



## PROBUS CLUB OF GREENWAY INC.

### FELLOWSHIP FRIENDSHIP & FUN

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Issue: 9 December 2025

### No Meeting, Christmas Party instead...

#### PRESIDENT'S DECEMBER MESSAGE

**Hi everyone,** By now you're either looking forward to Christmas or searching your house (and your brain) for where you stored your 'bah humbug' T Shirt. I'm not sure there is any in-between. One lady I worked with used to countdown to Christmas from what seemed like February, whereas I'm firmly in the camp where Christmas decorations go up no earlier than 1 December and come down no later than 6 January. The retail stores seem to put decorations up in September which has to be hard on young children because that is a very long lead time. I wonder how long after Christmas the grocery stores will put out the Easter hot-cross buns, or the back-to-school items.

Whatever your thoughts are on the science of Christmas decorations, I hope you have the opportunity to catch up meaningfully with friends and family, or alternatively someone takes you under their wing and includes you in their festivities. As I'm an apology for December's lunch and January's meeting, I look forward to catching up with you again at February's meeting. Season's greetings.

**Noela**

#### NEWS FROM THE NOVEMBER MEETING

\*\* Greenway's membership is 72, the meeting was attended by 52 members and there were 10 apologies.

\*\* At 11am the meeting stood in silence for one minute. Lest We Forget.

\*\* Privacy issues: Because our newsletters will eventually be published on the website, use of last names has been discontinued.

\*\* For the AGM in March, both a potential Vice-President and a trainee Webmaster have come forward. (Nomination forms will come out in January.)

\*\* VERY IMPORTANT Please note the **change** to our bank account **name**...Details below:

**(If paying cash to Pam, PLEASE put correct amount in envelope with your name and the details written in it ~ many thanks)**

FOR DIRECT DEPOSITS:

**Combined** Probud Club of Greenway Inc.

BSB: **062914**

ACCOUNT: **10634121** (In Reference put your name and what the amount is for e.g. John Smith Opera.)

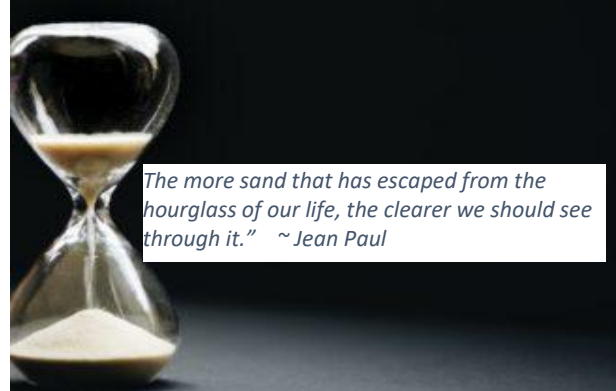
## THE NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY PHOTO

Graham, John & Jill



**Wishing a Happy December Birthday to:**

**Margaret, Russell, Linda, Terry, Jo,  
Lorraine, Joan M & Jan P.**



*The more sand that has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it." ~ Jean Paul*

**Positive thoughts and best wishes to Clem who is in hospital.**

(If you know of any member who is unwell, please call Sandra Barker on 0429 133 363)



**Here is Joan M's Book Review... 'The Road Trip' by Tricia Stringer**

'Entitled' and sophisticated Sharyn Tregonning wanted a glamorous holiday to celebrate her sixtieth birthday but when husband Barry surprised her with a four-wheel drive caravan journey from Adelaide to Broome, she is furious and bitterly

disappointed. To make matters worse, Barry's annoying friend Ray and his reclusive sister are traveling with them all the way!

