



# Probus Club of Sydney

www.sydneyprobus.org

## Newsletter

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### February 2021

Issue 428

#### MEETING DATES

February 2

DR JOHN HEWSON AM

2021 - An Even More Challenging Year?

**AT THE UNION, UNIVERSITY & SCHOOLS CLUB AND ON ZOOM!**

March 2

CHARLES AITKEN

The Local and Global Investment Climate

#### ACTIVITIES

February Tuesday 16

Chau Chak Wing Museum  
Sydney University

March date TBA

Tour of Cowra & Orange  
If Covid allows!

April Friday 30

HARS Aviation Museum  
Albion Park

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Guest Speaker Program

Social Activities

General Meeting Report

Book Reviews

Mystery Photo and much more!

#### FROM THE PRESIDENT

##### *Gentlemen*

Happy New Year! I trust that everybody had an enjoyable Christmas season despite the re-emergence of Covid-19. I particularly hope that any of our members who live in the northern beaches area haven't been badly affected. Hopefully by February everything will have been resolved and we can continue our 'live' meetings. I firmly believe that getting together in person is a great contributor to maintaining our sanity in these awful times.

This year promises to be an exciting one for the club with some great speakers and events lined up. One of the exciting initiatives will be the launch of our new website, powered by Wild Apricot, a long-established Canadian software company, and while the look and feel will be much the same, it will significantly improve a broad range of club activities including easier event and meeting bookings and payments. Up to date (and importantly, accurate) information will be available 24/7. Full details will be presented at the February General Meeting.

##### **Adrian Pilton**

President

**Note** – To book to attend the February meeting in person - [click here](#)

The attend the meeting on zoom, click the link is below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81418862785?pwd=SXhuL3ZKSEhkUlk1bmdpa3ZpYUx5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 814 1886 2785

Passcode: 779417

**The link above to the February Zoom meeting  
Click 5-10 minutes prior to 10.00am on Feb 2**

## FEBRUARY GUEST SPEAKER

**Note – If you plan to attend the February meeting, you must complete the ‘Booking Form’ and click ‘SEND’ [here](#)**

### FEBRUARY 2

#### DR JOHN HEWSON AM



#### *2021- An even more challenging year?*

After growing up in Sydney and graduating from Sydney University, then University of Regina (Canada), John Hewson obtained a doctorate in economics at John Hopkins University, along the way to a remarkably wide distinguished career in academia, bureaucracy, business, politics, and the media.

He is currently a Professor in the Crawford School of Public Policy at ANU, and an Adjunct Professor at Curtin, UTS, Canberra and Griffith Universities. Previous senior posts include Professor and Head of the School of Economics at UNSW and Professor of Management and Dean Macquarie Graduate School of Management at Macquarie University.

He has worked for The Australian Treasury (Census and Statistics), the IMF, the Reserve Bank, the United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific, as well as the Asian Development Bank. He often advises senior public servants.

He has also had a significant impact on many areas of Australian life in business, politics, the media and charities

[For more details click here](#)

**Note** – Fill in the Booking Form to attend the February meeting in person [click here](#)

## FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS

### MARCH 2

#### CHARLES AITKEN

CEO Aitken Investment Management



#### *The Local and Global Investment Climate*

Charlie Aitken will bring us up to date on the current financial environment. Members will recall that his presentation last March was immediately preceding the impact of Covid 19 pandemic. So where are we now?

APRIL 6

CHRIS MASTERS



*From Albury to Afghanistan*

The longest serving reporter on Australia's longest running current affairs program, Four Corners, Chris will reflect on a life in investigative journalism.

\* \* \* \* \*

Meantime, any suggestions from members of possible speakers would be much appreciated. Please pass to Peter at <[speakersprogram@sydneyprobus.org](mailto:speakersprogram@sydneyprobus.org)>

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

**FEBRUARY**

**Chau Chak Wing Museum**

**Tuesday 16**

**Meet in the Museum Foyer at 11.00am**



A guided Tour of the museum, Sydney's newest centre for Arts & Culture, will be followed by lunch at the adjacent Cafe. Bringing together art, science, history and ancient cultures, the museum will be the new cultural heart of the University of Sydney's main campus.

The Museum features are wide ranging -

- Gululu dhuwala djalkiri - welcome to the Yolŋu foundations
- The Mummy Room
- Coastline
- Natural Selections: animal worlds
- The Business of Photography: the 19th century studio
- Roman Spectres
- Daniel Boyd: contemporary art projects #1

As always, partners are encouraged to attend.

