The next step is now to register the constitution and standing resolutions with Probus South Pacific and the Department of Fair Trading. If you would like copies of the new constitution and standing resolutions, please contact me.

Keep smiling, Sue Brown

From the Money Man



Our finances at 27 January 2026 were:

Balance carried forward 1 January 2026	**6,309.57**
Receipts	
Membership fees	25.00
Outings	800.00
Total Receipts	**825.00**
Payments	
New equipment	798.00
General expenses	69.00
Raffle prizes	140.00
Total Payments	**1,007.00**
Total funds held	**6,127.57**
Less Deposits for Outings/Club Grant	1,890.00
Club Funds available	**4,237.57**

Ray Cook



Thought for the day

Too soon you'll see how suddenly tomorrow becomes
the past because life's too short,
no matter how long it lasts.

Brown's Buzz, the Tour Co-ordinator's Report

Upcoming events:

4 February	Panania RSL – Morning tea and/or lunch. From 10.30
11 February	Lunch at Club Menai, from 11.30.
4 March	Panania RSL – Morning tea and/or lunch. From 10.30
18 March	Bahai Temple and Pittwater Tour. $95 per person (may be reduced depending on numbers). Payment due 25 February. Coach will leave Club Condell Park at 8.30 am.
21 March	*The Importance of Being Earnest* at the Guild Theatre, Rockdale at 2.00 pm. **This is a Saturday**. Cost $25. Payment due by 25 February.
1 April	Panania RSL – Morning tea and/or lunch. From 10.30
15 April	Lunch at the Little Snail, from 11.30. 50 Murray Street, Pyrmont. $48 to be paid by 25 March. Payment for drinks to be paid at the restaurant on the day.

Other activities planned for 2026.

29-30 April	2 day Blue Mountain Getaway with High Tea at the Hydro Majestic and trip on the Zigzag Railway. Cost $503 per person, single supplement $110. Cost may reduce depending on numbers. $100 deposit payable **NOW**. Balance due 25 February.
TBA May	Biggest Morning tea at home of Jan and Bill. All proceeds to the Cancer Council. **This will be a Thursday**.
19 June	Tour and High Tea at Parliament House of NSW, 11.30 am, Strangers Restaurant, 8 Macquarie Street, Sydney. **Note that this is a Friday.** Cost $70 per person. Payment required by 27 May.
29 Oct – 2 Nov	Proposed tour to Grafton for the Jacaranda Festival. Cost $1575, single supplement $399. We need a minimum of 30 persons for this tour and we need to confirm our booking immediately. Please put your name down **NOW** if you wish to attend.

Please make sure that you put your name down on the lists found at the tour desk if you wish to attend any functions. Information sheets for all activities are provided there. Also please pay attention to the final dates for payments.

Keep Safe, Jan







Something to do
Imperial Hotel Clifton

Take a nice drive along the Seacliff bridge at Clifton/Stanwell Park and at the end you will find the old but renovated Imperial Hotel.

There is a great story to The Imperial Hotel, we might have to dig it up for another newsletter. Have a cold drink or a nice lunch. It's a good day out it and you get to be in a great part of the world with the best views.





Canterbury Bankstown Australia Day Awards
Volunteer of the Year – Graham Tomkinson



Our club would like to congratulate Graham Tomkinson for his award as Volunteer of the Year. Graham is well known to our club. Apart from being the brother of one of our members, Judith Wilson, he has also been a guest speaker at one of our meetings.

Graham has devoted almost 60 years to the NSW State Emergency Service, founding the Bankstown SES Unit in 1977 and shaping it into a vital community resource.

He has led responses to floods, earthquakes, hailstorms, and emergencies, saving lives and strengthening local resilience. Graham has also trained and mentored generations of volunteers, served on numerous safety committees and fostered international knowledge exchange with Japan.

In the Shire with Luppo

Jannali Boys High and Jannali Girls High



The area of Jannali developed rapidly in the 1950s and 60s, becoming a desirable residential suburb, necessitating local high schools to avoid long commutes to Sutherland.

As a result, Jannali Boys' and Girls' High Schools were established in the 1950s (Girls in 1953, Boys in 1956 or 1959) to serve the growing community. They eventually merged in 1992 to form the co-educational Jannali High School, a common trend for older single-sex schools in NSW to become comprehensive co-ed institutions.



The former Girls' site now houses the St George and Sutherland Community College (SGSCC). This is a community-based, not-for-profit organisation, now delivering education and training for over 60 years. It is a dedicated registered NDIS service provider and is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and CRICOS provider, delivering nationally recognised qualifications in business and community services. They also offer more than 250 short courses in leisure and school-aged tutoring

Guess who went to Jannali Boys High ? A chocolate if you guess.

