



Probuss Club of Sydney

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Newsletter

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SEPTEMBER 2021

Issue 435

MEETING DATES

September 7

STEPHEN LOOSLEY AM

Review of the Biden Presidency

October 5

NEIL MARTIN, OLYMPIAN

Behind the scenes of the Olympics
Munich to Tokyo

ACTIVITIES

Due to Covid 19, all activities are unfortunately postponed until further notice

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Mystery Photo

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gentlemen,

Our August Zoom meeting featured Elizabeth Anne McGregor who is retiring after 22 years with the Contemporary Art Gallery. She told the remarkable story of how this failing institution has been turned around to become the most visited contemporary art museum in the world. An advantage of Zoom is that we do recordings of the speaker so you can hear and see her talk just by clicking on the link and entering the passcode.

<https://bit.ly/3xzGFcR>

Passcode: wMWg*Gu6

If you missed the meeting, I would urge you all to hear this excellent talk with its supporting visuals. Because of capacity problems, we are not able to have partners to our meetings. However, this recording offers a great opportunity to let your partner hear from an outstanding speaker with a great story to tell.

Stay safe, get exercise, and communicate with friends and family whilst we go through this lockdown with no finite ending at this stage

John Rawson

President

Note

The September meeting will be held on Zoom. To join the meeting click the following link

<https://bit.ly/3ySKpYg>

FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS

SEPTEMBER 7

STEPHEN LOOSLEY AM



(Senator) Stephen Loosley served in the Australian Parliament during the Hawke and Keating Governments (1990-1995), where he chaired both the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade and the Senate Regulations Committee.

Prior to his Senate service, Stephen was the General Secretary of the NSW Branch of the Australian Labor Party (1983–90). He also served a term as ALP National President (1991–92).

Stephen Loosley is now the Chair of the Advisory Board of Thales (Australia). He has served as Chair of the Woomera Prohibited Area Advisory Board and is a Director of O'Connell Street Associates. Stephen is the immediate past chair of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, where he is now a Senior Fellow.

In addition, Stephen serves as a Corporate Councillor of the Asia Society (Australia) and on the Board of the Ethics Centre and the Territorial Advisory Board of the Salvation Army. He also serves on the Board of CoverMore Travel Insurance. Previously he served on the Advisory Boards of Veolia (Australia/NZ) and Crescent Capital and on the Board of the Australian-American Leadership Dialogue.

Stephen holds First Class Honours degrees in Politics (UNSW, 1976) and Law (UTS, 1997). His first book, *Machine Rules*, was published by Melbourne University Press in August 2015.

Stephen is a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (London); a member of the Centre for Strategy and Governance (Canberra) and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (Sydney). He is a commentator on Australian and US politics for Sky News; writes for *The Australian* and *The Spectator Australia* and is the Book Editor for *The Strategist*, Canberra.

On Australia Day 2015, Stephen was awarded an AM for services to the Parliament and to public policy.

OCTOBER 5

NEIL MARTIN, OLYMPIAN



Our Vice President Neil Martin represented Australia in swimming at the Munich Olympics in 1972. His involvement in swimming progressed into board responsibilities, becoming involved in later Olympics, attending at Sydney and Beijing, whilst also taking a keen personal interest in the wider Olympics movement.

Neil will share with us some of his experiences and perspectives, arising from his 50 years, from the joys and horrors at Munich through until the challenging lead up to Tokyo and the extraordinary achievements there in terms of performances and importantly in the health and wellbeing of the athletes.

Neil grew up in Queensland and learnt to swim at the age of three, rather necessary so he didn't drown if he accidentally fell in while frolicking around the pool with his older brothers.

He joined a swimming club at the age of five, and soon was winning all events at school swimming carnivals. He was identified by the coach of his older brother as a likely champion. By age 15, Neil was an Australian junior champion in backstroke and medley and dared to dream to make the Olympic swimming team for the 1972 Olympics. It was a lofty goal, but with dedicated hard work, he was selected.

Neil was the youngest male member of the entire Australian Olympic team that went to Munich. Unfortunately, he got a virus on arrival, but still swam, and was placed just out of the final 8 in the 200 metres backstroke.

In conversation with Neil's coach, the American head coach recommended that Neil should apply for American universities. As he had also performed well scholastically, he only wanted to apply to Harvard, which accepted him with a full scholarship. Unlike other American universities, both then and now, Harvard does not have sport scholarships, so there was no requirement to swim. Nevertheless, he swam for two years on the Harvard swim team winning a number of US east coast college swim events.

On return to Australia, work took precedence, but he maintained close involvement with swimming and keen interest in the Olympics.

In 2003 Neil was asked to join the board of Swimming Australia, and the following year he was elected President, which position he held for the limit of 5 years. These years were one of the golden eras of swimming in Australia.

