



# Probus Club of Sydney

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## Newsletter

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OCTOBER 2021

Issue 436

### MEETING DATES

October 5

NEIL MARTIN, OLYMPIAN

Behind the scenes of the Olympics  
Munich to Tokyo

November 9

PETER DOHERTY AC

Interview with the Nobel Laureate

### ACTIVITIES

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

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Who is this person?

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Gentlemen,*

Many members missed the excellent and very frank talk on the Biden Presidency by Stephen Loosely at the September meeting. Chatham House rules applied so we cannot share a recording of the talk, but you can read the summary in this Newsletter or on our website.

I do hope that you are all double vaxxed by now. If we are able to meet again in person in November it is highly likely that the UUSC Club will require that to be the case.

This month we will have a special behind the scenes presentation on Olympic and Paralympic Games by our very own Olympian, Neil Martin, and the Paralympian, Matt Levy, for this coming meeting. This should be another memorable one.

Stay safe and if you are bored and have some school-aged grandchildren nearby, try some homeschooling. We have had 3 primary-aged grandchildren for homeschooling at times!!

*John Rawson*

President

### **Note**

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

<https://bit.ly/2Zrqymh>

**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. Neil will be accompanied by Paralympian Matt Levy

## MATT LEVY, PARALYMPIAN



Matt Levy has cerebral palsy and a vision impairment due to being born 15 weeks premature. He attended St Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney. He works at Westpac Bank, is on the board of directors of the New South Wales disability organisation Ability Options, and lives in Sydney.

Matt is classified as an S7 swimmer. He first competed for Australia in 2003 when he broke the 200 m freestyle short course world record. He competed but did not win any medals at the 2004 Athens Games.

At the 2008 Beijing Games he won a gold medal but at the 2012 London Paralympics he won five medals: a gold medal in the 4×100m freestyle relay, a silver medal in the 100 m freestyle S7, and three bronze medals in the 200m individual medley SM7, 100 m breaststroke SB7 and 4×100 m medley relay.

At the 2016 Rio Paralympics, he won the bronze medal in the Men's 200 m Individual Medley SM7. He placed fourth in the Men's 50 m Freestyle S7 and Men's 100 m Freestyle S7, fifth in the Men's 50 m Butterfly S7, fourth in the Men's 4×100 m Medley Relay (34 points) and fifth in the Men's 4×100 m Freestyle (34 Points).[17]

At the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics, he won a gold medal in the Men's 4×100m Freestyle 34 pts event and a bronze medal in the Men's 100 m breaststroke SB6 event.

**NOVEMBER 9 [NB 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday]**

## **PETER DOHERTY AC, NOBEL LAUREATE**

**NOTE:** *The format of this meeting will be different from the norm. It will involve Peter Doherty being interviewed on Zoom from his Melbourne lab office by John Carter, who will assemble questions submitted in advance by members. Please send questions or areas you would like addressed to [jcarter@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jcarter@bigpond.net.au) before 6th November.*



Peter Doherty is an Australian immunologist and pathologist who, with Rolf Zinkernagel of Switzerland, received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1996 for their discovery of how the body's immune system distinguishes virus-infected cells from normal cells. He was the first veterinarian to win a Nobel prize.

After graduating in Veterinary Science from the University of Queensland, he moved to Scotland, where was awarded a PhD by the University of Edinburgh Medical School. After leading a research group at the Wistar Institute, Philadelphia, and teaching at the University of Pennsylvania (1975–82), Peter headed the department of experimental pathology at the John Curtin School of Medical Research in Canberra (1982–88) and served as chairman (1988–2001) of the department of immunology at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. In 2002, he joined the faculty of medicine at the University of Melbourne, and from 2014, has been at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, a joint venture between the university and the Royal Melbourne Hospital,

In addition to the Nobel Prize, Peter also shared the Paul Ehrlich Prize (Germany), the Gairdner International Award (Canada), and the Lasker Award for Basic Science (USA) with Rolf Zinkernagel. He is a Fellow, or Foreign Associate, of the Australian, UK, US, and Russian Academies of Science, and the French, US, UK and Australian Academies of Medicine. He is also a Fellow of numerous professional societies, has been awarded more than 20 Honorary Doctorates and has published some 500 research papers and reviews. His h-index is 81 (*Editor: look it up!*).

