Forest-Belrose Probus Club Inc.

September 2026
No. 157

To access the club website – click **HERE** or type
Forest Belrose Probus Club into Google.

September 2026 Newsletter

Message from our President – Robin PITT



Hello Everyone
Our Probus club has had a very busy two months since our last newsletter was distributed, so this could take some reading!

Our July speaker was Ian 'Herbie' Hemphill who spoke enthusiastically and informatively on spices in particular. He said he was obsessive and his passion for the topic was very clear. As well as speaking of the wealth and depth that spices bring to our food he also spoke of the history and discovery of spices which I found particularly interesting. (More details of his talk on Page 4)

Our Christmas in July was a great success - a sea of red and green! Many thanks to Jennifer for her organisation and to Kylie, the Forest Hotel Event Manager, for her smooth running of the function. Jill added to the fun with her Trivia Quiz and Pass the Parcel. It was wonderful to have so many of us together and it was indeed a very happy occasion.

Another opportunity for a large group of us to enjoy a very energetic and inspiring 'Last Night of the Proms' at the Concourse. This London tradition encouraged much flag waving and enthusiastic singalongs led by the charismatic conductor Dr Nicholas Milton. Another musical event attended by a select group was the Power of Song at the Sydney Town Hall. Nothing like hearing the sound of 50 male voices, new songs and visiting artists in such an iconic venue. It was very much enjoyed by all. The Presenter at the Power of Song mentioned the famous quote by Dick Clark (American Bandstand) "music is the soundtrack of our lives ". How true this is and the longer we live the more interesting and varied the soundtrack becomes.

The August meeting was chaired by Alan Lambert as I swanned around the Mediterranean on a cruise. Many thanks Alan! Our August speaker was Robert Toynton, son of our member Caroline Finlay. A very impressive speaker by all accounts.

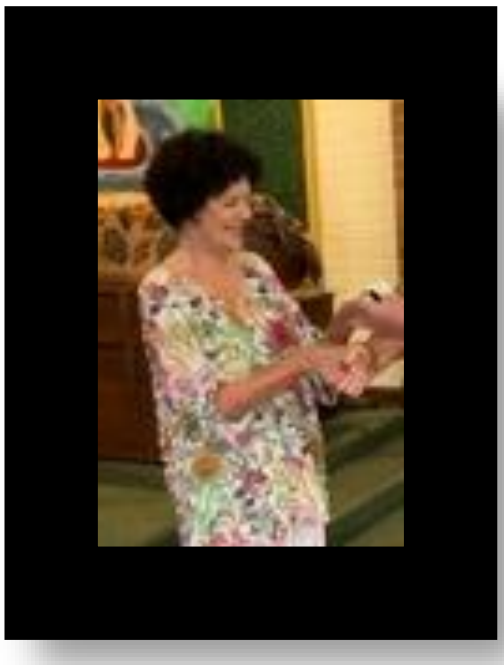
I had a wonderful time overseas however the heat was incredible, in the high thirties each day, and all towns on the sea seem to be sited on hillsides making walking exhausting! It's very nice to be home.

See you at the September meeting.

Best wishes to all

Robin Pitt

VALE – Jann REEKERS



Sadly we advise the passing of Jann Lynette Reekers on 31 August 2026. Jann joined our club in February 2022 and has joined in many of our activities over the years.

September Newsletter

This Newsletter reports on the period of July and August 2026 and shows events planned from September 2026 onwards.

Special Advice: Changes to Parking Permits

Remember those simple parking permits that come with your Annual Rates Notice. You just peel them off and add to your windscreen. ***But not any more!*** The new digital process is described in this LINK from Northern Beaches Council. This will take some time to do and you may need help from one of your grandchildren too! You will need to register an account with the council and provide photographic evidence of your drivers licence and rates notice. Don't leave it too late. The changes apply from September 2026.

Snippets

- Another very healthy attendance at the August meeting – 97 members and 2 visitors. And many apologies.
- Membership now at the 139 level.
- Pat Brown won the lucky Birthday prize in July.
- And Geraldine Anderson picked up the prize in August.