In 2014 he was asked to join the board of SwimmingSA, which oversees swimming in South Australia, a role in which he continues to serve.

Neil's experiences as a swimmer, an administrator and enthusiast give us the opportunity to hear his views on the Olympics over recent decades, now and into the future.

Any suggestions from members of possible speakers would be much appreciated. Please pass to Peter James at <speakersprogram@sydneyprobus.org>

JULY MEETING REPORT

Life Before Probus

JOHN FITZPATRICK



John told us of his life and career after being admitted as a solicitor back in 1976, following studies at Sydney University and UTS.

He initially worked for the Corporate Affairs Commission (which is now ASIC). The highlight of which was the prosecution of Ken and Frank Nugan of the Nugan Hand Bank in the late 1970's. He then managed to transition to the dream job of General Counsel at Tooth's Brewery which (perhaps unsurprisingly!) he claims was the highlight of his working life.

After several interesting years he then moved to Email Limited where he spent a further five years as General Counsel until 1988 when he decided to return to private practice at Norton Smith and later as a partner at Middletons until 2006. He subsequently set up his own firm which currently has six lawyers.

He is a very keen golfer, playing off 14 at Royal Sydney. He also enjoys walking, running, bush walking and snow skiing. He has completed 41 City to Surf runs!

He and his wife Jo have been married for 48 years and they have 3 children. They are very keen travellers, recently developing an interest in cruises.

IAN RODWELL



Ian was born and educated in Melbourne and arrived in Sydney in 1970 where he worked for a number of companies including Unilever Australia, Hunter Douglas and Neville Jeffress Advertising.

In 1978, he personally established Adcorp Australia with offices throughout Australia and New Zealand. In 2000 he listed Adcorp Australia as a Public Company on the ASX but eventually took the company private in November 2019 and he remains the majority shareholder and Chairman. The company has now diversified into market communications, video and film production and has sold series to Netflix.

He is a Director of Optalert, a company that has successfully developed and marketed an innovative technology to measure both alertness and drowsiness, as an aid to the global car, transport and mining industries.

In addition, he has also been active in several philanthropic entities, as a National Director of Diabetes Research Australia and MND Australia (Motor Neurone Disease). In May 2017 he was awarded an AO for his support of medical research.

He is married to Susan, and they have 3 daughters and 7 grandchildren. Aside from his business and charitable pursuits he is still trying to master golf!

GUEST SPEAKER

LIZ ANN MACGREGOR OBE

From Pariah to Popular: How the MCA became the most visited contemporary art museum in the world



In an outstanding address, Liz Ann reflected on her 22 years as director of MCA, from her arrival when the gallery was on the verge of bankruptcy with a reputation for being out of touch, to the current vibrant creativity centre, engaged with all ages from under 5s to dementia, spanning all Sydney and beyond.

Her initial challenge was to overcome pessimism and negativity. This was initially achieved by enabling free admission to open the doors to a wider audience, thanks to generous sponsorship by Telstra, who benefited by modernising their own image - a win-win.

A further initial approach was to build relations with the tabloid press, especially the Daily Telegraph, which had been scathing of the MCA previously, but were influential especially in Western Sydney, and to politicians of the day.

Another initiative was to engage with artists, who have become a high proportion of staff, thereby enabling connections through guides, and enriching education programmes, taking travelling exhibitions around the state, etc.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island art was fostered, building an impressive collection that has been very popular with visitors to the gallery. Over 6% of the staff are now indigenous.

A lot of effort was devoted to Western Sydney, especially at Penrith, Blacktown and Campbelltown, involving two-way traffic of encouraging schools and people to come to the MCA, and also exhibitions and artists to go into communities there. A close collaboration with Penrith Panthers helped this (with an artist leading a design project "Penrith of the Future"), as well as an artist's involvement in a highly successful project to reduce dumping of cars in the local river at Campbelltown. MCA also arranged an artist to do an innovative trash recycling project at Goulburn. Such projects show that artists can play a key part in local communities for the greater good.

By 2008, MCA attendance was up to 500,000 /year, stretching capacity, so lobbying led to contributions from Federal, NSW and Sydney governments plus private philanthropy that enabled a \$53 million expansion to be built on budget on time by 2012. By 2019, attendance grew to over 1 million, a global record for a contemporary gallery.

Apart from extra space for exhibitions (including attracting major exhibits by leading international artists), the expansion enabled larger education facilities, which were used for its National Centre for Creative Learning, which includes programmes for pre-schoolers, special needs, remote communities, teenagers, dementia patients, etc

Covid lockdowns have provided major challenges, met by innovative responses including on-line skills programmes for the AI/robot age ahead, namely developing creativity, critical thinking, empathy and collaboration. This included working with some schools to bring creativity into all subjects to meet future needs, helping to develop open minds, with toleration, able to make a difference.

