



Probus Club of Sydney

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Newsletter

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DECEMBER 2021

Issue 438

MEETING DATES

7 December

KIM OATES AO

'Errors in health care:

Why they occur and your role

In making your own healthcare
Safer'

8 February

JOHN JEREMY

'Submarines for the RAN – going
nuclear'

ACTIVITIES

14 December: Christmas lunch
Dunbar House

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A touch of Humour

Who is this person?

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gentlemen,

We are back together in person at last for our December meeting and I hope to see many of you at the UUSC on 7th December. One week later is the Xmas luncheon which as usual is very popular and a waiting list has been established. We expect to be allowed to have additional numbers, so please register on the waiting list if you are interested.

It's a bit early, but as the next newsletter will be for February may I wish you all an enjoyable Christmas season with friends and family and good health and a return to a more normal life and activities in 2022.

John Rawson

President

Note

To Register to attend the December meeting at the Union, University and Schools Club - [click here](#)

All attendees must be double vaccinated and will need to show proof at the UUSC reception

DECEMBER 7

PROFESSOR KIM OATES AO

Errors in health Care: Why they occur and your role in making your own healthcare safer



Kim Oates AO MD DSc MHP FRACP FRCP FAFPHM FRACMA spent 12 years with the University of Sydney as the Foundation Douglas Burrows Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, a position he held simultaneously with Chair, Division of Medicine at the Hospital, then became the hospital CEO in 1997.

A general paediatrician, he has long-standing clinical and research interests in child development, child behaviour, and child protection. Throughout 1993 he was Director of the Kempe National Centre for

the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect in the USA.

He has received numerous national and international awards and named lectureships, including the Sydney University Alumni Award for community service and The Howard Williams Medal for “Outstanding contributions to Paediatrics and Child Health in Australasia”, as well as the Brandt Steele and Kempe awards from the USA, the first time these have ever been awarded to a non-US citizen. He received an honorary Doctor of Science from the University of Western Sydney. He has written 15 books and over 300 published articles.

When Chief Executive of the Children’s Hospital at Westmead he developed a passion for patient safety and now teaches on this subject nationally and internationally. Until 2019 he led Undergraduate Quality and Safety at the NSW Clinical Excellence Commission, teaching in five medical schools about how doctors can work more safely to reduce patient harm. He established the Australian Academy for Emerging Leaders in Patient Safety, is an expert advisor to International Society for Quality in Health Care and one of 30 elected Founding Fellows of that Society. The Vietnamese government awarded him The Peoples Health Medal for his contributions to health in Vietnam.

He has been married to Robyn for over 50 years. They have 3 children and 9 grandchildren. In spare moments Kim acts in community theatre (but he says thankfully he doesn’t sing!) and kayaks on Sydney harbour.

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

FEBRUARY 1

JOHN JEREMY AM

Naval Architect & Maritime Historian

Submarines for the RAN – Going Nuclear



Almost 108 years after the RAN acquired its first submarines, a remarkable decision has been made to replace the Navy's present submarines with nuclear-powered boats. In his presentation John will summarise the often-controversial history of the RAN submarine service and outline the development of the modern nuclear submarine and its role. The momentous decision to go nuclear for our new submarines presents many challenges and John may well feel inclined to speculate about the way ahead.

We are very fortunate to have a member so highly qualified and experienced in naval architecture and history to inform us about this topical issue. Being passionate about ships from an early age, John started as an apprentice ship draughtsman at Cockatoo Dockyard in 1960. He studied naval architecture part time at UNSW, graduating BE (Hons) in 1967.

After a spell in Britain on a Vickers Limited post-graduate scholarship, he was appointed Technical Director of Vickers Cockatoo Dockyard Pty Ltd, then in 1981 Managing Director of the Dockyard until its closure 10 years later. After that he became Chief Executive of ANI Engineering Services.