New Member – Karin Schulz



Karin is a Londoner but one of those travelling Aussie boys convinced her to come to Australia. That relationship did not last but her love of Australia did. She built a career training people to use IT properly. On a visit to family back in the UK, Karin found an opportunity to do similar IT work with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. That involved travelling to all those parts of the world that flew the Union Jack. Sounds like a dream job!
Back in Australia, Karin worked for a decade as the Events Organiser for a Mosman Retirement Village. (Great training for a Probus Committee role!) Karin is also a keen Bridge player.
Karin has joined Probus to widen her circle of friends, and to participate on lunches and outings. Sounds like you have joined the right club!

Welcome to Probus, Karin

New Members – Alex and Liz Shepherd



Alex comes from Narraweena where his Scottish parents ran a big nursery in Alfred Street for many years. Liz comes from Epping where her father was a builder of major projects including the Gladesville Bridge. As many of us did, as youngsters their families used to individually holiday in the Coolangatta area. Remember the Cabbage Patch and Kirra and Greenmount beaches. So from a holiday romance they now can boast 54 years of marriage, and 3 children. They have a son in Japan who is internationally recognised for his video photography, another son who is a senior partner in a Dee Why accounting firm and a daughter who is deputy principal at a local high school.
Alex was a National Serviceman and served in the Signals Corps in Vietnam in 1969. He went on to an IT career in the Commonwealth Bank. Liz worked in admin at Roseville College for many years and is an accomplished pianist.
They look forward to joining in the many activities on offer at Probus.

Welcome to Probus, Alex and Liz

Our July Speaker – Ian HEMPHILL



Our July speaker was Ian 'Herbie' Hemphill who shared his obsession with spices in particular. We learned that although herbs and spices both come from plants the main difference lies in which part of the plant they come from- herbs are the green leafy part while spices come from roots and bark.

Of particular interest was the origin of spices and the history associated with them.
Three iconic spices - cloves, nutmeg and mace were unique to the Indonesian Spice Islands and their acquisition shaped world history in the 15th Century by encouraging world exploration and competition from East India companies. Ian and his wife were lucky enough to visit these islands.

The vanilla bean also has an interesting history which stretches back more than 2,000 years to the Totonac Indians of Mexico's east coast. They were the keepers of this secret spice until they were conquered by the Aztecs in the 15th century, the Totonacs had commonly used ground vanilla beans to flavour "Chocolatl", a beverage made from water, ground roasted cocoa beans and honey. The drink was an instant hit and became extremely popular throughout Europe. It wasn't until the mid19 century it was discovered that the flowers needed to be pollinated by hand in order for them to be grown elsewhere in the world.



We were all very surprised to learn that saffron whose stamens are harvested by hand from the Crocus plant is called 'yellow gold' because of its cost today - 200 grams (1 Tablespoon) premium saffron costs $310 AUD. Use sparingly!

Barbara Potts thanked Ian on behalf of our club.

Our August Speaker – Robert TOYNTON

Robert is the son of our member Caroline Finlay, and his role as Superintendent Commander of the Auburn Area Police Command was the theme of his talk.
He took us through his time at the Academy, his first postings at Wagga and Bankstown, and his passion for road safety. He told how a brawl at Wagga might get the only 2 police cars on duty to attend. But when a similar incident occurred at Bankstown he was amazed at the response with police cars everywhere, the dog squad, the riot squad and the helicopter and all of them asking the young constable – "What do you want us to do?"



He now controls a team of about 165 police and they work in what is a regular part of the news cycle – “Another shooting in South West Sydney!”



The struggle for power, drugs and money continues.

He noted how important it was for our Northern Beaches folk to appreciate the struggles that exist for many other people living in other areas of the state.

Rob’s career has seen many highlights – royal security details, emotional return of soldiers remains – with 55 hearses in the cortege, and massive bush fires.

He demonstrated a very caring and sometimes emotional response to his work. He says his task is to not only make people safe, but they must also feel safe.

When asked about some of the difficult issues facing police today, he carefully noted the apolitical response – “You can’t arrest your way out of these types of problems”

Colwynn Tapp, who has known Rob for many years, offered a note of thanks from our club for a very interesting and informative talk.