He was Australian of the Year and received a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1997, is listed as a living National Treasure, had his face on a postage stamp, and has research fellowships, a street and two buildings (in Edinburgh and Melbourne) named after him.

He is the author of many books, including *The Beginner's Guide to Winning the Nobel Prize: A Life in Science* (2005), *Sentinel Chickens: What Birds Tell Us About Our Health and the World* (2012) *The Knowledge Wars* (2015), *The Incidental Tourist* (2018) and most recently *An Insider's Plague Year* 2021)

*Any suggestions from members of possible speakers would be much appreciated. Please pass to Peter James at [speakersprogram@sydneyprobus.org](mailto:speakersprogram@sydneyprobus.org)*

### Life Before Probus

#### TED ANDERSON



When he was at Willoughby Primary School Ted thought he was the king of the castle because his father was prominent in the community. His dad was a pharmacist and so he wanted to be one too. However at Sydney Boys High his best mate's dad was into cars, so Ted suddenly didn't want to be a pharmacist any more!

He eventually became a customs officer and went to London on the Fairstar. When he wanted to return to Sydney he and his friend made a deal with Lambretta and Shell to get free scooters to make the journey in return for the story. The journey – via Iran, Afghanistan and India - was more than interesting and he learnt a number of 'lessons for life'. With their futuristic bike helmets they were mistaken for astronauts (this was just after the moon landing).

In Sydney he worked as a customs agent for a German company but decided to branch out on his own and gained some major clients such as Masterfoods, Dymo and Asics and grew so successfully that he needed 50 staff in Melbourne and 80 overseas. Customs agency is a complicated business and made for an exciting career!

At age 54 he sold his business and learnt to play golf, not well but he enjoys it. He was in Rotary and enjoyed fund raising. He and his wife Meg (who he met on the Fairstar!) have 2 daughters and a son and now 10 grandchildren. His interests include tennis, squash, sailing, golf, French language, wines, opera, theatre and meeting interesting people.

#### TIM RANKINE



Tim was born in Tamworth and educated at Cranbrook. In 1970 he enrolled at the University of Sydney to study Civil Engineering, became a resident at St Pauls College and met his future wife, Leticia who was a freshette at Women's College.

In 1976 as a wide eyed graduate with an honours degree in Structural Engineering and a Science degree in Computer Science he had hopes of being a designer of great buildings, but the building industry had collapsed so he joined the then fledgling computer industry.

He joined, CEANET, who provided computer based engineering solutions, and built a time sharing service for engineers. He was promoted to General Manager in 1981 and then changed his focus to the emerging Computer Aided Drafting industry. In 1983 he developed a business plan to shift CEANET's focus to engineering software

on Sun Workstations. However his chairman did not like the idea, so they “agreed” to go their separate ways and he decided to start his own company.

He formed CADCOM and started to implement the plan that had been rejected by CEANET. He visited the USA and UK a number of times before finding the foundation product for his plans, (EAGLE). In 1994 he took CADCOM (now named Mosaix Technologies Ltd) public on the Australian Stock Exchange and then moved the main operation to Silicon Valley in California, appointed an American CEO and established a European office in London. He spent the next five years as Chairman, attending board meetings in Europe and the USA and meeting with investors in Sydney, the USA and Europe. In 2001 his major investor privatised the company and (aged 50) he retired.

He did some board and consultancy work but was not enthralled by it so in 2005 he enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Western Sydney. His topic was ‘Why do the principles of Australian technology organisations find it difficult to build growing profitable companies’. Answer: because they usually focus on the technology and don’t build an appropriate organisational structure which can scale. He graduated PhD in 2009. From 2007 until 2015 he taught Innovation Management courses in the MBA program at the Sydney Graduate School of Management. In 2015 he was elected as Captain of the Royal Sydney Golf Club. During his captaincy the club developed plans to renovate their championship Golf Course.