Two caravans, four adults and a journey through Australia's heart. The trip of a lifetime; what could go wrong? Everything! This is a witty, heartwarming and true-to-life story that captures the highs and lows of caravanning across Australia. In this, Tricia Stringer's 18<sup>th</sup> novel, there are meltdowns, mishaps, overflowing loos & plenty of laughs along the way! **(More than once, caravanners will find themselves nodding, laughing and saying "Yep that's exactly how it is.")**

As Xmas 1938 approached, Chicago-based Bob May, a 34-year-old ad writer for Montgomery Ward was exhausted and in debt. His bedridden wife was at the end of a two-year battle with cancer, leaving Bob to look after 4 yr old Barbara. To comfort Barbara, **he made up a tale about a misfit reindeer with a bright red nose who'd found a special place on Santa's team.** Barbara loved the story and made her dad tell it every night. As he did, it grew more elaborate. He couldn't afford to buy her a gift for Xmas, so Bob turned the story into a homemade picture book. Then Bob's wife died. His co-workers urged him to attend the company Christmas party and to read from his picture book and after he did so, there was a standing ovation. Everyone wanted a copy. Montgomery Ward bought the rights to the book. Every major publishing house wanted the book. **In an incredible gesture of goodwill, the store returned the rights to May so he could sell it.** Four years later, now a millionaire and remarried with a growing family, May felt content, blessed by his good fortune. Then his brother-in-law, a successful songwriter, set the uplifting story to music, and country star Gene Autry recorded it. Within a few years, it became the second best-selling Christmas song ever! All this from a desperate dad's desire to bring comfort to his little girl.

## OUTINGS

### THE WALKING GROUP

**3rd Thursday each month.** (This month **18 December**) Meet at The Coffee Club at South Point, promptly **9.25 for 9.30am**. We walk to a café, have refreshment and return. (No Co-ordinator)

### GREENWAY SUNDAY DINING GROUP

**First Sunday of each month** members meet at various venues for lunch. There are usually about 20 of us and you'll be welcomed. Why not come along and give it a try and then decide if you want to join?

Contact **Sandra B** on **0429 133 363**

### GREENWAY REGULAR MOVIES GROUP

Want to go to the movies but reluctant to go by yourself? Why not join our regular movie group? Just give your name to **committee** and you'll be in the loop for the regular outings also to have coffee or lunch after. This is likely to be alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays on a fortnightly basis if there is a movie that members wish to see.



**\*\*TUESDAY 9 DEC GREENWAY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY** at Vikings Erindale, 6 Ricardo St Wanniasa. **PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY FOR 12PM.** 54 members so far. On the day, bring a \$10 wrapped present for the Santa Sack. Ladies will bring a lady present and gents a suitable present for guys. (When in doubt, a bottle of wine is suitable for either.) This is optional, so it's OK to bring nothing if you don't wish to participate in Santa's gift-giving.

**\*\*MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY TOUR PARLIAMENT HOUSE AND LUNCH** followed by Question Time at 2pm. Put your name on the list on the Outings Table.

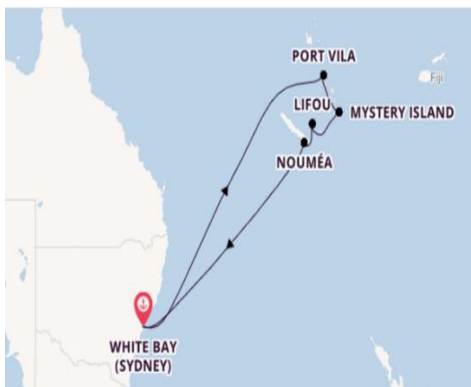
**\*\*FRIDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MARCH TOUR AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE MUSEUM IN HUME, THEN LUNCH.** (By request AFP, 12 members only.) If popular, we will arrange another opportunity.

**\*\*APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup> PHANTOM OF THE OPERA on the harbour outside the Opera House.** Price \$237. **12 have booked so far and there are 8 SEATS LEFT (Please pay \$100 deposit now.)** We're making our own way there; Linda will book a dining venue where we can meet up. Find your own accommodation. Final payment due by 3<sup>rd</sup> March. linda.tregonning@bigpond.com

