

WELLINGTON EASTERN SUBURBS PROBUS CLUB

14th July 2026

Newsletter 287

Committee

Marie Pearce

President

Shirley Blackie

Vice President

Val Norrish

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Peter Chik

Finance

Brian Cattermole

Newsletter Editor

Annette Barnes

Guest Speakers

Gillian Chitty

Committee

Chrissy Gall

Committee

June Inkpen

Committee

Ann Morris

Committee

Hilda Steadman

Committee

Simon Reynolds

Committee

Jean Glen

Almoner

Report on meeting held on 8th July 2026

Club Membership	55	Attendance	35
Apologies	8	Visitors	1

President Marie welcomed members to the meeting.

Peter showed videos of the walking group on their recent walk from Paramata to Plimmerton. He then gave a demonstration of the power and versatility of AI. He showed an old black and white photo of Annette as child on her horse and added colour. He showed photographs of the Probus group at lunch after a meeting and instructed AI to add sunglasses to everyone and to change the clothing which it carried out in seconds. However, he pointed out the AI has limitations, cannot perform all tasks and is not always accurate.

Financial A reminder to members who have not paid their subs of \$40 that they are now due. Please pay by cash or internet banking. Morning tea \$5 – paid at the door.

CLUB BANK ACCOUNT:

Wellington Eastern Suburbs: 02-0520-0153465-00

CLUB MICRO WEBSITE:

[HTTP://PROBUSSOUTHPACIFIC.ORG/MICROSITES/WELLINGTONEASTERNSUBURBS](http://PROBUSSOUTHPACIFIC.ORG/MICROSITES/WELLINGTONEASTERNSUBURBS)

Just click on the above link to access the website.

CLUB EMAIL ADDRESS:

wellingtoneasternsuburbsm@probusclubs.com.au

Guest Speaker

Guest speaker **Amro Garnel** gave one of the most animated and engaging talks we have heard for a long time. He was born in Kuwait, of Egyptian descent, and attended university in the Czech Republic, where he learnt English. He returned to Kuwait and worked in a bank. Eighteen years ago he came to New Zealand, and he remains enthusiastic and extremely grateful to have made his home here. His talk was about the cultures of different countries he had visited and lived in, along with amusing anecdotes about embarrassing moments caused by cultural differences. Having been brought up in the Middle East, he found New Zealand culture the most difficult to define and spoke of learning it “the hard way”. With our reserved nature and egalitarian society, it took him time to understand New Zealand, but he considers New Zealanders kind and humble.

In New Zealand he worked for the Ministry of Education, visiting countries to encourage international students to further their education here. Having learnt Spanish, and with an interest in South America, he was sent to Colombia. Because New Zealand is such a small nation, we concentrate our marketing efforts in smaller areas. Therefore, in Colombia, Amro went to the city of Santa Marta rather than the capital, Bogotá. He felt that, with his appearance and command of Spanish, he could be taken as a local, but when a beggar picked him out as a visitor because he waited for the traffic lights, he realised how much culture plays a part in becoming a local. He decided that being a respectful foreigner was the best policy. He also told an amusing story about learning the Colombian national dance, reggaeton, and the different ways it is performed in Santa Marta and Bogotá.

Amro spoke about Saudi culture and how his Italian girlfriend at the time could not understand it. He attended an exhibition in Japan at which Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was present, and she was much admired by local schoolgirls, who saw her as a role model to aspire to. New Zealand is one of the few countries in the world where the Prime Minister is so accessible. His travels also took him to many other countries, including Australia and Fiji, where he learnt from a local to slow down and relax while on holiday. On visits to the Middle East, he would often act as an interpreter. He is currently a lecturer at Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, the largest polytechnic in the country and serving New Zealand only, and he is also carrying out research into integrated learning.

In answer to questions, he said that he found New Zealand food bland on arrival, but appreciates that it is fresh and wholesome, and that many ethnic restaurants are now available. Open Polytechnic of New Zealand does not offer courses specifically for older citizens, but he felt this was a good idea and said he would suggest it to management.

Birthday Wishes

Happy birthday in August to:

Carol Couchman	9 th	Deryk McNamara	12 th
Marie Woods	19 th	Esmae Erb	27 th
Anne Jenkin	26 th		

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Walking Group



The walking group meet each Monday at 10:30am weather permitting. The walk is approximately 1 hour (about 4km) followed by coffee and a chat at a convenient café. Starting venue advised by email on Saturday evening prior to the Monday walk.

Contact: Simon Reynolds 0278136950 simonofporirua@yahoo.com

Apple Computer & iPad Group

Meet after the monthly Probus meeting, second Wednesday of each month. The group started as an iPad group but has evolved into an iPhone and technology group.



Contact: Peter Chik **0211870672** peter.chik@gmail.com

Cinema Group



The cinema group meet every 1st Tuesday in the month. The next film will be on Tuesday 4th August.

Contact: Anne Morris **0272213901**
anneimelda.morris@gmail.com

Lunch Group

The lunch group meet every month. The next lunch is on Wednesday 26th July at 12 noon at Park Kitchen, 6 Park Road, Miramar. Bookings essential. Contact: **Chrissy Gall 388 6786**



Almoner

If you are aware of any members who are suffering ill-health, please contact our almoner:

Jean Glen 934 8107 johnjean4425@gmail.com

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 12th August at Seatoun Bowling club, Dundas St, Seatoun at 10am.

Guest Speaker

The guest speaker for August is Jane Van Der Wilt from Taskmasters who will be talking on 'decluttering tips and tricks'.

Thought for July

Time is a great healer but a lousy beautician.