## GUEST SPEAKER

### STEPHEN LOOSLEY



Stephen Loosley drew on his long-standing close relationships with administrations on both sides of the Pacific to give us some fascinating insights as he assessed the first 200 days of the Biden presidency, and also deeply and thoughtfully reflected on the important ties between the USA and Australia, as well as Asia.

He set the scene by noting the deep unstable divisions within the US over recent years, peaking with the storming of the US Capitol after the election.

By contrast, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of ANZUS, the relationship between Australia and the USA has remained stable throughout, despite changes of government on both sides. With the departure of NZ from the alliance, the US/Aus relationship morphed into AUSMIN, an annual dialogue for meetings of Australia’s ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence, with US Secretaries of State and Defence, along with associated senior officials. The possibility of extending the scope of AUSMIN in future to encompass talks on economic strategy seems appropriate.

The US now sees itself with a clear responsibility in the Indo-Pacific region, which has seen the emergence of the Quad of US, Japan, India and Australia, and the importance of keeping traditional sea channels open, hence opposed to China’s claims and actions in the South China Sea. He recalled referring to the “9 dash line” (attributed to Chiang Kai-Shek in 1947), to which a Chinese official said the claim to

the South China Sea dates back to the Tang dynasty (9th century), which was seen as rather ironic that the claim of the communist PRC regime should draw on their Imperial past. By the same logic, Italy could claim the whole of the Mediterranean.

Thus, China has involved itself in border and other disputes with almost all its neighbours, and has become engaged in trade/commercial/political and cultural disputes with Scandinavia, Canada, and Australia, among others.

With President Xi's determination to extend its reach, especially in Asia but also beyond, Taiwan looms large in this context. From a region that was peaceful and increasingly prosperous, Beijing has ramped up the temperature, especially over Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the South China Sea, but also engaged in what has been called "debt diplomacy" in the SW Pacific and elsewhere.

President Biden has recruited many highly experienced, very capable people of consequence (Secretary of Treasury, State, Defence, etc) to join the administration, and notably these have remained, in contrast to the high turnover in the Trump cabinet and advisor staff.

The Afghanistan withdrawal was clearly a debacle, but it needs to be seen in context stretching back 20 years, and especially to the Trump deal with the Taliban, whereby an exit date was fixed in return for no firing on US troops (as distinct to firing on Afghan troops, which was permitted). There were many Afghan troops well trained and resourced, but when the Afghan President left by helicopter allegedly stashed with money, who can express surprise when many military units simply melted away. Pakistan will remain a critical factor in this region, including with the Taliban.

Covid remains a top focus in the US, with the new administration being far more consistent than Trump. Nevertheless, some states are resisting, eg seeking to outlaw the mask mandate in schools etc. By mid 2022, Covid may have receded as a focal point, so the US midterm elections then may be fought on the economy. Often these elections involve an anti-government swing, but this may not apply in 2022 (see California recall election).

Biden had been expected to be a competent, decent, stabilising figure boosting trust in the White House, and reassuring traditional US allies. Not only has he achieved that, he has performed well beyond, with an ambitious legislative agenda, including achieving significant bipartisanship, particularly with the infrastructure bill.

President Biden has issued several presidential orders, some focusing on the need to diversify supply chains to be more resilient, especially involving defence procurement.

Successive Australian ambassadors have performed very well in fostering the relationships with Washington. Even when there were sudden policy changes, such as sometimes announced by tweets previously, our diplomats have worked constructively without fanfare, adopting the "speak softly" approach, retaining relationships with all relevant parties, whilst also keeping Australia's interests in focus. There may be lessons elsewhere.

Overall, the US-Australia relation is on a sound footing, with good cooperation and scope to develop further into the future, given key technology, energy, minerals, potential for private/public infrastructure partnerships, and cooperation. Australia needs to be a more self-sufficient partner, more resilient, and seek to do more, especially with countries in the region.

Stephen then very interestingly and eloquently answered a wide range of topics, not only confined to US and Australia, before David Castle expressed great thanks for such a comprehensive overview of the status of the US and the Biden administration plus more widely of Asia and in particular China, all of which are so important to Australia now and into the future.

*Peter James*

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

### FUTURE EVENTS

The Covid 19 restrictions are continuing to impact the Probus Activities program for 2021.