To fill in the Booking Form [click here](#)

Cost is \$5 with lunch at your own expense.

## **MARCH**

### **Tour to Cowra and Orange**

#### **Advance notice**

With the assistance of Club member Peter Stevens, we plan to have a 3 day 2 night mid-week tour in the second half of March. The Tour was postponed from March 2020 due to Covid-19 but hopefully all will be well this year. Details will be circulated when arrangements are confirmed and thus bookings are not yet open.

## **APRIL**

### **Tour of HARS Aviation Museum at Albion Park**

#### **Friday 30 April**

**Meet at the Museum at 10-30am for morning tea**



This Museum comes highly recommended and holds the largest collection of airworthy and static aircraft in the southern hemisphere, 12,500 square metres under roof. We will meet at the Museum at 10.30am for morning tea followed at 11.00am by a guided tour. Lunch will be at the on-site cafe. Travel options include a train from Central followed by a short walk to the museum.

For more information about HARS - <https://hars.org.au>

To fill in the Booking Form [click here](#)

Cost is \$25 with lunch at your own expense

## RECENT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

### NOVEMBER



#### Rotary Regatta Cruise

On Friday 20 November, The Probus Club of Sydney had 17 representatives on board for the annual Rotary Charity Regatta Cruise. Unfortunately, there was no yachting regatta to observe this year due to Covid, so we all had to make do with a gorgeous sunny day & the magnificent sights of Sydney Harbour! The social interactions, superb lunch, unlimited refreshments & the jazz band ensured all had a pleasant day

### DECEMBER

#### Our Famous Christmas Luncheon at Dunbar House at Watsons Bay!



It was a great relief that the hiatus between "waves" of COVID allowed us to celebrate with an early Christmas lunch at Dunbar House on a beautifully sunny Tuesday 8 December (with mingling on the verandas for pre-lunch drinks getting the green light the day before). The smoke accompanying the 2019 lunch had fortunately disappeared!

The maximum number of attendees permitted changed the closer we were to the 8<sup>th</sup> and 3 days beforehand 95 people had signed up. Unfortunately, medical issues (mostly now settled) resulted in 11 "last minute" cancellations.



There was a wonderful esprit de corps among the Club members with President Adrian Pilton giving an insightful "Toast to the Spirit of Christmas", Tony Andrew again testing our knowledge of important Christmas trivia with his annual quiz & everyone appearing to enjoy the venue, meal, beverages, lucky door prize & raffles. I think we all appreciate how lucky we were on the 8th as COVID would have prevented us getting together a week or two later.

Hopefully Sydney can contain the current resurgence of the virus & vaccination we will be offered to us all in the next few months.

For more photos of the Christmas Luncheon [click here](#)

**John Carter**

Activities Coordinator

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DESK

Manned by the Activities Team, it is open at meetings for details of events.

[To book for activities click here](#)

You may contact the team by email

[social@sydneyprobus.org](mailto:social@sydneyprobus.org)

## PAYMENT FOR ACTIVITIES

**Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)** is the preferred method for payment. [Click here for details](#)

To contact the Activities Team urgently –

John Carter 0408 612 238

David Brand 0414 908 226

## A NEW WEBSITE FROM FEBRUARY 2021

The new website will be launched after the February General Meeting. The Committee has selected **Wild Apricot Membership Management Software** to enhance the accuracy, security and efficiency of our records. Wild Apricot is a long-established Canadian software company that is highly regarded in its field. Records will be securely stored in the cloud and members can access up to date information at all times. The software also automatically and accurately performs a wide range of activities including managing event registrations and payments, members details and subscription notices and payments and much more.

The look and feel of the recent website will be maintained, but to ensure privacy, **members must use a password** to enable them to login for full information. Please store your password securely and preferably as a favourite in your keychain or equivalent to enable prompt logins in future. Your password is confidential to you, you will never be asked for it. If you lose it, another can be sent through your profile when you click to log in.

**A full Guide to the New Website will be sent by email following the February meeting, it will also be posted in Members Area on the Notice Board.**

If you have any questions, contact -

Tony Andrew [tony.andrew@gpa.net.au](mailto:tony.andrew@gpa.net.au) 0411 424 826

Bill Cheshire [bjlcheshire@westnet.com.au](mailto:bjlcheshire@westnet.com.au) 0434 774 705

### **ANOTHER FACE-TO-FACE MEETING AT THE UNION, UNIVERSITY & SCHOOLS CLUB!**

Congratulations to President Adrian and Club Services Robert Warburton for the complex organisation of the simultaneous face-to-face meeting in the UUSC Dining Room and online Zoom. There were a few hiccups with the zoom!