**\*\*18 APRIL 2026 BUNDANOON HIGHLAND GATHERING.** We leave on Friday pm 17 April in Mini Bus (driven by Phil McPherson) Max 22 people. (Bus \$55 per person.) **PLEASE PAY FOR BUS NOW** Overnight in Spring Motel in Mittagong **JUST 1 MOTEL ROOM LEFT** (\$175 per room, pay on check-in.) Brigadoon Gathering Saturday 18 April, \$22 (which we can pay by transfer for everyone.) We'll return to Canberra after the closing ceremony. Final payment by 10 Feb meeting. linda.tregonning@bigpond.com



**\*\* JULY 2026 XMAS IN JULY CRUISE: ARE YOU JOINING US?** (So far 27 members have booked and more cabins available) 19/7 to 29/7 = Ten days of fun! Balcony room \$3,208 per cabin; Obstructed window ocean view \$2,608 per cabin; Interior room \$2,346 per cabin. Put your name on the list on the outings table. Contact person is linda.tregonning@bigpond.com



IF YOU HAVEN'T YET BROUGHT YOUR TODDLER-TO EARLY-ADULT PHOTO FOR FEBRUARY'S "GUESS WHO?" PLEASE BRING IT TO THE JANUARY MEETING IN AN ENVELOPE AND GIVE IT TO ANNETTE ON THE DOOR.

**AT MARTI'S 2025 HANDCRAFT DAY, WE MADE COLOURFUL GIFT BAGS**



**"PASS THE SCISSORS PLEASE"**



**LOTS OF PAPERS & RIBBONS**



**PAUL'S BAG TURNED OUT WELL...**



**MANY OF US NEEDED JAN'S ASSISTANCE!**

**EXCITING NEWS FOR JANUARY!**

Tues 9 December	Xmas Party 12pm	Santa
<b>Tues 13 January</b>	<b>Keith Podger</b>	<b>From 'The Seekers!'</b>
Tues 10 February	Guess Who?	Annette
Tues 10 March	TBA	
Tues 14 April	TBA	





### GRAHAM SHARES WITH US:

I was born in Newcastle in 1953, the first of four children – I have a sister and two younger brothers. We are all baby boomers. After serving in the Army in the war and surviving three and a half years as a prisoner of war in Singapore and Thailand, my father decided that a return to timber cutting for coal mines was not for him and he took up a plumbing traineeship in Newcastle with Newcastle City Council. While boarding in Newcastle he did meet the girl next door, romance blossomed and they married on 11 November 1950. They built the family home which my mother still lives in, and raised four kids.

During my early years I had the usual childhood ailments and broken bones. However; I almost became a road accident statistic when I was run over by car when I was three or four. Survived that and life went on uneventfully through primary and high school. Extra-curricular activities at various times included soccer, cricket, basketball, Australian rules football, Scouts, bushwalking and Army Cadets. Like most kids, money to spend on myself was in short supply so if I wanted it – jeans, transistor radio, driving lessons, and a car - I had to go out and earn it. A couple of pre-Christmas stints in retail - selling socks and jocks in Waltons department store gave my savings a boost. This was topped up with golf caddying. (Spending four hours on a Saturday towing someone else's golf buggy around probably killed any future interest I may have had in golf). The Army Reserve also paid well.

I did my six years of secondary schooling at Newcastle Boys High and my most notable achievement there was to be elected senior prefect in my final year. While not an academic standout, except in history and geography, I did become a bit of a celebrity in my second last year when I won a general knowledge TV quiz show. This show was sponsored by BHP and the prize was a trip to all the state capitals looking at various BHP facilities. In later years I did make an appearance on the Great Temptation.

1971 and with the end of high school it was time to decide where I would go next. Uni wasn't appealing, so I applied for ag college (perhaps to satisfy my inner desire to do something on the land) also teachers' college – you needed to have a fallback option. In the background, however, was my strong interest in a career in the Army. I've always had an interest in matters military; an interest tinged with pride in Australia and desire to serve the country. Sound advice from my father was that if you wanted to be in the Army you needed to be an officer. Only problem was that the minimum age for entry to the 12-month Officer Cadet School course was 18 ½. Nevertheless, I went the application and I was selected to commence training in July 72. I graduated in June 73 and was commissioned into the Royal Australian Engineers.

