



Probuss Club of Sydney

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Newsletter

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May 2025

Issue 475

MEETING DATES

MAY 6

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

KIRSTY SCHOFIELD APM

Australian Federal Police

ACTIVITIES

May 28 – Port Kembla Steelworks

June 26 - Tour of Archibald,
Wynne & Sulman Prizes

July 14 – Winter Lunch

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A Touch of Humour

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gentlemen,

April 2025 has busy “celebratory” days, the moon having brought Easter into its third week followed by Anzac Day on the 25th a week later. Easter can be sombre as is Anzac Day with attendance at the Dawn Service memorable, marching not so easy, and two-up not usually rewarding. Both Easter and Anzac Day enable families to come together or be thought of if they are in distant places or have passed on. Life, whilst not forever, has its enjoyable times when you and those with you celebrate the human purpose behind Easter and Anzac Day and find pleasure in remembering – “Lest We Forget”.

Professor Roux’s presentation on Forensic Science is summarised within this Newsletter’s pages, being the fascinating development of Forensic investigation into a separate Science, not yet quite as certain and deterministic as TV’s NYPD would have you think, but certainly moving from the better known “traces” such as DNA, finger prints, shoe marks, tyre tread marks, hair and blood samples, with the “explosion” in recent years in the number of “digital traces” arising from our use of phones, metadata and the internet.

In the April Newsletter, I referred to our speaker Maurice Cutler as being the first Australian to “stand at the South Pole”. Maurice informs me that he was the first Australian at the Pole, but overhead in a U.S. Air Force plane. He always gives credit to Jon Stephenson, a Queensland geologist who came along 15 months later with the Hillary-Fuchs Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition. Maurice was the first to see the South Pole, but Jon was the first to stand at the bottom of the earth.

John Doherty

President

Note: To Register to attend the 6th May meeting at the Union, University and Schools Club, along with any male guest you plan to host - [click here](#)

May 6

Assistant Commissioner Kirsty Schofield APM

Australian Federal Police



Kirsty Schofield APM is an Assistant Commissioner in the Australian Federal Police (AFP) with over 30 years operational policing experience across a range of crime types and capabilities including transnational serious and organised crime, fraud and anti-corruption, intelligence, counter terrorism investigations, protection of Australian High Office Holders, Aviation Security and delivery of Specialist Policing Capabilities.

As an Assistant Commissioner Kirsty has led the AFP's largest Regional Command of NSW, the AFP's Crime Command and the Specialist Protective Command.

In the role of Assistant Commissioner, Crime Command Kirsty was the AFP's strategic lead for crime and responsible for the development of strategies to mitigate transnational serious organised crime, economic crime, fugitive apprehension, importation of drugs and firearms, child protection and human exploitation. Kirsty has been the AFP's senior representative on key law enforcement committees, including the Serious Organised Crime Coordination Committee and is a founding member of the AFP's Transnational Serious and Organised Crime Strategy Board that provides direction and advice to the Commissioner of the AFP.

Kirsty led the AFP response in NSW for Operation Ironside, the most ambitious and complex investigation undertaken by the AFP which resulted in the seizure of more than 32 tonnes of drugs, \$48 million in cash and assets seized, and the arrest of more than 800 offenders nationally.

In October 2024, Kirsty commenced in the role of Assistant Commissioner Specialist Protective Command which is a hybrid (specialist/operational) command, responsible for establishing and coordinating national strategy and capabilities whilst also delivering operational outputs within the ACT and nationally for Close Personal Protection of Australian High Office Holders, 227 Federal Parliamentarians and Internationally protected Persons, Aviation Security and Specialist Policing capabilities.