The cancellations now include:

- 21 June- Defence of North Fort second tour
- 19 July- Archibald Prize tour
- 30 August- Sydney Institute of Marine Science
- 27 September- Justice and Police Museum
- 26 - 28 October - Tour of Cowra and Orange

If possible the cancelled activities from 2021 will be rescheduled in 2022. Members who had booked and paid for these activities have been given a credit for use against future bookings.

The only scheduled 2021 activity remaining is the Christmas Lunch at Dunbar House on 14 December. Hopefully this event can go ahead.

*David Brand*

## WHAT ARE 'COOKIES' & WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT THEM?

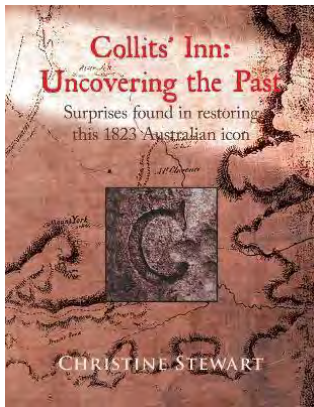
Learn how and why the websites you visit try to track and collect data from the browser on your device. Click the link below to learn more:

<https://www.sydneypobus.org/notice-board/>

*Active Retirees 22 Sep 2021*



### Collits' Inn: Uncovering the Past by Christine Stewart 2021



This unique book, written by our Past President's wife, Christine Stewart, will bring joy to many. Readers interested in early Australian history, architecture or historical restorations will love this book. Intertwined with the recovery of this special historic building is fascinating history of those persons involved in the life of the inn.

The style suggests Christine is sitting beside the reader personally recounting her remarkable tale about the salvation of the 1823 Collits' Inn located just beyond the Blue Mountains at Hartley Vale. Readers will enjoy the excitement of Christine and Russell's emotional rollercoaster ride, the thrill of rare finds, unforeseen frustrations and amazing serendipity.

Pierce Collits arrived in Australia in December 1801, a convict accompanied by his wife, a free settler. So successful were they that later in life they assisted their family to own many inns including the now Woodford Academy and the 1845 Rose Inn at Little Hartley, now known as the Ambermere Inn which has been beautifully restored as a very good restaurant.

Colour is added by many contemporary and historical photos. The author's professional research is outstanding. The transcript of Collits' successful 1821 request to Governor Macquarie for a grant of 200 acres brings history to the forefront. She dispels many myths in her rigorous quest for authenticity.

It was decided that the inn would be restored to its original purpose with accommodation and a restaurant despite the difficulties of that path. Christine and her husband overcame a maze of hurdles, many augmented by inflexibility of bureaucratic offices, water supply, dangerous trees, architectural requirements and establishing a functioning inn being just a few. Rewarding, yes- but how successful was the project? Among the range of awards were the following:

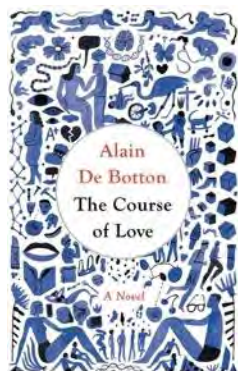
- Energy Australia/National Trust Heritage Award for Best Individual Restoration of a Heritage Building in NSW
- Best French Restaurant in NSW
- Best European Restaurant in Australia!

Readers will enjoy this is an exciting and informative journey .

**Tony Andrew**

Note: Digital and hard copies of the book may be purchased at [collitsinnbook.com](http://collitsinnbook.com)

## The course of Love by Alain de Botton – 2016 (222 pages)



Have you ever lost your phone or keys and looked for someone to blame? Have you ever disagreed with your wife on whether the bedroom windows should be opened or closed or the air-conditioning turned up or down? The answers to these questions and many more husband-and-wife issues are contained in this extended case study, masquerading as fiction.

The author is a well-known modern philosopher of everyday life, who has written a number of highly regarded books – many of which are best sellers. This book looks at what happens to romantic love over the course of fourteen years.