Our Next Speakers

Sandra Summergreene continues to find interesting speakers for us:

- **28 September 2026**
- **Anita JACOBY AM, Chair of the ABC Advisory Council**
- **26 October 2026**
- **Nadia Williams**, and her topic is 'Stepping On', talking about preventing falls in the elderly.
- **23 November 2026**
- **Stephanie Stoddard**, Regional Manager for Life Care (War Vets,) to speak about the History of the War Vets complex at Narrabeen.

Wrap with Love



Janice kindly offered her home for a sewing bee and the date is Wednesday 30 September. Janice has written to her regulars. The team have just finished a rug with squares provided by the War Vets. We plan to display it at the September meeting. Our wraps have been so well received at Wrap with Love. In fact, the full report of the work of this very important charity is available HERE.

Well done Janice and the team.

Wednesday 22 July
Christmas in July at Forest Hotel



An excellent event with good food, good company, good humour, good prizes and good attendance. Thanks to Robin, Jill, Jennifer and all who made this a fun event.

Thursday 30 July – Barefoot Bowls at Belrose



Barefoot Bowls is now Belrose Bowls as we were allowed to be shod at Club Belrose at our first Bowls session arranged by Alan Lambert.
A small group of us braved a cool day in July to try to get a handle on the game of Lawn Bowls. There were 16 of us and 13 figured they could bowl ok. Bowls were supplied and we were made into two teams. First, we had to get our stance right to bowl and secondly, work out which side of the Bowl the bias was, left or right. Bowls were going in all sorts of directions and the closest either team got to the Jack was some distance.
We persevered and after 10 ends and 75 minutes some Champions emerged (no names). It was a lot of fun.
After drinks 15 of us stayed for dinner at the Club so our disasters and/or fine efforts on the green could be analysed and laughed about. The dinner was really about friendship and fellowship.
We all agreed to have another go later in the year, so we have booked another session in November. See details in the New Event section.

Sunday 2 August – another Sunday Brunch at H2O

Always popular at our favourite location.





Tuesday 4 August – Ladies Lunch at Club York

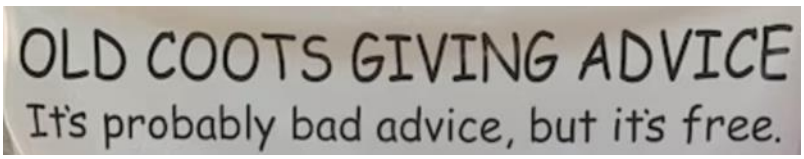
Lunch in the city for a change and a chance to shop as well! Most enjoyable.

Sunday 9 August – A Night at the PROMS

Lived up to its reputation as a great night out with wonderful singing and the usual enthusiasm of the conductor – Dr Nicholas Milton



Monday 10 August – Men's Breakfast



The usual crew solving the problems of the world. Join us next time!

Saturday 15 August – Sydney Male Choir

A very enjoyable afternoon of music.



Tuesday 18 August – Nan Tien Temple



A most enjoyable day for those members who attended, with a lesson in Tai Chi, traditional lunch and an informative guided tour of the Temple, facilities and beautiful gardens.

Sunday 6 September – Brunch at H2O

A beautiful Sunday brunch together at Narrabeen. Come and join us October 4 at H2O



Tuesday 8 September – Balmain Walk

32 members and visitors enjoyed a simple stroll down Darling Street Balmain to the Cricketers Hotel. Most just window shopped but someone came away with a flash pair of sandals! The meals were good value and the drinks were cold. We followed lunch with a range of coffee options and an easy walk down past historic buildings to the ferry home.



A couple of Balmain regulars!! They really look the part!!



And Jane enjoyed her Guiness too!

And many members noticed interesting restaurants in Balmain that they plan to return to. A lovely day out.

Important Procedures

MEETINGS – PLEASE NOTE:

1. If you cannot attend a meeting, contact Secretary Cheryl on 9452 5460 or 0418 432 647 or Membership Officer Ron on 9451 9003.
2. Please remember to wear your name badges to ALL events.