Overall, her presentation was extraordinary and inspirational, as expressed by John Thom in his Vote of Thanks on members' behalf, with as much acclamation as Zoom could permit.

Peter James

ACTIVITIES

FUTURE EVENTS

The Covid restrictions are continuing to affect the planned Probus activities.

The tour of the Archibald Prize on 19 July was cancelled and due to the length of the lockdown is unlikely to be rescheduled. On 30 August we are scheduled to visit the Institute of Marine Science at Chowder Bay. As the current lockdown extends to Friday 27 August, it is unlikely this event will happen. There are 18 members and guests registered. I will advise members later this month whether this tour is going ahead.

The remaining activities for the year are:

- 27 September- Police Museum tour
- 26-28 October- Cowra/ Orange Tour
- November- TBA
- 14 December- Christmas lunch Dunbar House

David Brand

SEE THE ARCHIBALD PORTRAITS

For those who were planning to attend the Archibald tour at the Art Gallery of NSW here is a link which will take you on a virtual tour of the Archibald entries (and a few other things)

[AWS Venues eDM](#)

RAY HYSLOP

Ray's daughter advises that he is coping well with the lockdown, but outings are not possible, and his communication challenges are made worse due to visit restrictions.

She assures us that his care is excellent, and he enjoys the location with views over the lakes and sunny verandahs.

He would love to hear from any members who wish to phone him, details are as follows. Ray's direct number is 4397 6387 or you may ring Wallarah Point on 4397 6100, select Option 4 for Munmorah Section and ask for him.

LET THE OTHER MEMBERS KNOW WHO YOU ARE

There are still a few members who are yet to submit a short bio along the lines below. It becomes part of your Member Directory and is only available to club members. Your bio will significantly assist New Member's assimilation into our club. 200 words is ideal, here are some headings:

- **Career highlights** – Vocation and interesting work locations
- **Education** – especially Tertiary and Postgraduate
- **Major activities since retirement** – especially anything unusual
- **Main hobbies and interests** -
- **Family outline** -
- **Something that has happened in your life that might surprise members!**

Send your bio to Tony Andrew – 0411 424 826 or tony.andrew@gpa.net.au

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Peter James has sent the following, which he received from his sister-in-law in Vienna. It obviously refers to the UK but it is very relevant to us here in NSW today.

Just ponder on this for a minute...

2021 - We just have to stay in for a couple of months.

WW II - You have to leave your loved ones and might never see them again.

2021 - But my kids need some fresh air so we're all going to the park.

WW II - Your kids have to be evacuated and live with random good samaritans for their safety.

2021 - I can only Facetime my family and friends. I can't see them.

WW II - I have written letters, I'm hoping they're received and I get a response this year.

2021 - I am trying to order my food shop online, it's taking ages to get to me. I need, alcohol, and all the other foods I'm craving.

WW II - Are you coming to queue-up in the line for our rations-potato soup every day of the week?

2021 - The government hasn't said we can't go out, they just said we can but only once to exercise so I'm going to go meet my friends and do what I want.

WW II - I'm not going out just in case a bomb drops so I will stay in listening to some music quietly because the air raid siren might go off.

2021 - Netflix needs to sort the streaming out I can't even watch a series without it crashing.

WW II - We are sitting in the dark around a candle playing cards keeping as much light in as possible so the warplanes don't see us from above.

2021 - Every man for themselves, so I'm going to stockpile as much as I can because we are more important than anyone else, never mind the elderly that gave us this freedom.

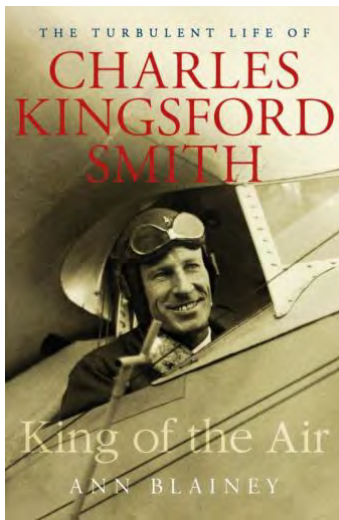
WW II - I'm so grateful for this community, everyone is helping each other out when and where we can, we must stay strong.

This is the perspective that we should have, we don't know how **LUCKY** we have it and people still aren't listening.

Stay in, it really is that simple!

BOOK REVIEWS

King of the Air – the Turbulent Life of Charles Kingsford Smith by Ann Blainey – 2018 (335 pages)



Our greatest pioneer aviator died at 38, in 1935 near Myanmar. His body has never been recovered. He achieved more in that time than most of us in our 21st-century extended lives. Brilliant aviator, indifferent husband, absentee father and incompetent businessman – Ann Blainey tells it warts and all.