He has written three books on the history of the island facility and its work. John is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers (Australia), a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA) and a member of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers. He was a member of the London Council of RINA from 2006 to 2012 and is now editor-in-chief of *The Australian Naval Architect*, the quarterly journal of the Australian Division.

He regularly sails his yacht with the RSYs and the Sydney Amateurs (including a stint as Commodore). He is Senior Vice President of the Navy League of Australia and Vice President of the Naval Historical Society of Australia.

John was appointed a Member in the Order of Australia (AM) in 2015 for the preservation and celebration of naval and maritime history.

MARCH 1

PROFESSOR SHERYL VAN NUNEN

Tick-induced Allergies: Mammalian Meat Allergy and Tick Anaphylaxis: A tale of newly emergent allergies, with an extraordinary evolution and surprising public health consequences"

NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT

Vale Rob Robson CBE



President John informed members of the passing of long time member and Past President Rob Robson.

Rob joined the club in 1990. He was elected President the following year and was, until recently, a regular attendee at our meetings where his playful sense of humour brought joy to all. He was a member of our club for over 30 years.

He was raised and educated in Melbourne, achieving degrees in Mathematics and Civil Engineering at Melbourne University and was later awarded a Master of Science (Engineering) from the Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg.

in Johannesburg.

Rob spent 20 years with Rocla Industries (a leading supplier of concrete products for the construction industry), the last 5 as Managing Director. He then went on to BMI and then AGC, both as MD, for a further 15 years. He held a number of directorships of major public companies in the manufacturing and pharmaceutical industries as well as Ready Mixed Concrete. He was an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Quarrying.



He held several senior Government appointments in a wide range of fields and was awarded the honour of a Commander of the British Empire CBE in 1980 for services to industry. He did war service from 1945 as an aircrew trainee and then joined the AIF. After being de-mobbed in 1947 he went on to serve in the Army Reserve, Engineers and Infantry for a further 9 years.

In his latter years his interests included the theatre, cinema and music, writing, Tai Chi, computer accounting, and "Staying Alive!" (computer humour).

Report from London



Stuart Murray, who is spending a few months in London visiting his daughters and their families, gave a report on how London is coping with Covid. It seems that whilst things are opening up there is still a worry that Covid will continue to be a problem in the UK. Nonetheless, Stuart and his wife Carol are enjoying spending time with their family.

John Kell



John Kell, who members will remember gave a talk several months ago on his proposal to bring water from the Burdekin River catchment in North Queensland to the Darling River by gravity flow, gave us an update on what has happened since. He has had some interest from politicians, including Barnaby Joyce and Bob Katter, but not much has happened. His

enthusiasm for continuing is to be admired!

If you are interested you can read his submission to the Productivity Commission on National Water Reform 2020. Go to their web site (www.pc.gov.au) and search for Submission DR130 under the National Water Reform heading.

GUEST SPEAKER

LAUREATE PROFESSOR PETER DOHERTY AC



In his Vote of Thanks to Peter Doherty, Tony Andrew summed up what I am sure was universally felt by saying:

- “We have just heard an inspirational presentation by a world authority
- with up to the minute information,
- most importantly delivered in a manner we could all understand,
- and immeasurably increased our understanding of covid”

There were so many fascinating comments and deep insights, that I find it hard to sift out just a few into a summary. So instead, I urge you to listen again, as I have just done, by clicking on the following link, and adding the passcode

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/dq2E86jZOUjWjGEmQMJAko_LAhtqY1O5vdafs-8BLVwE7ypXJFXJV1VEOJOCfkKy.3H_2WWdRJI-gCc4I Passcode: 2H&E4pDp

We were indeed privileged and honoured to hear Prof Doherty’s views, which were given as agreed through the process of an interview by our John Carter, who asked questions (not given in advance, and some drawn from those provided by other members) on:

- Spanish flu of 1918
- HIV/Aids, Hong Kong flu, Ebola
- Origins of SARS-CoV2
- Delta, and potential for other mutations
- Vaccines, types, booster, infectivity of vaxxed and unvaxxed
- Rapid antigen testing
- Herd immunity
- Climate change
- Research funding

His answers showed an extraordinary intellect, a profound grasp of the complexities, and an ability to explain so coherently and clearly in a way that would have satisfied the medical scientists among us, as well as those of us who may seldom delve beyond the news broadcasts on such matters.