OUTINGS – PLEASE NOTE:

1. Most coach tours depart from the MINI FIELDS parking area in Hews Parade just down from Willow Tree Crescent. Always check departure location details for each event.
2. Please remember to wear your name badges to ALL events.

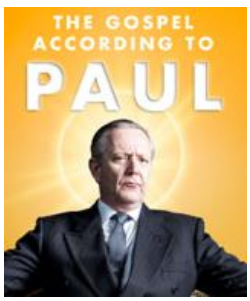
VISITORS – PLEASE NOTE:

1. Visitors may not just turn up at Probus meetings.
2. Permission for guests to attend must be obtained prior to any meeting by telephoning Secretary Cheryl 9452 5460 or 0418 432 647 or Membership Officer Ron on 9451 900

Planned Outings – Paid and OPAL

Outings are organised for members but if you wish to bring along a spouse or a friend, (and we can fit them in) just let us know.

7.30pm Friday 11 September
The Gospel According to Paul



With the performer who made Paul Keating come alive at the WHARF Revue – Jonathon Biggins. A very popular show at Glen Street. We have secured 20 tickets. Cost is $90. If you need tickets please contact Robin or Jill.

8am Monday 14 September
Men's Breakfast

Let Tim O'Sullivan know that you wish to join the Table of Knowledge and you will be very welcome.

12pm Monday 14 September
Ladies Lunch at Terrey Hills Golf Club

Lynn Findlay is the organiser here and the sheet was at the August meeting.



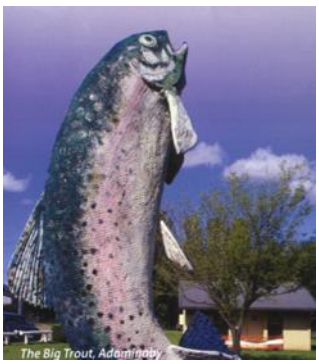
18 September 2026 Tour of Quarantine Station

Opal or self-drive event for a guided tour highlighting the history of the old Quarantine Station at North Head. Take the 161 bus from Manly Wharf or drive and park. There is a shuttle bus to take you from the car park to the Q Station – and back again too!

The tour is in the morning at 10:30 am and takes about an hour or so.

The cost is $46.50 and includes the tour, and lunch – sandwich, sweet treat, fruit, tea/coffee and juice. Wine is available for purchase.

EXTRA SPECIAL EVENT Sunday 18 to Friday 23 October 2026. Alpine Tour



This will be a special tour around the Snowy Mountains with a 5-night stay at the best hotel in Jindabyne. Unpack once – and enjoy trips each day around the spectacular sights of the Snowy mountains. More details are available at this LINK. This great little holiday will cost just $1,200 per member.
AND there is NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT!!

Please NOTE:
There is a meeting planned for the travellers at the Belrose Hotel on Wednesday 23 September at 11am. All booked members have been advised by email.



Friday 13 November 2026 Naval Cruise – Sydney Harbour

CANCELLED by Operator

been highly recommend
commentary from naval
available at the Septemb

Refunds available for all members who have paid. Contact Treasurer Barbara with BSB and Account Number.

3.00pm Friday 13 November Picnic / Get Together



Due to the cancellation of the above Naval Cruise, we have decided to have a Picnic / Get Together at **Clontarf Reserve** at 3 pm. This is a BYO event. Bring your own chair, drinks, food, and sense of humour. It is not a Naval Cruise, but you will still be close to the water!! Mark your diary.



3.00pm Thursday 26 November Barefoot Bowls at Belrose Bowling Club

Our second session. Tuition and bowls provided. A fun introduction to lawn bowls. Cost is $20. Free if you just want to watch the mayhem! We already have a big list, but you are welcome to add your name at the September meeting. And you can wear flat shoes or go barefoot if you wish.
And why not stay on after the bowls to have dinner at the club with us.
Sign up at the September meeting.

Monday 14 December 2026.
CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The booking sheet will be available at the October meeting.



At Wakehurst Golf Club.
Some photos from the 2025 event.





As with all events –your booking is confirmed ONLY when you pay the fee into the Probus Account. Details are below.

