



Bulletin

Probus Club of Bacchus Marsh

September 2026

Est. 1988



President

Jean La Franchi

NEXT EVENT

Thurs Oct 8: Trip to Ballarat, catching the train to Ballarat, where a bus will collect members & take to

Lake Wendouree for a paddle steamer trip, then lunch at The Bunch of Grapes, tour of Ballarat before

returning to Station for trip home. Cost is \$26 – (plus lunch own expense) train will be free as it is

Seniors Month, but you still need a Myki card. Places are limited, so call Lin Homewood if you want to go.



President Jean welcomes our newest member Gudrun Milne

Welcome to Spring and the warmer weather. The roses are shooting. Last week Jim and I were cleaning up our wood heap, and I had a horrible thought: with the warmer weather, before long the snakes will be on the move.

Early in the month we went up to Barham for a few days. We came home the long way via Swan Hill, St Arnaud, Ballarat, etc

We visited the Lake Boga Museum, which is the home of the Catalina. During WW2 the flying boats were stationed at Lake Boga. If you're up that way, it is worth a visit. During our drive, we saw silo art at Barham, Lake Boga & St Arnaud. The crops were green, and the wattle was flowering.

What a lovely day we had at Ballan Heritage Museum. They have a good collection of vintage engines and machines all made by Ronaldson Tippet in Ballarat. Martin Ball gave a very interesting talk. (We'll have to have him as a guest speaker in the future.) Their members are very enthusiastic about their restoration of these machines. We had lunch at Greendale Pub, which didn't disappoint with their food.

Carolyn Blackman's talk at our meeting was so interesting, about her love of horticulture from such a young age and the places around the world it has taken her.

This month we are celebrating Probus's 50th at our next meeting with entertainment and lunch.

Till next time, take care

Jean.

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Jean's Journal

CLUB NOTES . . .

Judy Stewart

Birthdays

Ken Polmear	9 th
Mary Baulch	9 th
Loryn Clark	12 th
Alistair Davie	15 th
Pauline Lowe	16 th
Eric Lowe	16 th
Brenda Robinson	16 th
Gillian Loughman	19 th
Dottie Emerson	23 rd
Judy Stewart	27 th
Mary Whitefield	29 th
Sue Wilson	30 th
Pauline Magri	30 th

Anniversaries

Mary & Dennis Baulch	14 th
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Morning Tea Duty

Noreen Tonks, Lin &
Russ Homewood

Door Welcome Duty

Anneliese Kied &
Merilyn Meadows

MEETING APOLOGIES

Ring Mary Baulch

0428 438 980

Ballan Engine Club visit and Greendale Hotel lunch

Wednesday 26th Aug 2026

On behalf of the 17 members who enjoyed the outing, I would like to thank Lin & Rus Homewood and Ray Meadows for putting together a great outing.

As usual, Ballan turned on a beautiful spring morning for our visit. The sun was shining, the air temperature was 10 degrees, and when the breeze blew, the wind was a bit chilly.

Our visit started with the gate keeper come shepherd, Chris Carroll, greeting us at the entrance to the old Ballan Racecourse reserve, where we were directed to the vintage machinery sheds. First up we observed the starting of the magnificent vintage Ruston Engine by its dedicated operator, David.

Next up we enjoyed morning tea in the warm club rooms, followed by a great talk from Martin Ball on the history of the Ballarat-built Ronaldson Tippet engines.

We then made our way into the fantastic Ronaldson Tippet Heritage Museum.

This museum houses one example of at least 90% of all types and versions of engines made by the company in Ballarat and is the most comprehensive collection of Ronaldson Tippet engines in the world.

The museum building, the engines on display, the information available on each engine and the enthusiasm of the dedicated engine club members are outstanding and are both a credit to the club itself and a great asset of the Moorabool Shire.

We cannot thank the Ballan Engine Club members for their warm hospitality and enthusiasm enough. Thank you also to Ray Meadows for making our visit possible.

We then drove to the little hamlet of Greendale, where we enjoyed a great meal along with some great fellowship. The Greendale Hotel provides a warm, friendly environment with good food and cold beverages.

Thanks again to Lin, Rus and Ray for a great day.



A Little Bit of History . . .

John Duns Scotus Gave The World 'Dunces'

Who He Was: Medieval Priest, Philosopher, and Professor. John Duns Scotus is associated with thinkers like St. Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham due to his influence in Scholasticism.

The Scottish-born theologian wrote about ethics and metaphysics, among other topics, during the 13th and early 14th centuries, but is largely remembered for Scotism. The school of thought named after Scotus focuses faith as an exercise of free will in God's divine plan. He essentially excluded reason as a factor.

