

**Probus Club of Templestowe Valley Inc.**

**Secretary's Annual Report**

**2005**



## **Introduction**

This report has been produced to inform club members of the club's activities and progress since the AGM in March 2004.

## **About Probus**

### **History**

The Probus movement had its genesis in two ancestors in the United Kingdom in 1965 –1966. These were established by Rotary Clubs in Welwyn Garden and later in Caterham. This later club was the first to be called a PROBUS CLUB. Out of the "PRO" in Professional and the "BUS" from Business. The word "Probus" incidentally is the Latin word from which the English word Probity comes from; meaning uprightness and honesty. Both were formed to meet the need for companionship of their peers and mental stimulation for retired business and professional men.

The first PROBUS club in Australia was Hunters Hill in NSW in 1976. By 1996 there were 1875 clubs in the Pacific region. In 1982 the first PROBUS club for women was opened in Bateau Bay NSW and subsequently Combined Probus Clubs have been formed.

### **Members**

During 2004 the number of Probus clubs in the South Pacific Region was around 3000. With an average membership of around 100 there are approximately 300000 members.

### **Probus South Pacific**

In February 1981 a group of members in the Sydney area decided to instigate a service to provide information for groups intending to form Probus clubs. This eventually became the Probus Information centre a later to become the Probus Centre-South Pacific. The quarterly Probus newsletter which later became a magazine was instigated from this centre.

### **Probus Groups**

As Probus has grown, groups of clubs have organized gatherings for special occasions to which they have, through Probus South Pacific, invited Probus members from throughout the region.

Probus Rendezvous is now an established annual Probus event.

## **Our Club History**

### **How and why the club was started**

Probus clubs in our area have been very quick to establish a full membership and thus a wait list of people wishing to join. Given an annual membership drop out of less than 5% in most clubs, these wait lists can take several years to turn over. Periodically, local Rotary Clubs take the initiative and organize the formation of new clubs to take up the wait lists of existing clubs.

Our club was started by Manningham Rotary under the guidance of Ken Murray and Max Didier on June the 12<sup>th</sup> 2003 when the inaugural meeting was held in the hall that we still use for fellowship meetings.

### **Foundation Members**

Subsequent to the Foundation Meeting, 62 foundation members signed up. These were members who joined at the Foundation Meeting or before the first fellowship meeting held in July

### **The Newsletter**

The newsletter has proven to play a vital role in keeping members informed on activities both future and past. The committee at their first meeting decided, that the newsletter should be posted out so members have access to information several days prior to the meetings. This would allow time for them to make arrangements and have any payments ready to be passed over at the next meeting. This arrangement though entailing cost in postage, will be continued because of the benefits to members..

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### Constitution and by-laws

The club members at our inaugural meeting agreed to adopt the standard constitution and by-laws of Probus South Pacific. However, due to local Victorian regulations we had to adopt a special Constitution and By Laws The documents describing the constitution and by-laws can be requested from the Secretary at any time.

The club was incorporated in 2004. With myself (Doug Hayne) being appointed as Public Officer. By being properly incorporated, any litigation has to be directed to the incorporated body and cannot be directed to individual members.

### Club Insurance

Probus South Pacific provides a universal insurance cover for members and third parties at or around club events. Our club is levied an annual fee to cover this insurance.

### Auditor

One of our members Terry Peargood, volunteered to act as Auditor for the Club. This audit has been completed for the year 2004/2005.

### Our Committee

The foundation committee, now made up of eight members is as follows:

- **President** Kerry McInerney
- **Vice President** Margaret Cornell
- **Treasurer** Lorraine Cooper
- **Secretary** Doug Hayne (Also Public Officer)
- **Assistant Secretary** Peter Fishley
- **Speakers** Gwen Young
- **Hospitality** John Mugridge
- **Welfare** Terry Peargood

### Our President

Our past President Kerry McInerney has set a high standard for future presidential candidates for our club. Our new President Margaret Cornell has willingly taken over from Kerry for the 2005/2006 year after very effectively managing membership. Margaret will be inducted at our April fellowship meeting

### Our Vice President

As a result of the by-law that the Vice President takes the office of President automatically each year, the Vice Presidents office was vacant and three candidates were nominated for the position for 2005/2006. The new Vice President will be elected by ballot at the AGM on March 11th

### Our Treasurer

Lorraine Cooper has continued her excellent professional work in managing our finances. Her member husband Ray has been of great assistance both to Lorraine and as an active club member. Lorraine has nominated for another term as our Treasurer. after which a new Treasurer must be appointed in 2006 in compliance with our constitution.

**Controlling expenditure:** The committee are very conscious of the fact that many members have a limited budget. Our administrative expenses do need to be closely monitored but without putting pressure on members. However the committee decided during the year that we could not put the club funds towards any event costs or lost deposits due to member cancellations or function cancellations. Therefore it was decided that a policy would be adopted that refunds of payments made by members could not be made unless we obtain a refund from the vendor of the event. This policy has needed to be applied in some instances during 2004. However in most cases our event vendors have refunded for cancellations and refunds were offered to the affected members. Another policy adopted by the committee was that costs would not be covered by the club for trophies or prizes for events unless all club members were likely to be involved. Our Treasurer's procedure and the associated documentation needed to keep track of event administration has worked well in the busy environment of event management.

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**Financial health:** The membership numbers we have has enabled the club to operate without increasing fees for 2005/2006. In fact, due to diligent financial management by our committee, there have been opportunities to supplement events with assistance from club funds. At our 2004 Christmas function the club provided drinks and raffle prizes for members. Club funds will also used to upgrade the spit roast luncheon at the April 2004 President's induction meeting.