In talking about the origins of covid, he referred to the work of Dr Eddie Holmes, an Australian virologist who worked closely with the Wuhan scientists, and who is convinced that covid-19 came from nature, through the Wuhan market, with no evidence of leakage from the research lab as some have speculated.

Members may be interested in a related podcast following Dr Holmes being recently awarded the Prime Minister's Prize for Science 2021.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/the-science-show-full-program-podcast/id73330054?i=1000540845444>

or for windows users: <https://bit.ly/3CoXqcU>

or longer video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c4LFBh9zRU>

Prof Doherty described how he has been very public in supporting vaccination, including on twitter. He discussed in detail the UQld vaccine (which had to be withdrawn due to cross-reactivity with AIDS diagnostic tests), Astra Zenica, mRNA (Pfizer and Moderna) and Novavax. He will be getting the booster shot as soon as practical, and advocates that all should do so, especially if vulnerable, immune compromised or front line exposed.

Rapid antigen testing has a place, but noted 15-minute waiting time, injector skill, etc can make it complicated where large numbers are involved in a short time frame (incl school, factory, etc).

A dreadful side issue of his public advocacy for vaccination has been anonymous threats and attacks (gladly only verbal on twitter etc) by trolls. Dr Fauci has been especially targeted by such anti-vax trolls, as can be heard in following interview last week reviewing the status of covid-19 in USA

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/podcasts/the-daily/anthony-fauci-vaccine-mandates-booster-shots.html?action=click&module=audio-series-bar®ion=header&pgtype=Article>

Aside from immunology, Prof Doherty also addressed his concerns about research funding in Australia, where silos are too common (ie inadequate communication/cooperation within and between federal depts, state depts,

industry), aside from cuts to funding of CSIRO, covid impact incl overseas student funding model at universities etc. He would like to see a lot more cross functional cooperation, including training university researchers through stints in industry, and vice versa, a model which has been very successful in Germany, Scandinavia, MIT, etc.

Special thanks go to John Carter for conducting such a fine interview with our special guest.

Peter James

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

FUTURE EVENTS

The only scheduled 2021 activity remaining is the Christmas Lunch at Dunbar House on 14 December. As per the recent email, this event is confirmed although the permissible numbers remain to be finalised. At present the lunch is fully booked with a waiting list but we are hopeful of a change in the public health rules which will allow more people to attend.

David Brand

ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT COMPUTERS, THE INTERNET & MORE . .

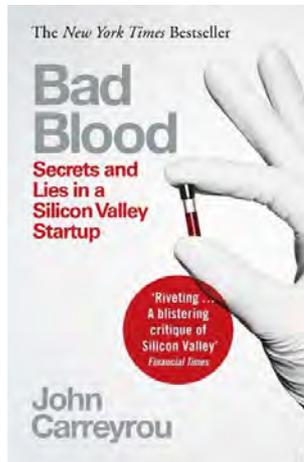
Early next year the Club is running a series of Questions and Answer sessions by zoom to assist members obtain the best results from their digital technology.

Session topics include the Club Website, the Internet, Android tablets and phones, Apple iPad, iPhone and Mac computers, and PC Computers. Other topics may be added according to demand. Sessions are about 1 hour long.