What Happened To His Name: Duns Scotus was Catholic, and during the Protestant Reformation, his ideas were criticized for their lack of emphasis on reason. Followers of Duns Scotus and Scotism were considered to be “dolts” and “dullards” and called *Duns* as a result. This became “dunce” and retained that meaning.

The dunce cap - a cone-shaped head ornament worn by students to be singled out - came later with authors like Charles Dickens referencing them in their work with this in mind. For Duns Scotus, however, there are indications that he advocated for wearing hats. His followers were said to have worn hats, suggesting they started off as something associated with intelligence in the eyes of some, too.

Villagers Were Confused By The Appearance Of The Green Children Of Woolpit

Many are well aware of the folk tale of the green children of Woolpit, the two mysterious children who appeared in the English village with inexplicably green skin. But contrary to popular belief, the story likely has some basis in truth. Although many don't believe that two children appeared from an underground world inhabited by green people, many historians believe that they existed and had green skin. The first sighting of the green children of Woolpit was in the mid-12th century during the reign of King Stephen.

According to historical texts, two children appeared in 1150 in a village in Suffolk. These children had green skin and were talking gibberish while acting nervously. Since the villagers were nervous about the appearance of these children, they were taken to Sir Richard de Calne. For days, Calne reportedly tried to convince them to eat to no avail.

For years, the children lived with Calne and slowly began to eat what he gave them. According to historical accounts, the children began to speak English and slowly lost the green colour of their skin due to the diet they were being fed.

When they could speak English, they were asked who they were and where they had come from. The children reportedly said that they were from the land of St. Martin and that they did not know how they had arrived in the village where they were found.

One theory is that the children were the descendants of immigrants whom King Henry II or King Stephen had slain. Others put forth that the children were extraterrestrials or that they hailed from another world. Additionally, the green tint to their skin could have been due to malnourishment or “green sickness.”

YouTube Sites

Couple of great YouTube videos that are worth the time.

If you are a fan of The Chase or even if you are not:

Type into Youtube
“The Chase Bloopers” you will have a great laugh along with Bradley.

I defy anyone to walk away without laughing.

This is another one that is worth your time.

“Australian Slang Was So Strong”
Even the US Military Couldn't Understand It.

A Little Bit of History cont. . . .

What Was The Dancing Plague?

In 1518, hundreds of residents of a town in the Holy Roman Empire started dancing - and didn't stop for three months. The so-called Dancing Plague seized Strasbourg through the summer months, with Frau Troffea being the first victim. She danced to exhaustion for days, bloodying and bruising her feet until eventually succumbing to her affliction.

The Dancing Plague lasted from July to early September, at which point it subsided. Historians still wonder what the root cause was, but Strasbourg wasn't the only place it struck. Similar instances of dancing to death occurred in various parts of Germany, France, Holland, and Switzerland as early as 1374.

At the time, the disorder was thought to be caused by "hot blood," the devil, or a curse from Saint Vitus, the patron saint of dancers and entertainment. Other theories involve poison, spider bites, or a communal possession of sorts, bred in an "environment of belief" that some supernatural force was at large.

The American President Actually Pays For Their Own Food

There's no need for taxpayers to scrutinise the President's grocery bills. It's up to the President to pay for all their personal food and drink, as well as a number of other necessities like toothpaste or dry-cleaning. However, state dinners are considered part of the government's operations and are paid for with federal funds.

Editors note: I sincerely hesitate to think our politicians do this

After The Battle Of Shiloh, Some Soldiers' Wounds Glowed Blue

After the Battle of Shiloh, many soldiers had to wait two days before they could be treated by a medic. At night, they noticed that some of their wounds glowed blue. Stranger still, after being treated by a physician, the soldiers with glowing wounds healed faster than their non-glowing comrades. They dubbed the miracle "Angel's Glow."

It sounds like the stuff of legend, but in 2001, a microbiologist suggested the glow could have been caused by a type of bioluminescent soil bacteria known as *Photorhabdus luminescens*. The bacteria shares a symbiotic relationship with a tiny, parasitic worm that uses the bacteria to feed on insects and other microorganisms. When the worm vomits up the bacteria, these microorganisms expire.

Normally, the nematode worms and their bacteria can't live inside a human body; it's too hot. But soldiers left outside in the rainy, muddy Tennessee nights could have caught hypothermia, lowering their body temperature enough to harbour the worms and their glowing bacteria. At that point, *P. luminescens* would have killed the harmful bacteria infecting the soldiers' wounds, which explains why they healed faster.