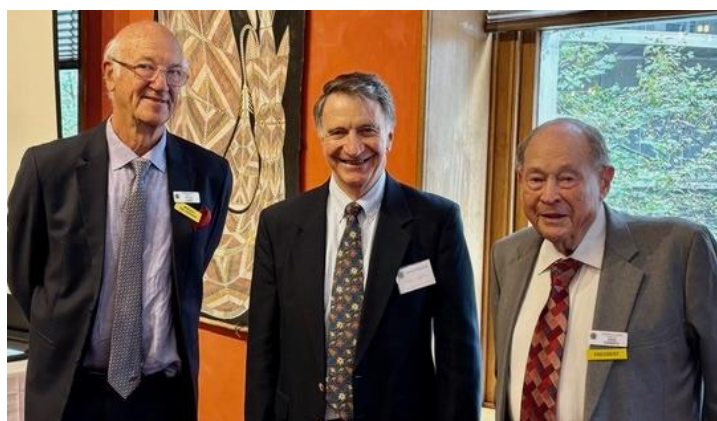
Throughout her career, Kirsty's leadership and strategic abilities have been recognised with numerous awards, including the Australian Police Medal in 2017, and the Australasia Council of Women in Policing Award for Most Outstanding Female Investigator in 2016, and five Commissioners Group Citations for Conspicuous Conduct of significant operations under her leadership. Kirsty holds a Bachelor of Administrative Leadership, is a qualified Senior Investigating Officer under Australia New Zealand Counter Terrorism Committee arrangements, has completed National Security Executive Development. She has completed future leaders programs, and is a mentor for Women in Law Enforcement.

APRIL MEETING REPORT

President John Doherty welcomed four guests. He mentioned Past President John Jeremy, his important career at Cockatoo Island and wished him well in light of the challenges he is currently facing. Geoff McWilliam advised of the next few guest speakers including Kirsty Schofield in May and Professor James Curran from Sydney University in June. Kim Oates reported on the successful Western Harbour Cruise on 28 March and future events including the Art Gallery of NSW for the Archibald, Wynne & Sulman prizes on 26 June and the Winter Lunch on 14 July.

INDUCTION

John Kell



Peter James introduced John Kell who he has known for a long while, and who has previously been a guest speaker at the Club. John is a civil engineer from Sydney University, having worked on water projects in Africa and then structural engineering in England. He has travelled extensively. In

1990 he became involved in a metal factory specializing in casting, becoming the managing director about five years later. Having seen the Darling River during the Covid drought, John became involved in a project to divert the Burdekin River with the construction of a new dam north of Charters Towers. This feasibility remains ongoing.

John was able to tell us a little about Investment Casting – developed by the Persians whereby an object is cast using bees wax surrounded by clay as the mould; and then using molten metal to replace the wax and form the object.

LIFE BEFORE PROBUS

Ian Lansdown



Ian started his education at Killara Infants School in the days of the ink well which was useful for dipping the plaits of girls seated in front! After attending North Sydney High he worked and studied part time. Based on his father's advice he took a computing job at the tax office and then moved to Qantas which had a state of the art computer system. After Qantas he completed an MBA, a "real eyeopener", learning all about finance, marketing, psychology, etc.

Citibank was setting up a merchant bank in Australia and on joining Ian was assigned to Singapore/Malaysia for five years where

he gained a lifelong attraction to all things Asian. Management saw his Australian background as advantageous compared to his English and American peers!

Subsequently, he moved to a boutique management buyout house in Sydney, Catalyst Investment Managers, which was later on sold to Prudential, providing an opportunity to move to Hong Kong and then Tokyo.

On retirement Ian travelled the world extensively and then as a widower married the beautiful Tricia Bell.

Two examples of outstanding management seen during Ian's working life:

- In the 1970s Lee Kwan Yew PM of Singapore decided that the island state needed to be a value added manufacturer. He doubled everyone's wages overnight and sent them back to school to learn new skills. That led to Singapore's success.
- At Citibank in the 1990s, the bank almost "went under" as it was long in Latin American debt. To downsize its workforce by 10 percent, each business unit had to determine who should go. Ian decided he was the one in his group to depart. This approach was the opposite of the top down principle as currently practiced by Donald Trump's DOGE network.