Please consider joining in no matter how little or how much you feel you already know. Participation during the sessions is encouraged. The program will be led by Vice President Neil Martin, Bill Cheshire and Tony Andrew.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact Tony at tony.andrew@gpa.net.au or 0411 424 826

Bad Blood by John Carreyrou (2018) – 304 pages plus index – Fact – 5/11/21



Many of you will have heard of Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos. At its zenith, this Silicon Valley start-up was worth US\$9 billion. As a respected Pulitzer prize-winning Wall Street journalist, in 2015 the author exposed conduct which resulted in the liquidation of the company and the current criminal trial of Elizabeth in California.

To “blow the whistle” on Elizabeth and the company, the author interviewed more than 150 people – including more than 60 former employees. He had to encounter multiple obstacles in the form of paranoid secrecy/ confidentiality, legal tactics and the fact that Rupert Murdoch, proprietor of the Wall Street Journal, had invested about US\$120 million in the company. Fortunately, Murdoch refused to prevent publication of the expose in that newspaper.

The story of how all this occurred from about 2006 until about 2015 makes fascinating reading. On the board of the company were people like Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, at least one Stanford professor and David Boies. Because the case is still in litigation, you have to read for yourselves how all this happened and consider whether it could happen again – not only in America, but here.

It is a tale of how Elizabeth, with no scientific or medical qualifications, could found an empire based on “inventing” a pathology system requiring only blood from a finger prick to achieve the full pallet of results. Is medical fraud even more serious than financial fraud?

A salutary tale and fascinating read for anyone interested in investigative journalism and how easily the public can be misled, and people can part with their money.

David Castle

A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

LAST WORDS

John was on his deathbed and gasped pitifully. "Give me one last request," he said.

"Of course, John," his wife said softly.

"Six months after I die," he said, "I want you to marry Bob."

"But I thought you hated Bob," she said.

With his last breath John said, "I do!"

KNITTING

A highway patrolman pulled alongside a speeding car on the freeway.

Glancing at the car, he was astounded to see that the blonde behind the wheel was knitting! Realizing that she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the trooper cranked down his window, turned on his bullhorn and yelled, "PULL OVER!"

"NO!" the blonde yelled back, "IT'S A SCARF!"



Puns for Pun Lovers

Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson.

What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled.

If you're bad at haggling, you'll end up paying the price.

Just so everyone's clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.

Never buy flowers from a monk. Only you can prevent florist friars.

I once worked at a cheap pizza shop to get by. I kneaded the dough.

Bono and The Edge walk into a Dublin bar and the bartender says, "Oh no, not U2 again."

Scientists got together to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk, and the result was staggering.

I'm trying to organize a hide and seek tournament, but good players are really hard to find.

I've started telling everyone about the benefits of eating dried grapes. It's all about raisin awareness.

THE BRIDGE

A man walking along a Californian beach was deep in prayer. Suddenly, the sky clouded above his head, and, in a booming voice, the Lord said, "Because you have tried to be faithful to me in all ways, I will grant you one wish."

The man said, "Build a bridge to Hawaii so I can drive over anytime I want." The Lord said, "Your request is very materialistic. Think of the enormous challenges for that kind of undertaking. The supports to the bottom of the Pacific! The concrete and steel it would take! It will nearly exhaust several natural resources." I can do it, but it is hard for me to justify your desire for worldly things. Take a little more time and think of something that would honour and glorify me."

The man thought about it for a long time. Finally, he said, "Lord, I wish that I could understand my wife. I want to know how she feels inside, what she's thinking when she gives me the silent treatment, why she cries, what she means when she says nothing's wrong, and how I can make a woman truly happy."

The Lord replied, "You want two lanes or four on that bridge?"



WHO IS THIS YOUNG PERSON?

Members with correct answers will receive recognition in the next Newsletter



Last month was obviously too easy! The mystery people were Scott Morrison and his wife Jenny. Those who got it right were Robert Wilson, Neil Martin, Ralph Cohen and Wayne Jones. Congratulations.

I've made this month's mystery person a bit more difficult (in fact its very difficult I think!!) Can you identify this young person?

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.