Barbary Lion

History - The Barbary lion was a population of lions that roamed North Africa. They were declared regionally extinct by the 1960s. They were believed to be a subspecies of lions, but DNA analysis conducted in 2017 concluded they were a separate population of the Asiatic lion. Barbary lions were important culturally throughout the Roman Empire and were imported to be used during gladiatorial games.

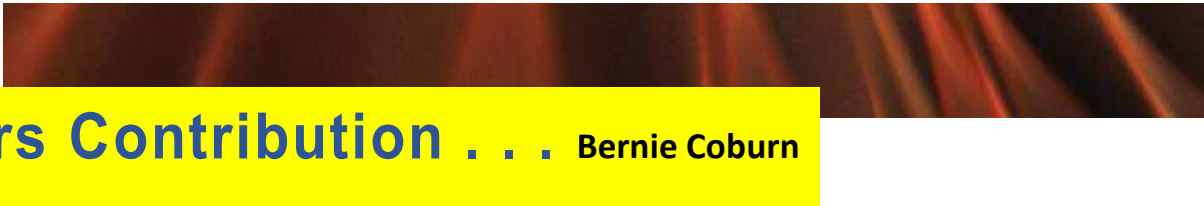
Physical Description - Large, beautiful manes, which extended over the shoulders and under the belly.

Size - Barbary lions were larger than most other species of lions, reaching up to 8 feet in length and weighing as much as 660 lbs.

Location - The Atlas Mountains between Morocco and Egypt.

Modern Relatives - They were genetically identical to the Asiatic lion, which remains extant.

- **Scientific Name:** *Panthera leo leo*



Members Contribution . . . Bernie Coburn

Give the fire a poke Bill", Mum would urge as we lounged in front of the wood stove after tea on winter nights. It was the 1940's and we were living on a farm on muddy/dusty – according to the weather - Cemetery Road about a kilometre north of the Melton township. A town one unkind visitor said belonged in the Mallee. Years of drought and the restrictions imposed by war meant times were not good for farmers. Looking back, we had assets, but little income.

At Probus morning coffee the conversation often turns to how hard our early life was, compared to the affluent, carefree life that is our grandchildren's. Let's think about that.

Originally the house was a solid four-room dwelling without a passage. Over time, rooms and verandas had been haphazardly added – not an architectural triumph, nevertheless homely. No electricity, no town water and no sewage. Perishables were kept coolish in a Coolgardie safe and later in an ice chest. The huge kitchen was lit by a Tilley lamp. The rest of the house was navigated by the dim flame of kerosene lamps. I am not sure when we got a sink (wooden), up until then, we washed up on the kitchen table. There were three water tanks, one for the kitchen, one for the bathroom, and I think the third was accessed from outside. There were a few more around the sheds. Even throughout the drought, we did not run out of water. City relatives were watched like hawks to make sure they did not run taps or, worse still, leave them running. The stock watered at a large dam that got low, but not empty, and there was bore. Sewage, don't ask. We were our own nightman

Chooks were a staple. They laid eggs, which were sold after we washed and packed them on the kitchen table. Chickens and mutton were the Sunday roast and sometimes the chicken broth. Even the old broilers were sold. Milk from the house cows became cream and butter, with the whey fed to the calves. There were hectic periods when Mum preserved in-season fruit, jam, pickles and chutney. My aunt made tomato sauce; I did not think it was the genuine article as it was not red like our store-bought sauce.

My two-years-younger sister and I played outside, mostly games of our own making, until called for tea. There were lots of books, and despite their number, we read most of them twice. We had a battery radio; reception was poor, and batteries were expensive, so we only listened to a few staples: Superman, Uncle Norman, and a shoot-em-up western.

We often had relatives to stay, and we visited relatives for meals and celebrations. We never dined out, but if Mum took us to Melbourne, we dined like kings at Coles Cafeteria. Society was ordered. Shops, except for essentials, closed for the weekend at 5 on Fridays. Grocers, etc at 12 on Saturday. Saturday afternoon was for watching or playing sport. Sunday morning was for God and Sunday afternoon for visiting or receiving visitors.

My sister and I were unaware we were living in hard times and blissfully ignorant of a harsher world awaiting us.

In 1950 electricity arrived, and I went away to boarding school. Melton is a city. Cemetery Road is now a four-lane highway. Water arrived in 1968. Sewage in the late 1970's. As times improved, the old house was remodelled. Now it is the clubhouse for a tennis club.

And tea is now dinner!

Daily Traumas . . . by Margaret Murray

My Golf Club experience.

Now you might think I have been out playing golf, but no, I wasn't. I was having lunch with a few Probus friends. All was very fine; I couldn't complain about the meal or the friends, but I had a serious problem with their toilets.

