



TOOWOOMBA RANGE PROBUS

Newsletter

Issued 20th May 2026

Next General Meeting – 10a.m., Tuesday 26th May 2026 Ballymore Room, Gold Park, 341 Hume Street Toowoomba
Guest Speaker: Alan Jarrott, Retired School Principal, now a part-time Private Investigator

Alan was one of the last of the two-year-trained teachers to graduate from what was known at the time as Kedron Park Teachers College. He completed his university degree externally through the University of Queensland.

He worked in schools around Queensland including Nambour Primary, Mt Petion (between Mackay and Proserpine), Ramsay (south of Toowoomba), Swan Creek (between Warwick and Killarney), Kin Kin (in the Gympie area), Finch Hatton (west of Mackay), Crescent Lagoon (Rockhampton), and finally Toowoomba East School where

he spent 16 years before taking early retirement in 2005. He and wife Gay then spent two years in England where Alan was Deputy Head of a school called Harcourt, near Dover, Kent.

On returning to Australia, Alan worked part-time as a private investigator.

He will talk on significant changes he has observed in education and the method of selection of principals for schools during the years as a school principal and compare it with the current policy and procedures of selection of principals.



Next Outing – Tuesday 9th June –

Brisbane River Cruise - \$120p.p.

A call for attendees was made at the April General Meeting, and the list appears at right..

If you wish your name added to or removed from the list, contact Floyd on 0418 110 344 or Paul on 0422 820 825

Timetable:

8.30a.m. Depart Picnic Point by coach

10.30a.m. All aboard! From Hamilton Wharf

11a.m. to 2p.m.: River Cruising including barbecue lunch

2pm. Depart for home, arriving Picnic Point about 4p.m.

Barrett (Paul & Carmel)	2
Brampton (Noel)	1
Butt (Mike)	1
Catto (Rob & Peta)	2
Coorey (Mick)	1
Dodman (Bob & Jan) (GF)	1
Free (David & Lyn)	2
Guerin (Derm & Lyn)	2
Hinchliffe (Bruce and Sue)	1
Kong (Melvyn & Karen)	2
Kretschmann (Bob & Carolyn)	2

McCasker (Ross & Beverly)	2
Mullen (Tony & Hilary)	2
Randall (John & Karen)	1
Stephenson (Ken & Claudia)	2
Stevens (Don & Barb) (DF)	2
Sullivan (Tim & Trish)	2
Turner (Bob & Meaden)	2
Wilson (Floyd)	1
Wockner (Col & Gail) (Chick)	2
Manning (Jean) (GF)	1
Attending:	34

MANAGEMENT TEAM – 2026-27

President **Mike Butt** email mikebutt@email.com Ph0438 666 411

Immediate Past President **John Randall** johnrandall4370@gmail.com 0427 984 370

Vice-President **Mel Kong** mlkong@bigpond.com 0488 591 997

Secretary/Welfare Officer **Tony Mullen** anthonybmullen@yahoo.com.au 0408238091

Treasurer **Ken Stephenson** kenstephenson@internode.on.net 0428 360 144

Programs Director **Rob Catto** robcatto67@gmail.com 0415 956 100

Trips and Outings Co-directors **Floyd Wilson** floydwilson@email.com 0418 110 344

and **Paul Barrett** vpbarrett262@gmail.com 0422 820 825

Newsletter **Bruce Hinchliffe** hinchb@bigpond.net.au 0418 795 038

Members unable to attend next General Meeting should contact Secretary by email with an apology.

Birthdays in June

Jeffrey Martin	1
Mike Browning	7
John Brien	8
Doris Watson	19
Ros Linnett	19
Paul Barrett	29
David Free	29
Jill Cory	29

VALE - TOM BENCE

One of the most gracious, highly respected and loved members of Toowoomba Range Probus, Tom Bence, passed away on Thursday 30th April, 2026, aged 93 years. He had been a member of Probus since August 2008 and served as President in 2015-16.

A celebration of Tom's life, held at Burstow's Chapel on Thursday 14th May, was, fittingly, well attended by members and partners.

Club Tributes to Tom: Tom Bence was held in the highest esteem by all with whom he came in contact. He had a wry sense of humour, a sharp wit and an engaging manner that endeared him to all. Some of his mates have contributed to this Probus Tribute to Our Mate, Tom Bence:

HORST BROSI: Tom enjoyed every facet of his life - golf, fishing, cards and his coffee extra extra extra extra hot!

COLIN WOCKNER: Tom was great company and his friendship to me was special and I will miss him very much.

JOHN CLIFT: Tom was a mate you could always rely on – it didn't matter, through thick or thin, and I reckon I was privileged to know him.

BOB KRETCHMANN: Tom was always great company and good for a yarn about the Good Old Days, especially about his time with the oil company. A great mate. R.I.P.