### **11 Day 'Escape to the Country' of Western NSW**

Tony Andrew gave a brief presentation describing his recent tour of Western NSW

#### **Route outline**

Tony described his recent tour to the NSW country. Starting in the Bylong Valley the journey included Hill End, the Warrumbungles, Cobar, Trilby Station on the Darling River, White Cliff Opal field, Wilcannia, the Riverina and the wheat belt.

A fascinating tour, a number of surprises and was delightful to feel very welcomed.

To read his story, [click here](#)



**Thoroughly recommended!**

**Tony Andrew**

## President Adrian conducted two Inductions

### Geoff McWilliam



Geoff was schooled at Homebush Primary and Epping Boys prior to graduating in Civil Engineering from the University of NSW in 1968. He worked for Lendlease from 1973 until 1996 in most divisions located in Australia but also in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and London. During this time, he worked for Chairman Dick Dusseldorp and CEO Stuart Horner.

In 1996 he joined Com Bank in Corporate and Property Investment including 3 REITs. He retired 10 years later to a number of directorships and Trustee of the Dusseldorp Forum for a further 12 years. Geoff has 3 daughters and 8 grandchildren, all in Sydney. He is an enthusiastic golfer and a member of the Australian Club.

### Noel Dan



Noel graduated in Medicine from Sydney University. He practiced Neurosurgery at St Vincents General and Private Hospitals. He became Head of Neurosurgery at Concord Hospital. He has been president of a number of international neurosurgical academic bodies and organisations. Noel is a bibliophile especially in relation to Early Australian Settlement, Christopher Brennan and David Malouf. His current interests include fine arts and antiques, rugby, cricket and travel.

## DR MICHAEL SPENCE AC

### *Current Challenges and Plans for the Future at Sydney University*



Our December meeting coincided with the last week in the office for Dr Michael Spence, Vice Chancellor of Sydney University, before his departure to become head of University College London. He stood by his commitment to speak, but his hectic schedule meant he joined us by zoom for a full hour rather than be abbreviated by travel time.

Unfortunately zoom technical issues caused interruptions which were distracting but did not detract from the interest in his insights on the key challenges being faced by Australian universities in general, and by USyd in particular. He referred to the historic funding of USyd mainly by fees and philanthropy pre 1970, until a period of 30 years when government funding dominated revenue (90% in 1990). By 2019, government contributed only 30% of revenue, with universities pushed to be more self-supporting by attracting fee paying overseas students, both undergraduates and post-graduates.

By end 2019, over 40% of students were from over 140 overseas countries, boosting revenue, enriching campus experience for all, and providing ambassadors for Australia when they return to their countries.

[To read the full report of his outstanding presentation, click here](#)

## SICK BAY



### Ray Hyslop

Encouraging news about Ray Hyslop who remains in Mt Wilga Hospital after his stroke. He is slowly improving and movements are returning on his right side. He can stand unaided but needs help with walking; his comprehension is "pretty good", but communication is difficult. Tentative discharge date is 18 January.

Rehabilitation Hospital - [Click here for details](#)

### Peter Golding

In December Peter was admitted to hospital with a broken leg. It has been fixed to a point and he now can walk with the assistance of a 'walker'. Investigation of the cause of the break found that he has bone cancer and probably a secondary from the lung cancer which was found when the technicians went looking for answers.

At present Peter can only have one visitor, Denise, due to Covid restrictions. But he is in good spirits. Who would expect otherwise!! I'm sure Peter would like to hear from fellow Feather Dusters and if you would like to send greetings to Peter, I suggest you do so by sending the message to Denise, for her to pass on to Peter - [dplayoust@bigpond.com](mailto:dplayoust@bigpond.com)

Peter is somewhere north of 98y and until recently was walking 7 km each day. Perhaps we all need to lift our game!

### Adrian Pilton

## PROBUS TRAVEL INSURANCE

### PSPL Travel Insurance Update

Following an enquiry by a member, PSPL have advised that their Travel Insurance does **not cover** pandemic related incidents.

## A BRUSH WITH BRITISH TABLOIDS

The tabloids of Fleet Street have a long and inglorious history. From the moment in 1702, when England's first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, found its way into the inns, coffeehouses and homes of London, the tabloids have enjoyed unfettered licence to titillate their readers in any outrageous way they like, free of any moral scruple. Since back in those days neither the Tories nor the Whigs could trust the other to censor the press in a non-partisan way, the press slipped free of any restraint. By the 1730s there were 31 newspapers on the streets of London, most

of them churning out any virulent gossip that could be dredged up from eavesdropping on private conversations, disgruntled citizens with axes to grind, or surreptitious tips from high office-bearers.