Now I am no princess lightweight, and age isn't doing me any favours, but the Golf Club needs to have some consideration for people like me.

Before I left the club, I decided to go to the toilet so that I didn't have an emergency on the way home to Corio. I parked my walker and entered the cubicle, locked the door, seated myself, and all was fine.

Then the trouble started. The toilet seat is very low. You see my knees don't function like they used to so there was the first problem. The second problem was, no bar to grab to rise from the throne.

Attempt No:

1. Rise from the seat – failed.
2. Rock back and forth to gain momentum, still seated.
3. Rock again, only harder this time, still stuck to the magical throne.

I thought about calling the Mayor for help, but that wouldn't work. Then I thought of our premier and wondered who the premier was now; then I decided this was a job for the Prime Minister, and he said yes, woohoo, he would do it, but we know he would say he didn't say that, so I was stuck on this low-lying throne.

Now, I am thinking, perhaps I should ring someone for help. Nup, not gonna work; phone is on my walker, and it is outside the cubicle, and even if I could ring someone, the damned cubicle door was locked. By this time, I could see myself being locked in till the cleaner came. I wondered how often they cleaned the toilets; yikes, I could be here for a week.

Then after about ten minutes of trying to part company with the throne, I finally had an idea. I spoke to God. I said, "God, please forgive me for all my sins, but I really need to get off this throne. I really would like to see my friends again; can you please help?"

I sat for thirty seconds while God got his thoughts together, and I then had another go. I built the momentum up: 1, 2, 3, go, and I rose from the seat like a feather that floats in the breeze. Thank you, God. I know I am going to have to pay you back someday, and that is okay. I wonder whether you grant wishes, because I would like that golf club to put a handrail in the toilets for people like me or even for those not like me. After all, they may find themselves in the same predicament one day.

About Politicians

The polties came
marching down Main
Street,
All promises polished, all
speeches upbeat.
They vowed a new park,
a bridge, and a zoo —
Though how they'd fund
that,
not one of them knew.
They shook every hand
like a prize-winning pup,
declared, "We'll fix
everything!"
then promptly stuffed
up.
Their plans were as
sturdy as wet Weet-Bix
mush,
And collapsed at the first
gentle breeze or slight
push.

By winter the bridge was
still just a dream,
The park was a paddock,
the zoo a meme.
But one thing they built
with great dedication
Was a towering
monument to public
frustration.

Still, come next election,
they'll smile and they'll
grin,
And promise the same
things all over again.
And the townsfolk will
nod, with a sigh and a
smirk:
*"Ah yes... democracy's
renovation at work."*

Quote . . . After all is said and done, the politicians say it, and the taxpayers do it!

Probus Club of Bacchus Marsh

It's *your* club and needs *your* input, whether as a member of the committee, a volunteer for morning tea, or door greeting, or a contribution as a five-minute speaker or simply putting forward ideas for the bulletin or the committee to consider. It is all important to the ongoing success of our club.

Little Johnny and the Name of the Lord

A Sunday School teacher decided to quiz her students about what they learned that year. Sunday School Teacher: "Okay class... who can tell me what are some different names used when talking about God?" Little Johnny: "Hallowed!" Sunday School Teacher: "Hallowed? How did you get that as an answer?" Little Johnny: "It's in the Lord's Prayer: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name..."

The Great Outdoors

This guy in his 50s goes to the doctor. "What's your daily activity level like?" the doctor asks. "Why do you ask?" "Well, a guy your age, probably not eating all that healthy, probably not getting that much exercise..." The guy shrugs. "Yesterday afternoon, I waded along the edge of a lake and outran a wild dog in the heavy brush." "Well, that sounds pretty good," the doctor comments. "That's nothing," the guy says. "The day before, I marched up and down several hills and outran a couple of bears." "That sounds really impressive." "And last weekend, I crawled out of quicksand, stood in a patch of poison ivy, and knocked down a small tree." "Well," the doctor says, "it sounds like you're one hell of an outdoorsman!" "Nah," the guy replies, "I'm just real lousy at golf."

The Nun and the Cabby

A nun gets into a cab and notices that the VERY handsome cab driver won't stop staring at her. She asks him why he is staring. He replies: "I have a question to ask you but I don't want to offend you." She answers, "My son, you cannot offend me. When you're as old as I am and have been a nun as long as I have, you get a offensive." "Well, I've always had a fantasy to have a nun kiss me." She responds, Well let's see what we can do about that: #1, you have to be single and #2, you must be Catholic." The

Smile and Smirk

cab driver is very excited and says, "Yes, I'm single and Catholic!" "OK," the nun says. "Pull in to the next alley." The nun fulfills his fantasy with a kiss that would make a hooker blush. But when they get back on the road, the cab driver starts crying. "My dear child," says the nun, "why are you crying?" "Forgive me but I've sinned. I lied and I must confess, I'm married and I'm Jewish." The nun says, "That's OK. My name is Kevin and I'm going to a fancy dress party."