RAY AND MADELINE TAYLOR: Tom was a remarkable person whose life was full of wonderful experiences which he enjoyed sharing over many cups of coffee. We feel so privileged to have been a part of his journey.

AND SO SAY ALL OF US! TOOWOOMBA RANGE PROBUS IS SO MUCH THE POORER FOR THE PASSING OF TOM BENCE.

The following "Getting to Know You" report was included in the Range Probus News of March 2009:

"Thomas Bence was born in Bacchus Marsh and attended the first Public School to be built out of Melbourne.

"He worked in an accountant's firm for six years, then served in National Service, followed by 20 years working for the Ampol Oil Company, serving in every State.

"He joined the Ensign Group, then purchased the Colonial Motel in Toowoomba. He later was involved in several other Motels throughout Queensland and Victoria.

"During this period he became a board member of Homestead/Best Western Motel chain and eventually becoming President. This led to being appointed to Best Western International, involving much overseas travel.

"The family moved to Toowoomba in 1979. He joined Graham Newnham in commercial real estate for several years. He was President of Toowoomba Tourist Board. He married in 1958 in Swan Hill and lost his wife Kathleen 15 years ago. They had three children and he now has eight grandchildren, all who live in Toowoomba."

FOOTNOTE: Tom's surviving family now includes seven great-grandchildren.

He is also greatly mourned by his dear friend, Loretto.



This photograph of Tom with great grand-daughter Maggie was taken last month at daughter Vicki's gym



Tom with dear friend Loretto



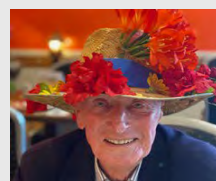
Tom with some of his best mates, John Clift, Horst Brosi and Bob Kretchmann.



Tom among friends at a Probus lunch.



Fishing mates – the late Brian Ball, John Clift, Horst Brosi, Tom Bence.



Looking good in his floral hat at a springtime lunch.

Guest Speaker at the April General Meeting was sporting champion

ANGUS YOUNG – Australian Representative in Lawn Bowls, Indoor Bowls and Curling

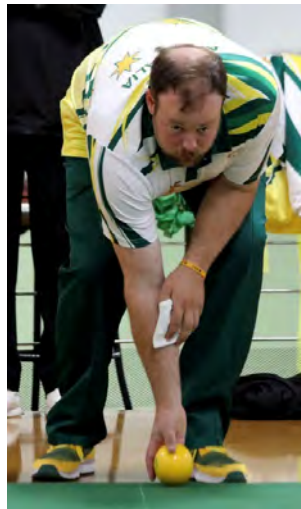
Angus, obviously an enthusiastic sportsman, stressed the important role sport played in community wellbeing and cohesion.

Sport – and he was especially referring to the sports he was principally involved with, indoor bowls and lawn bowls – played a big role in drawing communities together with inter-generational communication and understanding.

He instanced his own experiences with one of his best mates, his indoor bowls pairs partner, who was more than twice his age. Thirty-five-year-old Angus is a member of the Queensland and Australian indoor bowls teams. He is the current Australasian Men's Pairs and Fours champion, an Australian Men's Pairs champion, and has won 20 State titles. He is also a three-time Darling Downs Champion of Champion Singles winner in lawn bowls and previously represented Australia in the Winter Olympic Sport of curling, having won five national championships.



Angus Young shows his curling “sweeper” style to an appreciative audience of Geoff Smith, Floyd Wilson and President Mike Butt. Angus represented Australia at curling – a sport played on ice.



All concentration . . . Angus delivers a bowl while representing Australia in indoor bowls.



He's won lots of trophies, but nothing like this! President Mike presents Angus with a genuine Probus-logo-embazoned enamel mug as appreciation of a fine talk.

TOOWOOMBA RANGE PROBUS GOES TO ADELAIDE AND KANGAROO ISLAND



Twenty from Toowoomba Range Probus Club went on an exciting five-day tour of beautiful Adelaide and fascinating Kangaroo Island in early May 2026. We had a ball!

This group picture was taken at the start of the tour of Wirra Wirra Winery in the McLaren Vale district. (Included in the group were Floyd Wilson's sister Malene Woodward and husband Don.)

The party was led most efficiently and pleasantly by Lauren Roby from Uplift Tours (at right in photo)

(Floyd is missing from the above group picture. He had doubled back to the unusual huge log gateway of the winery to get a photo of it, reproduced at right.)