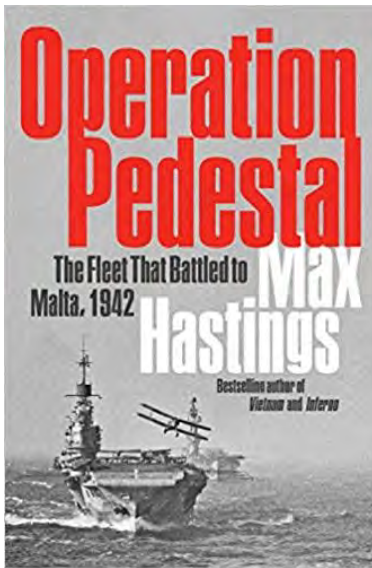
So much has already been written about one of the most famous Australians of all time. Her justification for writing it is “to focus on the inner as well as the outer man”. Also, to examine “his relationship with fame”. Blainey has relied on all available sources and has included extensive footnotes. She has made good use of newspapers of that time. However, the question remains as to whether she has revealed anything new.

So, it is well written and worth reading – particularly for those, like me, who only had a vague knowledge of his exploits and the man behind the legend. Also, of the hazards of aviation between the wars. While details of his early life are interesting but not exciting, his air exploits and tribulations are hair raising. I did not know he served in Gallipoli and France – all before he became a pilot and First World War air ace. Then was wounded in air combat.

Highly recommended – particularly for those who did not know, or have forgotten, details of the life of Smithy.

David Castle

Operation Pedestal: The fleet that battled to Malta, 1942, by Max Hastings 2021 (422 pages)



Sir Max Hastings, former editor of the Daily Telegraph in London, is a very distinguished historian who has written numerous books on warfare, mainly about the period from World War II to modern times including the conflicts in Belfast and the Falklands. This is (I believe) his first book on naval warfare and it is a gem.

The book tells the story of the convoy – the largest fleet action of the Royal Navy in World War II - that set out to provide desperately needed supplies of fuel, food and fighters to Malta. I was aware of course of the ‘relief of Malta’ partially through the unusual award of the George Cross to the entire population of the island for their heroism and suffering during the siege of 1942. I knew also of the basic facts of the

relief convoy, but I had no idea of the extraordinary difficulties faced by both the Royal Navy and the merchant navies of Britain and the US in getting the convoy through to Malta.

Hastings has a unique style which encompasses both the big picture and the anecdotal detail provided by interviews with ‘those who were there’. I find this is sometimes annoying when the same point is covered over and over again in the words of different people but nonetheless it does help provide the full picture with all of the grim detail that gives us the full story of courage and cowardice.

It might be a niche interest but if you have any interest at all in modern history, I strongly recommend this book.

Adrian Pilton

A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

A note from the Editor

I’d like to thank those members who send in contributions to the humour section of the newsletter. They are universally brilliant, and I would like to include them all but (so far) my technical skills are not up to the level of cutting and pasting everything in. But I’m working on it so keep sending them in!

And whilst it’s not St Patrick’s Day yet, this might brighten up your day (thanks to Bill Cheshire, the well-known Irishman!).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8gVXz8ZIHl>

And for the oldies amongst us here is how a Millennial has a job interview!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo0KjdDJr1c>

Click the link and have the volume turned up

An Irish Joke

Two Irish nuns, old and young, were sitting at a traffic light in their car when a bunch of rowdy drunks pulled up alongside of them.

"Hey, show us your goods, ye bloody penguins!" shouts one of the drunks.

The Mother Superior thought this would be a good test for the novice, and turns to Sister Immaculata, "I don't think they know who we are - show them your cross."

So, Sister Immaculata rolls down her window and shouts, "Screw off ye little wankers, before I come over there and rip yer balls off!"

Sister Immaculata looks back at the Mother Superior and asks, "Was that cross enough, Sister?"

An Artistic thought!



Now that I've lived through an actual plague, I totally understand why Italian Renaissance paintings are full of naked fat people laying on couches.

More awful puns

Astronomers got tired of watching the moon go round the earth for 24 hours.

So they decided to call it a day.

I have a pencil that used to be owned by William Shakespeare.
But he chewed it a lot. Now I don't know if its 2B or not 2B.

MELANOMA RESEARCH

John Doherty advises that there will a virtual official opening of the Australian Centre of Excellence in Melanoma Imaging and Diagnosis on Monday 13 September at 11am. The event will show how this national initiative will aim to transform the detection of Melanoma across Australia. The opening will let you hear from leading researchers as well as a patient who is directly benefitting from this work. Contact info@acrf.com.au if you are interested.

WHO IS THIS PERSON?

Members with correct answers will receive recognition in the next Newsletter



*Last month the mystery person was Sean Connery.
Only one person got it right! Well done Stephen Howes.*

Hopefully this month's young man might also be difficult to identify!

Send your answer to
newsletter@sydneyprobus.org

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.