RACONTEUR

Rod Binsted - How I Took Christianity to China



Rod's Christianity experience commenced with him being sent to Sunday School and confirmation class, perhaps with some ulterior motives of his own, leading to his confirmation. Years later, he decided it would be best if he attended church and provide his own children with a religious education as he liked the ethics and principles of Christianity.

In 1987 Alex Hobbs at Royal North Shore, a very religious man, asked Rod if he would be interested in joining a medical trip to China focussing in his professional field of anaesthetist/perfusionist. The travel group lead by Professor Cliff Hughes from Royal Prince Alfred, comprised a team of about 15 Australians and 15 Americans. On arrival in Hong Kong they were given religious books to hide in their China bound luggage. Needless to say, the books if discovered by the authorities, would have been regarded as contraband.

The Chinese were not so friendly, most still wore Mao suits. The hotel in GuangZhou had not been maintained - taps dripped, electricity was iffy and the water not drinkable. Room doors were locked at night and monitored. There were few cars on the streets. Health care was not free. There were three tiers of hospitals – for people, for coal workers and for the army. Hygeine and practices were primitive. At an operating theatre in Changcha two operations were taking place in the one theatre. There were no swab counts, needles were blunt, anaesthetics were primitive, there were no sterile saline bags – the bottles used for the purpose were topped up through a filter. There was even a guy cooking rice in a corner of the theatre.

In the city of Changcha the group were taken to the opera. The best seats, already occupied, were made available by the local guide who told the occupants to move. An army hospital had an advanced pulsating flow heart lung machine, but it was still wrapped in dusty plastic as no one knew how to use it. Toilets were open troughs, there was no paper and no nappies.

There were two currencies – the renminbi and the yuan. The renminbi was for the Chinese people and the yuan was reserved for the communist party members and foreigners to spend in foreign goods shops.

Wuhan was a big city. They travelled by bus which had a priority #1 sign enabling it to by-pass long queues of traffic. The locals loved a banquet as they could use public funds and order plenty of food. The downside being that the host shared food with chop sticks that had been in his mouth and the meal included dog meat.

The return flight to Hong Kong was delayed by 12 hours as the Party had commandeered the scheduled aircraft for its own purposes.

GUEST SPEAKER

Distinguished Professor Claude Roux

Discover the Role of Forensic Science



Introduced by Geoff McWilliam, Professor Roux spoke of his passion for Forensic Science, commenting that rather than individual professionals such as medical doctors, chemists and engineers analysing a situation from their own professional perspectives and describing themselves as forensic specialists there is a growing but not yet complete acceptance of Forensic Science as a distinct discipline and true science. It is not as glamorous as shown on television and

its acceptance has not been aided by a few high profile miscarriage of justice cases overseas and here. Despite advances in technology critical thinking and asking the right questions are still essential. Apart from the better known ‘traces’ such as DNA, fingerprints, shoe marks, tyre tread marks, hair and blood samples, there has been an explosion in recent years in the number of “digital traces” arising from our use of phones and the internet.

A ‘Sydney Declaration’, prepared in advance of a conference of Forensic Science experts in 2023, set down 7 principles aimed at further enhancing the professional practice and standing of Forensic Science. It has had a significant and favourable impact around the world including in Africa

For our interest, Professor Roux recounted several case studies involving, for example, boot sole and tyre tread marks in a case in Canada, and fibres retained on shoe soles in an Australian murder case. He also outlined some of the projects undertaken within his Centre including on how to capture and retain fingerprints on plastic bank notes, and on the development of portable devices for drug detection. In outlining areas where there is scope for further improvement in Forensic Science practices he focused particularly on the capture and processing of traces, especially in the field.

At the conclusion of his presentation Professor Roux fielded several questions including about trace collection and the many different parties that can be involved, depending on the context of a particular case.

On behalf of the members Jim Warren thanked Professor Roux for a “fascinating and riveting” presentation.