See you next Month Luppo



Wally and Nelly Waramuk's
Must see movie,

All the way from Stooges Reef Nabiac, it's a Loony's production, a Dooley's movie starring Albert "McGoo" Brown and Bossick " Dodge" La-Lup in "The Camel and the Shavel" Free tickets from the President.

Not in the Shire with Susie

The Crossroads at Casula



The Crossroads at Casula is a well known landmark in the Liverpool District, located where the Hume Highway meets Camden Valley Way (previously known as Cowpasture Road). It has been an important junction since the early 1800's but has changed significantly over the years. This photograph is from 1962, but, as we all know, it looks very different today.

The Crossroads Hotel is one of the oldest hotel sites in the region, established around 1833 as the Talbot Inn. It was at the junction of major routes, and served as a crucial stop for travellers with accommodation and meals. Known as the Crossroads Hotel by the 1880s, it was a significant hub for coaches and mail. You wouldn't recognise it today, extensive renovations in 2017 modernized it into a popular modern pub and sports bar, while retaining its historic landmark status.





The Crossroads Hotel has a number of dubious claims to fame. It was the pub at the centre of one of the first coronavirus outbreaks in Sydney. A traveller or truck driver from Victoria was thought to have spread the virus after arriving in town. It was also once a bikie haunt and Ivan Milat's drinking hole, and the last place a missing backpacker was seen 30 years ago.



Today, the Crossroads is the location of a huge Homemaker centre. It has over 25 big brand retailers and 1600 car park spaces.

The Crossroads is also the home of the well known Hunts Motel. When I started researching this I found lots of interesting facts about the hotel and the family who ran it for many years. Enough to have a story of its own. Look out for it in the next issue.

More next time, Sue

Members' Corner

Thanks to all our contributors

Denise's One Liners
Thanks Denise

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospital, dying of nothing.

Rob's jokes of the week
Thanks Rob

Have you heard about the guy who was addicted to brake fluid?..
He claimed he could stop at any time!!!!

What word starts with E and ends with E but only has one letter in it?...
envelope



Only the Irish
Thanks Frances and Robert.

A distressed man went to the doctor and said "Doctor, doctor, my hair's falling out. Can you give me something to keep it in?"
"Certainly", the doctor replied. "Here's a paper bag".

Did you know?



In an emergency, sometimes ambulance personnel are called to a property where the door is locked and the patient is unable to unlock it. If they are unable to access the premises they need to call the police to force entry and this can take valuable time. One way to avoid this is to install a lock box and register it with the ambulance service.

A lock box is essentially a key safe. These are relatively inexpensive (you can buy them from lots of places including Bunnings). You install the box in a secure, discreet location on your property (this is a very simple process), then set a code number of your own choice to unlock them, placing keys to the property inside.

Registering them with NSW Ambulance Service is also easy. Simply send an email to Ambulance-GeneralEnquiry@health.nsw.gov.au with your name and address and contact number. They will connect you with your local Sector Office who will call you to register the details. You will need to provide details of the key safe's location and the entry code.

If a callout is made to your address, the details of the lock box will be made available to the attending crew.

Poet's Corner

Thanks Bev Spithill

The Four Minute mile



The boughs were heavy, the apples ripe,
As we scaled the fence by the pale moonlight.
Sugar bags slung over our back.
We crept quietly down the track.

Old Farmer Jones wouldn't miss a few
He never counted them as they grew.
As we filled our bags and justified our misdeed,
The warning signal we failed to heed.

Jessie the cow was bellowing low,
Trying to tell us it was time to go.
But we didn't hear her gentle moo,
We were too busy doing what a kid had to do.

We should have gone when our bags were full,
For we didn't see Farmer Jones' prize bull.
We were too busy skylarking about
We didn't hear young Pete's shout.



Old Jones' bull came charging at us
No wonder Jessie was making such a fuss
We took to our heels and broke the four minute mile
Hurdling the fence in Olympic style.

Our apples forgotten, strewn down the track.
Home safe, there was no going back.

Old Farmer Jones was said to have scratched his head,
When he passed through the orchard to his packing shed.
And spotted the apples that we had thrown.
He knew darn well they weren't wind blown.