Healthy Life, Healthy Wife

In their small village, a couple was famous for the husband being 102 years old and his wife being 98 years old, and both in terrific condition, working their farm every day and having the bodies of much younger people. One day, a visitor to the village, curious about the couple, approached the old man at his farm. The old man was cutting wood without a shirt on, sweat glistening on a body that seemed to belong to a man half his age. The visitor introduced himself and asked the old man: "I hear you are 102!" "That's correct." said the old man with a smile. "Wow, I must say, you look in amazing shape!" "Thank you." Said the old man humbly. "Do you mind if I ask-" "-How am I this healthy at my age?" finished the old man. "Help me carry this wood back home and I'll tell you." The visitor agrees and they make their way inside. "You see," said the old man, "I've been married for 75 years. Now, when we got married, I made a little arrangement with the wife. Every time we have an argument, the loser of said argument must run for 5 kilometers. Seeing as we have a pretty typical marriage, I've been running 5 kilometers almost every day for 75 years! That's why I'm in the great shape I am." "But if that's the case," said the puzzled visitor, "how come your wife is in such great shape too?" "Well," smiled the old man, "she usually runs after me to make sure I finish the whole five."

A woman brings her pet duck to the vet.

"Something's wrong; he looks weak" The vet examines the duck for a moment, then sighs: "I'm sorry, your duck is dead" The woman frowns: "Already? "You didn't even run any tests!" The vet nods, then whistles. A black Labrador walks in, sniffs the duck from head to tail, shakes its head and walks out. Then the cat jumps up, sniffs the duck, lets out a soft meow and leaves. The vet turns back to the woman: "I'm sorry, the results are clear" He hands her the bill. She gasps: "\$1000 for that?" The vet shrugs: "Well..... if you'd taken any word for it, it would have been \$50...".....but with the Lab report and the Cat scan, it adds up."

A bit more . . .

The Golf Club Throne Fiasco — A Poem

I went to the Golf Club for lunch with the crew,
A lovely Probus outing — as fine as a brew.
The meal was delightful, the chatter was grand,
But the toilets... well, that's where things got out of hand.

I parked my old walker, stepped in with a grin,
Locked the cubicle door, thought, "Right, let's begin."
But the seat was so low it was practically underground —
A throne for contortionists, not folks like me, I found.

I sat myself down; all seemed calm at the start,
Till I tried to get up... and my knees said, "Depart?"
Attempt number one: a heroic rise — nope.
Attempt number two: rocking gently — still no hope.

Attempt number three: rocking harder — still stuck.
By now I was thinking, "Well this is just sucked."
My phone was outside, my walker too far,
And the cubicle door locked like Fort Knox with a bar.

I pictured the cleaner finding me days from now,
Still perched on the throne like a baffled old cow.
I thought of the Mayor, the Premier, the PM —
But they'd all deny helping, so no point calling them.

Ten minutes went by, I was losing the fight,
So I whispered to God, "Mate, help me tonight.
I know I've been sinful, but please hear my plea —
I'd quite like to leave, and rejoin humanity."

I waited a moment while God had a think,
Then gathered my strength — quicker than a wink.
I rocked once, twice, thrice — then up I did soar,
Like a feather escaping a laundry-room floor.

"Thank you," I said, "for the heavenly shove.
I owe you a favour — you've earned my love.
But if you grant wishes, here's one more to install:
A handrail, dear Lord, in that Golf Club stall."

Because one day, you see, even spry folks may groan,
When they find themselves stuck on the Low-Lying Throne.

By Meander M

DON'T FORGET

**Anniversary –
Probus 50th & our
own (38th) held
over to September
Meeting; will have
entertainer
Brendan Scott &
catered lunch cost
\$25 to be paid by
September 17
either to Ian or
into bank.**



*Our August guest speaker
Carolyn Blackman*



Contacts: President Jean La Franchi - 0423 635 536, Secretary: Gillian Loughman - 0417 583 753, Treasurer: Ian Backhouse - 0408 518 290, Ladies Welfare: Liz Fitzpatrick - 0407 814 673, Men's Welfare: Alastair Davie 0403 005 192, Bulletin: Margaret Murray 0434 965 954.

NOTE: Can you please let welfare carers know if somebody is unwell, as they may need assistance?