Alan Locke

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Western Sydney Harbour Cruise



The March Activity was a cruise around the Western part of Sydney Harbour conducted by the Naval Historical Association on 28 March. We had a total number of 52 Members and Guests and almost exhausted the waiting list. We were joined on board by the Probus Club of

Canterbury Bankstown. An interesting, but less well known area of the Harbour. The commentary was of a high standard as was the morning tea.

Ted Brogan
Events Coordinator

Tour of Government House



On 11 April 2025, 20 members and guests enjoyed a comprehensive tour of the public rooms and gardens of Government house, Sydney. The history of the building, it's residents past and present, furnishings, and the events that

take place in the various rooms was well explained by our knowledgeable guide.

Future events (please see the website and emails for details)



Port Kembla Steelworks Tour

A tour of the Port Kembla Steelworks is planned for **28 May 2025** for 50 members and guests. The Steelworks Tour takes approx. 3 hours and includes around 2-3km of walking and around 200-300 stairs in total. Further details, including travel information via rail is available on the website.

Tour of Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes 2025



On **26 June 2025**, a private tour of the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW has been arranged for 40 members and guests. The Archibald Prize for portrait painting is Australia's most celebrated and sometimes controversial – art award. This is a great opportunity to inspect the winners and make up your own mind. See the website for further details.

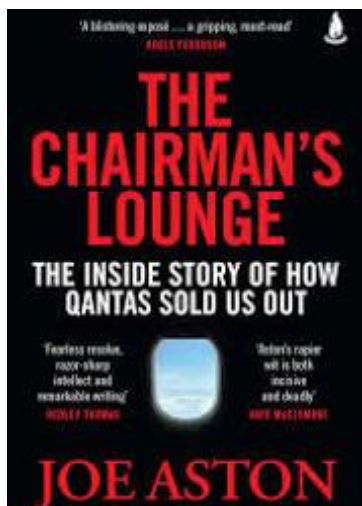
The Winter Lunch will be held at the Royal Sydney Golf Club on Monday **14 July 2025**. The Speaker will be Dr Stephanie Ward, a geriatrician and a star of the ABC TV series *Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds*.

Looking ahead, the **Christmas Lunch** is booked for **8 December 2025**, at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. Please add this important annual event to your diary.

Kim Oates
Events Coordinator

BOOK REVIEW

The Chairman's Lounge by Jo Aston (2024) – 322 pages – Fact



It is unusual for a piece of investigative journalism to become a best seller. Jo Aston either has an amazing publicity machine or was just lucky to hit the market shortly before Christmas 2024.

His main target is Alan Joyce. However the public could be mistaken for thinking that the book is about the privilege (and conflicts of interest) of those politicians and others who enjoy the benefit of the Qantas Chairman's Lounge – and in particular the Prime Minister. Yes there is an important chapter on this subject but most of the book is devoted to the rise and fall of Alan Joyce over his 15 year period as CEO of

Qantas. Aston paints a damning picture of the way in which Joyce and Qantas have fallen from grace over that period.

It is an open question of whether detailed investigative journalism of this nature, comprising over 300 pages and with few details spared, makes a “good read”. For those wanting to be reminded of what happened to aviation during Covid and its aftermath, for those interested in Qantas and for devoted readers of the Rear Vision column of the AFR – this is for you.

For the general reader there is too much detail, even though many of the chapters are highly entertaining. However, the jury is out as to whether those chapters justify the time taken to read a book of this size.

David Castle

A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

Smart Woman

Still living at home and expecting to inherit a fortune when his sickly, widower father died, Robert decided he needed a woman to enjoy it with. So he went to a singles bar and he searched until he spotted a woman whose beauty took his breath away. "Right now, I'm just an ordinary man," he said, walking up to her, "but within a month or two, my father will pass away and I'll inherit over \$20 million dollars."

The woman went home with Robert that night, and four days later she became his stepmother.

Men will never learn.

Technology



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