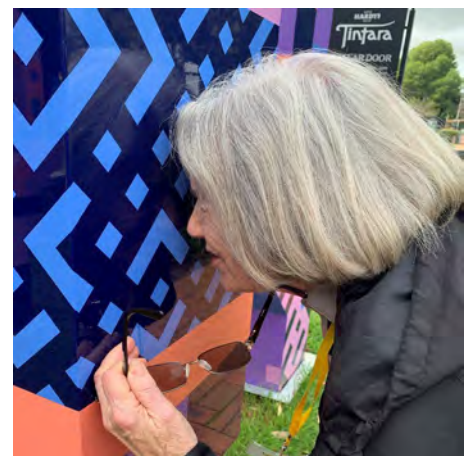
Three nonagenarian members made the trip – and they're looking forward to the next one ... and the one after that ... and ...



Bruce and Noel took a selfie with bus driver and expert commentator Jo-Anne, with the Remarkable Rocks in the background.



Other 90+ member Bob Turner considered an E-scooter for transport to Adelaide Markets



Anne Petriwskyj takes a peek at one of the 3-dimensional views of the area featured in a colourful and interesting piece of street art at McLaren Vale.

Here's *Prost!* from **HAHNDORF**



German sausage was on the lunch menu at Australia's oldest German settlement, Hahndorf. And, of course, German beer!



Hahndorf Inn where we had lunch

WIRRA WIRRA

Among the Gum Trees

Nestled among gum trees and vineyard in the middle of the McLaren Vale region, Wirra Wirra boasts world-class tasting facilities and stunning grounds.



Wirra Wirra also do very informative tours of its wine cellars . . .



Photos by Floyd



On Kangaroo Island . . .

Bees, Birds, Kangaroos, Koalas – and an angry Wombat!

BEES

KI is the world's oldest bee sanctuary and home to the only pure strain of Ligurian Bee in the world. Clifford's Honey Farm runs more than 300 honey-producing hives and can extract up to 20 tonnes of honey annually. In the Honey Room (pic) we heard about the amazing mating habits of the queen bee, observed the extraction process, and tasted a variety of honey flavours.



BIRDS

One of the best KI attractions is the Wildlife Park, with more than 150 species of native wildlife and over 600 animals. We enjoyed delightful interactive experiences with friendly barn owls – and Floyd got to hold a 5-6kg wedgetail eagle!



KANGAROOS

There are plenty of Kangaroos on KI, and our group had the pleasure of feeding some of the happy 'roo residents of WP.



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KOALAS

Mostly asleep, the park's koala population paid little attention to the "Oo's" and "Ah's" of visitors.



And the ANGRY WOMBAT?

Indi was her name. She'd been locked in her cage while an attendant cleaned her spacious home, complete with wombat-friendly logs and fresh eucalypt branches. Indi wasn't a bit happy, growling incessantly and refusing for some minutes to come out. Finally, she waddled out (insert), still grumbling and staring down the unwelcomed attention of onlookers . . .



News From Around The Globe!



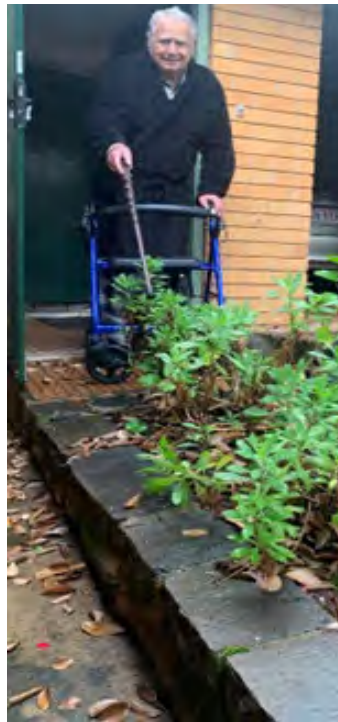
Seventy years of wedded bliss were celebrated by Don and Barbara Steven at a surprise morning tea at Picnic Point sprung by son Craig and his wife Deb.



Barbara and Don on their wedding day, 12th May 1956.



International interest has been aroused by this sign seen recently on Herries Street, Toowoomba. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) wants to know how many babies were sold and to whom. Investigative journalists from NFATG! are leaving no stone unturned. . .



That's where it happened!

John Clift took a bad tumble in his garden on Tuesday 12th May, badly bruising his right side, leg and upper arm. Nothing broken, but a lot of pain plenty of purple and black bruising. He couldn't walk for a couple of days, but with the aid of a wheelie walker was able to hobble into Burstow's Chapel for his mate Tom's funeral. "He never let me down; I wasn't going to miss his final farewell," said John.

How did the fall happen?

Carrying a garden blower in his right hand and a dead palm frond in the other, John failed to lift his leg high enough to clear the raised garden bed, and came crashing down among the azaleas and geraniums. The plants were unharmed, but John's got plenty of colourful new skin tones to show for the misadventure!



What a time for this to happen . . . Bob Dodman ruefully points to the sole of his left shoe which had almost completely come adrift from the upper. "I've got some good glue at home so I'll just have to flap around in the meantime," he said. He was at Tom Bence's wake at Toowoomba Golf Club.



Close-up of the offending shoe malfunction.