January Birthdays

Bill Brown, Barbara Doust, Beatrice Drew, Charlie Hattie, Annette Melville, Kathryn Muldoon, Giannina Och, Sylvia Somers

February Birthdays

Cheryl Beaver, Colleen Cook, Robyn Elder, Sue Israel, Norma Jenkins, Sally Touma, Diane Tuckey, Marg Sharp

Best wishes every one Barbara Doust



Urgent Teletext
Dash and Willy's Journal of The Days of Their Life's

Recap. If you remember, the day before the group were to leave they got their riding clothes and had instructions on camel riding. At that time Pitt, Sav and Gramay spotted some old familiar faces from the bandits that tried to rob them on their way into town in the cafe across the road.

So to today. Well it was time to mount the camels. Kit Kat and Rob Hod were up and ready to go first on Big Camel. Just behind them was Mongo on the smallest camel named Small Camel. Big Chuck was walking around his camel looking lost when Bev Binhow walked over to him. "Big Chuck this is your Camel". Yes said Chuck, "no Chuck, that's his name, Camel. He is the oldest and sweetest, so give him a kiss and he is yours. "A kiss!" Chucky said, "You are kidding". BB (short for Bev Binhow) said "look at it this way old fella, home is that way. If you want to get there give him a kiss or start walking". So Chucky bent down and gave Camel a peck on the cheek.



While all this was going on Willy and Dash were up and on their camels, Long Foot and Long Foot 2 and can we say no one could tell them between The Sheik from Ara Bike and The Silk from Bom Bay. At that time Pitt and Sav came riding in on Moon Shine and Moon Hooch followed by Gramay on Madam. Sav said "I will ride shotgun at the back, I have a feeling we may be followed". "Yes, good idea" said Pitt. "Where do you think they will try something" asked Gramay. Pitt said "I think they will keep their distance, they may try at Chamdo Springs but more likely they will wait till our overnight stop at Domodedovo. So don't say anything yet, just keep a sharp eye out. Sav did you see Cak'O last night and get the 3 colt 45s?" "Yes I did and if you look under your saddle blanket you will find them".

Ok every one are you all ready. Kit Kat and Rob Hob said all good. Mongo said you bet. Willy and Dash said dodger and Big Chuck said do we get morning tea. Bev Binhow, Ben Binalong and Harry Howlong all gave the thumbs up so Pitt said let's get moving. As Pitt and Sav were walking to their camels Pitt told Gramay to ride in the middle of the pack, I'll take the lead. Just then Sav came alongside Pitt "what are you thinking these cowboys want comrade?" He just pointed at Gramay I understand. So when will the bandits make a more and what does Sav understand?



See ya next month to find out.



Zigzag Zac's Book of the Month.

The Long Walk
By Misty Bus



Cookery Corner

Provided by Sue Brown. Don't worry, my reputation is still intact. I didn't cook this! Somebody else did and it was yummy.



French Onion Potato Bake
300ml thickened cream
40g French onion soup mix
1kg washed white potato, thinly sliced
1 cup shredded tasty cheese
1/4 punnet thyme, leaves picked

- Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Grease a 5cm-deep, 17x23 baking dish.
- Combine cream, soup mix and 1/2 cup water in a large jug. Season with pepper. Reserve 1 tsp thyme leaves. Layer half of the potato, half of the cheese and half of the remaining thyme in prepared pan.
- Pour over half of the cream mixture. Repeat layering with remaining potato, cheese and thyme. Pour over remaining cream mixture. Cover dish with baking paper, then tightly in foil. Bake for 50 minutes or until potato is just tender.
- Carefully remove foil and baking paper. Bake for a further 30 minutes or until top is golden. Stand for 10 minutes. Serve sprinkled with reserved thyme.

Andrea's Welfare Report

Andrea reported that Beatrice Drew is doing well. However, Elizabeth Crocker is still having issues with her leg. Heather Wicks missed our meeting , suffering with asthma, but is on the mend.

In a group like ours, almost everybody has some medical issues that they are dealing with on an on-going basis. If you are struggling and we don't mention you here, please know that our thoughts are with you anyway. If you know of anybody who is not well, please contact Andrea on 0415 659 961 and let her know.

Highsenburg's Quiz

Happy 2026 to you all. So for our first quiz of the year, can you find a town in this:

awesinliceh

A hint, it's not in Queensland.
C ya next month with the answer H.

We are always looking for contributions to our newsletters.



Remember, the newsletter is for all of us, by all of us.

If you would like to contribute to our newsletter, email or phone Dave on d.tourgossip@gmail.com or 0417 490 740

Compiled and designed by Sue Brown, Elizabeth Rea and Dave Lupton
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