It is well written, interesting and entertaining. But it is certainly not a novel, despite the husband and wife being presented as real people. Yes, their trials and tribulations ring true but the author cannot help editorialising (in italics) on every second page. Worth reading for those who like this author and for those interested in knowing whether romantic love can survive time and children. Possibly recommended for those about to tie or untie the knot and perhaps for those having second thoughts.

David Castle

## Putin's People: How the KGB took back Russia and then took on the West by Catherine Belton – 2020 (640 pages)



From 2007 to 2013, Belton worked for the Financial Times as the newspaper's Moscow correspondent. Putin's People is an account of Putin's rise to power, and the Kremlin's influence on the West.

The book opens with a list of Russians who are associated with Putin – his inner circle, KGB-connected business-people, mobsters and people connected with Donald Trump!

Russian billionaires are right now trying to use English solicitors and courts against Catherine herself. If she is right, these and other actions suggest Russian money is being used on the part of the solicitors and the courts themselves!

The aim of her book is to show that Putin's KGB cronies used the equivalent of billions of dollars at their disposal 'to undermine and corrupt the institutions and democracies of the West.' – including into the business empire of Donald Trump.' She goes in detail to the complex steps that led to the previous president, Yeltsin, in 1999 nominating Putin as his successor President – at a stage when Putin was not regarded as prominent and despite warnings that Yeltsin did not understand Putin's corrupt background.

Once Putin was in power, she says 'From the beginning, behind the appearances of liberal economics, there was a strong undertow aimed at strengthening the control

of the state.' ... 'But the influence of the KGB men began to far outweigh all else.' ... 'Putin's rise to power did of course amount to the takeover by the KGB of the Kremlin.'

She comments: 'The growing concerns about the fusion of Russian organised crime with the highest levels of government coincided with an increasing awareness of Russian intelligence activity in the West.'

Luke Harding in the Observer says: 'Belton gives a chilling account of Putin's rise to power and his personal corruption...Belton offers the most detailed and compelling version yet, based on dozens of interviews with oligarchs and Kremlin insiders, as well as KGB operatives and Swiss and Russian bankers.'

**Russell Stewart**

## A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

### The first Irish Joke ever!!

[https://youtu.be/YPR\\_vLPBe\\_o](https://youtu.be/YPR_vLPBe_o)

Click the link and have the volume turned up

### Some more Irish Humour

My neighbour knocked on my door at 2:30am this morning, can you believe that 2:30am!

Luckily for him, I was still up playing my Bagpipes.

The wife has been missing a week now.

Police said to prepare for the worst.

So I have been to the charity shop to get all her clothes back.

Paddy says "Mick, I'm thinking of buying a Labrador.

"Bugger that" says Mick, "have you seen how many of their owners go blind?"

### Smile and laugh!





Apparently you can now visit friends... But you must stay in the car



## NEW MYSTERY MEMBERS COMPETITION

Listed below are abstracts of three member's brief bios. If you can name the members, send your answers to Tony Andrew – [tony.andrew@gpa.net.au](mailto:tony.andrew@gpa.net.au)

This is an 'Open book' competition! Review your selections by checking the Members Directory in the MEMBERS AREA of the website here. Login is required to access this confidential information.

The names of the Mystery Members and successful respondents will be revealed in next month's newsletter. Then, after logging in to the website, you can review their full bios in the Member Directory. Good luck!

### **Mystery Member 1**

Fought in the Korean War  
Chief of Supply, Department of Defence  
Attended Australia's first America's Cup Challenge  
Completed three Sydney Hobart races

### **Mystery Member 2**

Father and I both born in Fiji  
Longest serving member of Price Waterhouse/PwC  
Travelled to boarding school on the SS Orcades  
Have undertaken assignments in more than 20 countries

### **Mystery Member 3**

President South Asia of my employer for 5 years  
Attempted a climb of Mount Kilimanjaro  
Completed the Kokoda Track  
Centrefold of the first edition of New Zealand Surfer Magazine

## **WHO IS THIS PERSON?**

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



*Last month the mystery person was George Clooney. Only one person got it right! Well done Stephen Howes. Someone, who shall remain nameless (but let's say his initials are GT), thought it was a trick question, and identified him as Marise Payne.....!*

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

**Send your answer to**  
[newsletter@sydneyprobus.org](mailto: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.**