IMPORTANT - HOW TO PAY:

PLEASE NOTE: Bookings are NOT confirmed until payment is received by either:

1. **Direct Deposit to National Australia Bank (NAB)**
   i. **(Forestway Branch) BSB 082 132 Acct 14746 3739**
   ii. **(Please include Surname and first initial of First name in the description field plus some indication of what the payment is for. This is most important).**
2. **In cash at the next convenient Club meeting by enclosing an explanatory note or writing on the front of the envelope (name and purpose of payment) and your payment in an envelope marked "The Treasurer".**
   i. **You may pay cash at the table on the day of the meeting.**
3. **NEW - Pay by Credit card with a fee of 1.9% by Square on the day of the meeting.**
4. **Bookings and Cancellations must be made with the relevant Outings Coordinator ONLY well prior to the booking deadline to be eligible for a refund. NO ONE ELSE CAN ACCEPT CANCELLATIONS.**

Cancellation of tours:

If less than 1 week from date of event, the club will have to pay for the trip, so refunds are not possible.

Small Group Activities



FOOD & WINE

All are welcome. Events every few months. Jennifer Weirick is the coordinator, and she is available on 0412 454 779



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men's Breakfasts are held every month – a great opportunity to help solve the world's crises with like-minded mates.

Lock in the **8am on second Monday each month** for a chat with mates.

If any male member would like to join the group - contact the group coordinator, Tim O'Sullivan on 0418 191 121 .



Our book for **July** was "How to be Remembered" by Michael Thompson, described as magic realist fiction. This was a whimsical story about a boy who is destined to be forgotten at the same time every year, by everyone around him. He grows up enduring his own universal Reset and sets out on a mission to trick the universe and finally be remembered. He has to figure out what's more important, the things we leave behind or the people we bring along with us.

For **August**, we read a darkly dystopian novel – the 2023 Booker Prize winning "Prophet Song" by Irish author Paul Lynch. It is a devasting vision of societal collapse in a futuristic Ireland and follows one woman's fight to hold her family together.

After discussion of the book and a break for coffee, we have a short trivia quiz and end the meeting with a joke.

As Noah's Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, Noah stood at the bow of the ship with his head in his hands, as the male and female lions came down the gangplank.
The male lion said to the female, "Well, that was a rotten cruise – it rained every day and night, there was nothing to look at but water, we weren't allowed off to look around any interesting ports of call ...."
"Yes, dear" said the female lion "but wasn't the food excellent – we had something different every day!"

Barbara Vinall is the coordinator of the Book Club. They meet on the first Wednesday of each month. They currently have a full complement, but you can let Barbara know if you would like to join in the future. She can be contacted on 0448 256 588.

Welfare – Let us Know

We hope anyone who is aware of a member who is unwell will contact **Gaye Pringle** on 0407 248 331or email to probus.forest.belrose@gmail.com

Meeting Attendance – Who to Call

And if you are unable to attend a Probus Meeting – please contact one of these committee members:
Secretary - Cheryl 9452 5460 / 0418 432 647 or
Membership - Ron 9451 9003 / 0405 576 196

Management Team 2026/27 - Contact Details

President:	**Robin Pitt**	9948 2031	0409 712 231
Immediate Past Pres	**Jill Gray**		0418 279 839
Vice President:	**Alan Lambert**		0418 448 485
Secretary:	**Cheryl Prouting-Smith**	9452 5460	0418 432 647
Treasurer:	**Barbara Watmore**	9939 2340	0405 371 328
Membership:	**Ron Furness**	9451 9003	0405 576 196
Outings Coordinator:	**David Bull**		0490 908 193
Outings Assistant:	**Max Lambley**	9981 6774	0414 586 240
Theatre Parties:	**Robin Pitt**	9948 2031	0409 712 231
Food and Wine:	**Jennifer Weirick**		0412 454 779
Welfare:	**Gaye Pringle**		0407 248 331
Newsletter:	**Peter O'Reilly**		0419 992 104
Speakers/Ambassador:	**Sandra Summergreene**		0407 776 250
Ladies Lunch Coordinator:	**Lynn Findlay**		0418 291 837

GENERAL ENQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO probus.forest.belrose@gmail.com



10am
Monday 28
September
2026