Fast forward to the 1980s, and so far as the tabloids were concerned, it was business as usual, but enhanced now with the advent of phone tapping, 'blagging' (pretending to be someone else in order to gain private information) and 'bin-diving'. The latter was made famous by office cleaner, Benjamin Pell – 'Benji the Binman' – who regularly passed to journalists the discarded papers retrieved from the wastepaper baskets of lawyers, celebrities and business executives.

It was against this background that in September 1988 the Fleet Street tabloids accompanied Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, on a visit to Australia. To find the extraordinary developments that took place [click here](#)

**Les Anderson**

## SUMMER READING

### WARLIGHT

Michael Ondaatje



I thought this an interesting, well written novel and I enjoyed it. Ondaatje's prose is supple and fluid with well constructed and evenly balanced sentences. As a result, he is easy to read. Olivia Manning has a similar style although she is less elliptical than Ondaatje, so it is not surprising that he refers to her at one point. He claims that Arthur McCash was the model for Simon Balderstone in Manning's "Features of War". So, a character in a 1950s novel is based on a character in a 21<sup>st</sup> century novel. I had to read this twice in order to grasp such drollery.

Ondaatje is at his best when writing about characters with zero affiliation needs and gregarious loners. Such people make excellent spies and, as in Manning, successful expatriates. So, the chapters on the Moth and the Dodger are the best in the book. The Dodger, a clever working-class spiv, is clearly drawn but the Moth, an enigmatic figure, stays in the shadows. This is beautifully summed up in one sentence. "When Olivia Lawrence and the Dodger burst into flames the Moth, suddenly, seemed like the head waiter who could only brush away the broken glass."

Does Ondaatje have weaknesses? Yes, he delights in abstractions and uncertainties which leave too many loose ends. We do not know what Viola did or why she was shot. We are never told why the father left or where he went. The following sentence illustrates his love of words for their own sake. 'The familiar false modesty of the English, which included absurd secrecy or the cliché of an innocent boffin, was

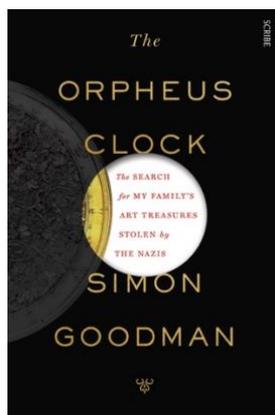
somewhat like those carefully painted formal dioramas that hid the truth and closed the door on their private selves." I have worked at it but have no idea what that sentence means.

I found the last chapters involving Marsh Felon somewhat uninteresting. It seemed that Ondaatje had become tired and bored with his project. His account, however, of Nathaniel's last meeting with the Dodger was very skilful and it tied up one loose end. In summary: a very fine novel.

**T E Young**

## THE ORPHEUS CLOCK

**Simon Goodman (2015)**



Even 75 years after the end of WW 2, stories of the Holocaust are still shocking. This is the story of how an extremely wealthy German family (Gutmann) try to recover their stolen artwork after the end of the war. Grandfather founded the Dresdner Bank and, before his death in 1925, put together one of the most valuable fine art collections in Germany. This included works by Degas, Renoir, Botticelli and many others. Fritz, one of his 7 children, was not only interned (as a German enemy alien) by Britain during the First World War but died in a German concentration camp during WW 2. His son (Bernard) spent most of his life trying to recover the family artefacts. Simon, son of Bernard, and the author of this book spent 20 years from 1994 until 2014 in the same task. He estimates that his father recovered about one third of the family collection and that he (Simon) recovered another one third in 20 years of full-time searching. This left the remaining one third in the hands of Russian and other private and public collectors.

The book appears to be factual and authentic. Since writing it, Simon has been feted as a pioneer of the process of recovering Jewish and other artefacts and belongings stolen by the Nazis during WW 2. It starts with the family history and the way in which great wealth was created and the collection put together. Then follow shocking chapters about the internment of Fritz and his wife in Theresienstadt and Auschwitz, where both were murdered. Fritz made the "mistake" of not fleeing from Holland (where he had lived for many years) before the war, partly because of his wealth, respect and position in society – which counted for nothing when the Nazis came for him.