During this time Gail and I were continuing our relationship which had begun when we were fifteen--no we weren't high school sweethearts--and we married the week after graduation. Children followed - our daughter was born in Wagga in May 75 and our son in Sydney in January 77. Subsequently they have given us six grandchildren (four girls and two boys) ranging in age from 26 down to 9. Earlier this year our eldest granddaughter gave us our first great grandchild.

During my 20-year Army career, I had postings in Sydney (3), Wagga (1), Puckapunyal Victoria (1), Newcastle (1) and Canberra (4) and we lived in 9 houses. During my service there was very little happening in terms of operational deployments but I can say I fought in the Cold War. Anyway, all good things come to an end and with post-Cold War downsizing happening in the Army, I resigned when I was successful in winning a public service position in Defence – actually it was initially the same job I was doing in uniform. I literally left the office in uniform on the Friday and came back Monday to the same office in a suit. I went on to have a very interesting and satisfying 21 year career in Defence's infrastructure and property organisation, mainly in the property and strategic planning areas. In late 2013, I was involved in what turned out to be one of the most interesting projects I had in Defence - working with the US Marine Corps on planning facilities in Darwin. Who can resist a redundancy offer. So ended my career in Defence but not my interest.

We came to Canberra in 1983 when I was posted on staff to Duntroon. It didn't take us very long to decide we liked Canberra; its quieter lifestyle and family friendly environment appealed to us. Also, by then, we had a daughter and a son who were at a stage in their schooling where they needed to be settled. So, we took the plunge and built a house in Macarthur. (*continues next page...*)

**Graham continues:** We initially thought this would be short term, but ended up living there for thirty-five years. Eventually, with two of us rattling around in a three-level house with plenty of stairs on a large sloping block, we decided Macarthur wasn't a long-term proposition for us, so we downsized and six years ago moved to where we are now in Pearce.

When I look back, my happiest childhood memory is staying with my grandmother and step-Grandad on their beef cattle property near Muswellbrook in the Hunter Valley. That is probably why I sometimes tell people I'm a frustrated farmer. In terms of interests, I like to read but don't get as much time to do that as I would like (Gail tells me my problem is that I have too much I want to read). I also really enjoy caravanning - seeing the small out of the way places around the country and meeting interesting people - but other commitments restrict us doing as much as I'd like. One of my regular weekly activities, is exercise classes at the Over 55s Club in Tuggeranong, followed by coffee. With the same group of blokes, I also do a weekly morning walk around Lake Tuggeranong and you guessed it, it's followed by coffee. I've also been involved in the Weston Creek Men's Shed for ten years, including being President for three years. Some people think Men's Sheds are all about learning skills and making stuff, but providing a venue for male bonding and camaraderie is their true value. It's good for men's mental health -- making things is just a vehicle for that.

Over the years, Gail and I have done a lot of overseas travelling. The US and Canada most frequently – Defence work trips, visiting family (daughter and her family were posted to Detroit for 18 months – three extended visits) as well as just holidaying. Recently we did a two-week river cruise in Europe followed by a two-week do-it-yourself self-drive tour through Scotland. That was our second trip to Europe and the UK. Other destinations include Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Zealand and India (I'd go back to India in a heartbeat! It's totally different -- the people, the customs, the sounds and smells). I can say, however, that I've never been to Bali and don't ever want to go. These days we seem to be doing a lot of tripping to Tasmania to catchup with our great granddaughter. I am certainly looking forward to Spirit of Tasmania IV and V commencing operations.

How did I get involved in Probus? Let say it's in the family. Gail's mother was in Probus in Newcastle for some 30 years so that's how we knew about it. Being married to an Activities Officer I have a very social life and I've just become part of the newsletter team as the outings reporter and photographer. I also get to be the sounding board for ideas and occasionally throw in ideas of my own.