However, most of the book is devoted to the process of "recovery". Today, the obstacles then faced by Simon and his brother are beyond belief. These included the Dutch bureaucracy and refusal to relinquish stolen property, the attitude of major art houses and obstructions put in the way by wealthy private collectors and public institutions. Simon deals with these in great detail and they are the most fascinating and original parts of the book.

The search by the Goodman family and others for property stolen by the Nazis continues to this day. A fascinating and unusual book. Highly recommended but somewhat too long at 321 pages, plus useful appendices and an index. It should especially appeal to those interested in famous and historic fine art.

**David Castle**

## SQUIZ SHORTCUT

### Shark Attacks in Australia

After the assault on the US Capitol by Donald Trump supporters last week, Twitter decided to permanently suspend the President's account. It wasn't alone – with Facebook, Snapchat, Reddit and even Pinterest making moves to restrict his presence on their platforms. In this episode of Squiz Shortcuts, we take a look at why these decisions have been taken, the rise of alternative social media platforms, and what it all means in the ongoing free speech debate.

<https://www.thesquiz.com.au/shortcuts/squiz-shortcuts-trumps-social-media-ban/>

## AND WHILE WE HAVE YOU . . .



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMa0j5A3nWw>

### LOBSTER PIES

George was walking around the Saturday market when he espied a friend of his, Arny the fisherman.

Arny had set up a stall and was selling Lobster Pies. Now, George new that lobsters were cheap at the moment, China and all that, but he was surprised at how cheap the pies were, and he questioned Arny about the price.

Well George, Arny began, and you won't tell anyone my little secret will you?

Of course not says George, tell me more.

Well, said Arny, lowering his voice, I do add a bit of shark to keep the price down, fifty-fifty, one lobster, one shark.

## Winners of the Neologism Contest!

Once again, The Washington Post has published the winning submissions to its yearly neologism contest, in which readers are asked to supply alternate meanings for common words...and the winners are:

1. Coffee (n.), the person upon whom one coughs.
2. Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
3. Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
4. Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
5. Willy-nilly (adj.), impotent.
6. Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
7. Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.
8. Gargoyle (n.), gross olive-flavored mouthwash.
9. Flatulance (n.) emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
10. Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.
11. Rectitude (n.), the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists.
12. Pokemon (n), a Rastafarian proctologist.
13. Circumvent (n.), an opening in the front of boxer shorts worn by Jewish men..



### Testiculate

To wave one's arms about while talking bollocks

## COVID RISK ASSESSMENT



## A LOVELY OPTIMISTIC & ENTERTAINING VIEW OF 2021



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYPXkA0hyfA>

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH!

### STRAWBERRY HAZELNUT CHOCOLATE TORTE – YUMMY!

Serves 6-8

#### Ingredients

4 egg whites  
1¼ cups caster sugar  
1 cup hazelnut meal  
1 teaspoon white vinegar  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
185g dark chocolate, melted  
20g butter melted  
300ml thickened cream whipped  
1-2 punnets strawberries halved



## Method

Preheat oven to 160°C fan forced. Grease two 22cm springform pans and line base and sides with baking paper. Grease the paper and sprinkle with cornflour shaking away excess.

Using electric beaters beat egg whites in small bowl until soft peaks form, gradually add sugar beating after each addition until sugar is dissolved.

Fold in hazelnut meal, vinegar and vanilla.

Divide mixture evenly between pans. Bake for 35 minutes or until meringue is crisp. Release sides of pans and cool meringues on bases.

Gently melt chocolate and butter in small bowl. Remove meringues from bases. Place one layer on a serving plate, flat side down.

Spread with half the chocolate mixture, then half the cream and some strawberries.

Place second meringue layer on top flat side up, cover with remaining chocolate mixture, cream and strawberries.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

This can also be made with 2 Pavlova Magic Eggs.

**Lynne Hurley**

## HOW TO CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER

To contact any committee member [Click here](#)

**Please use email where possible or telephone if you require urgent contact.**

## SHE HAS BEEN HELPING KEEP US SAFE, DO YOU KNOW WHO SHE IS?

**Send your answer to**

**[newsletter@sydneyprobus.org](mailto:newsletter@sydneyprobus.org)**

**Members with correct answers will receive  
recognition in the next Newsletter**

***Congratulations to***

***Those who identified Kamala Harris!***

**Stephen Howes, Wayne Jones, Leonard Regan,  
Robert Wilson, John Hyslop Terry Young and  
David Barnett**



## HEY, READERS WHERE ARE YOU, CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE?

**Please contact the Editor, Tony Andrew!**

**[newsletter@sydneyprobus.org](mailto:newsletter@sydneyprobus.org)**

**0411 424 826**