**DID YOU KNOW** that 'Blue Poles' that Abstract Expressionist painting by Jackson Pollock which was approved by the government in 1973 and purchased for \$1.3 million (and which became a political weapon against Prime Minister Gough Whitlam at the time) is today worth **\$500 million**? That sale was a record for an American artwork and news of the sale caused a sensation. It triggered an exponential rise in international art prices that today shows no sign of abating. The national collection is owned by all Australians and in 1975 after Blue Poles was acquired, it toured to every capital city in Australia and people paid 20 cents to see it. It has also travelled to London's Royal Academy and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. **America wants it back** and in 2016, offered the National Gallery \$350 million for it. Blue Poles was well ahead of its time and important for the Abstract Expressionist movement. Though not understood as art at the time, it is now as famous as the Mona Lisa and actually attracts tourism. (The cheeky Whitlams put Blue Poles on their annual Christmas card for years after Gough left government.)



**PHOTOS FROM GLENDA'S ARCHIVE:**



*Marti, Janette & Norma*



President Janice inducting three new members Sheri Longhurst, Tom Longhurst and Lynne Richards



\*\*PSPL is organising special events next October to celebrate 50 years of Probus in Australia and to Tom's surprise, he has been recruited to that planning committee. One of their projects is a wine & cheese cruise. **HURRY BECAUSE 110 PROBUS MEMBERS AUSTRALIA-WIDE HAVE ALREADY BOOKED.** Bookings should be made with **TRADE TRAVEL** directly for this trip on the newly refurbished Celebrity Solstice for: **OCT 31<sup>st</sup>--NOV 10<sup>th</sup> 2026.** 11 days, 10 nights departs from Sydney. Apart from leisurely days at sea, spend a day in Hobart, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide, Melbourne, Eden, return to Sydney.  
 \$2,284 pp twin share interior room  
 \$3,907 pp twin share balcony room

**GOOD NEWS...GOOD NEWS...GOOD NEWS...GOOD NEWS...GOOD NEWS...**

***(THERE IS ALWAYS GOOD HAPPENING SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD)***

Good News Network reports: **Russian and American Conservationists working together have succeeded in restoring tiger populations in a region of Russia where they were absent for more than 50 years:**

Between 2012 and 2021, they released six Russian Amur orphan cubs and now more than a dozen are roaming the wilds. The cubs were part of a study and had been kept in specially designed enclosures where contact with humans was kept to an absolute minimum, and at appropriate ages, they were offered live prey so that they could learn how to hunt. The WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society's) Bronx Zoo in the USA and other partners also advised the Russians on ways to raise and keep the cubs, so that they would not become dependent on humans. They were released at 18 months of age into the Pri-Amur region of Russia, beyond the Sikhote-Alin Mountains.

Along with providing the framework for rearing cubs in semi-captive conditions and preparing them for the wild, the study presented another fascinating phenomenon: A love story. Boris and Svetlana, two unrelated Amur tigers were part of the 6 original orphans released into the wild 100 miles apart in 2014. During the following year, as the scientists watched their GPS collars ping their locations onto computer screens, they witnessed a magical act of love and devotion. In 2015, **one year after their release**, Boris began walking in virtually a straight line directly north. Day after day he continued his march until his paws had chewed up 193kms—stopping where Svetlana had made a den! Six months later, a litter of Amur kittens was born. Boris and Svetlana had been rescued from completely different parts of the mountains, but grew up in captivity together in the facility that reared the 6 orphans, so something special must have bloomed between them during those growing days.

“This study represents a tantalizing new development in expanding the ‘toolbox’ for conservationists to return tigers to those parts of Asia where they have been lost” said Dr. Luke Hunter, Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s Big Cats Program. “The team was scrupulous in preparing those young cubs for life in the wild, especially in ensuring they did not habituate to humans. Their careful approach succeeded and paves the way for more reintroduction attempts—not only of tigers, but of other big cats as well.”

**Just like Boris and Svetlana’s unlikely union, the international collaboration with the Russian Academy of Sciences was also unlikely, but yielded outstanding results. This is a testimony to how really good things can happen with working collaboratively --irrespective of nationality and politics.**



**BORIS & SVETLANA RECORDED ON CAMERA**