### **Our Secretary and Newsletter Editor**

For the first year of our existence there was a lot of work required to get the administration of the club in order and to have a useful newsletter issued each month. Taking on both these tasks would have been impossible for me without the help, patience advice and feedback from committee and club members and this is very much appreciated.

I have nominated to return as Secretary for another term after which a new Secretary must be appointed in 2006 under our rules.

### **Our Assistant Secretary**

Peter Fishley's experience has been very valuable in having accurate minutes and encouraging proper observance of protocol at our committee and club meetings.

Peter also contributes a lot to helping club members get to know one another by going out of his way to chat with all people making sure they all feel a part of the club.

### **Our Welfare Officer**

Fortunately our members had very little happen in their lives in 2004 that required the welfare officer Terry Pearlgood to become involved. Those few members who did have illness, or other adverse events that did occur, were promptly contacted by Terry and where the club could assist he made sure this happened.

Terry also instigated the idea of birthday greetings being included with the newsletter when sent out to members. This has been received warmly by those members receiving the greeting.

Due to his own circumstances, Terry has had to resign as Welfare Officer and committee member but will remain an active member of the club. Val Reid as the only nominee for the vacant Welfare Officer position will take on the job as of April 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Our Hospitality Officer**

John Mugridge has made a great contribution at both committee and fellowship meetings. In addition to his hospitality role at fellowship meetings, John also started the golf group and instigated several club events such as the very succesful hobbies expo at the August meeting. He also got the club involved in the Lions Club's Tsunami appeal which resulted in over 150 bags of clothing being donated by club members and their friends.

### **Our Speakers Officer**

Gwen Young 's experience in obtaining quality speakers for Rotary has resulted in some very interesting visitors speaking at all our fellowship meetings. Over the past year and a half we have had around 15 speakers, all very much appreciated by meeting attendees and no cancellations. Gwen is also a very important member of our committee whose experience with Rotary has been of great benefit in assisting us to make decisions.

## **Committee Activities**

Committee meetings are held monthly, soon after the regular club meetings. committee members have all been generous in offering the use of their homes for these meetings.

All of the committee meetings have been congenial, friendly and productive. Several important issues have been dealt with and improvements to procedures developed. The committee members regularly communicate with one another to keep us all up to date.

### **Membership**

Keeping track of members' attendance and new member applications as well as and the collection of fees, has been a major task for our membership officer Marg Cornell and others who have assisted from time to time. Membership details are passed on to the Secretary who maintains a database of members' details. We now have a good database of members and their details, which makes the production of documents such as the phone list and attendance registers much easier,

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consistent and accurate. As Marg will be our President this year, the membership management will be handed over to another club member.

### Fellowship Meetings

We are able to book the hall a year ahead thus ensuring that we always have comfortable a meeting place. Our choice of the second Monday of the month has not been always possible to adhere to because of Monday holidays early in the year. We appreciate the members' patience in coping with the different periods of time that occur between meetings.

**Fees:** The \$2.00 fee to cover the hall hire and tea. has worked out to be adequate to handle meeting costs. The committee has no plans to change this in the coming year.

**Tea Roster:** Immediately the club meetings commenced we had plenty of volunteers to do the work needed to provide our "Fellowship Tea" at the meetings. A Roster was drawn up using alphabetical order of surnames. This appears to work well as long as we provide adequate notice. We expect that the members whose names start with "Y" (there are no Z's) will be on the tea roster in 4 to 5 years time; the luck of the draw.

### Speakers

Gwen's choice of speakers has been excellent with all of the speakers so far receiving a warm welcome and stimulating questions and discussion. The speakers for the first eight months of our existence were:

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|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • <b>March</b>     | <b>Peter Sellars</b>           | <b>Tour Bus Stories</b>               |
| • <b>April</b>     | <b>John Mentha</b>             | <b>Secrets of Magic</b>               |
| • <b>May</b>       | <b>Kevin Mason</b>             | <b>Law Courts Stories</b>             |
| • <b>June</b>      | <b>Dennis Colan</b>            | <b>Air Traffic Control</b>            |
| • <b>July</b>      | <b>Doug Hayne/Deana Thomas</b> | <b>China Egypt AV - Travel</b>        |
| • <b>August</b>    | <b>Wendy Grant</b>             | <b>Olympic Games</b>                  |
| • <b>September</b> | <b>Stephen Blanch</b>          | <b>Westfield Shopping Centres</b>     |
| • <b>October</b>   | <b>Brian Negus</b>             | <b>Vic Roads</b>                      |
| • <b>November</b>  | <b>Club Members</b>            | <b>Hobbies Exhibition</b>             |
| • <b>December</b>  | <b>Ellen Boyd</b>              | <b>Grandparenting</b>                 |
| • <b>January</b>   | <b>Jean Dennis</b>             | <b>Botanical Illustrator - Travel</b> |
| • <b>February</b>  | <b>Peter Bishop</b>            | <b>Ronald McDonald House</b>          |

### Luncheon

Part of the Probus tradition is for members to gather for a luncheon after fellowship meetings. Being aware of costs of this to members, the Manning ham Club was chosen and visited for lunch after most of our meetings the exception being the Christmas Lunch in December which was enjoyed by 82 members at the Yarra Valley Club's premises making sure the venue management were informed of numbers. We have had requests for some variety in lunch venues, and Margaret Cornell has researched some alternatives in the area. It has not been a simple task to find a venue that can handles our numbers on a Monday and still be in a convenient location. We will however continue to seek out some alternatives to provide variety. Most members who regularly attend Manningham Club for our lunch do say they are satisfied with the menu and service, however variety would be a good thing if we could find something of similar standard.

### Club events

The committee have instigated an approval process for events where funds need to be collected or deposits paid. This was done to minimize the risk of financial cost to the club and ensure that all member's interests are catered for in organizing events. Guidelines for event organizers were also issued to those members involved in event planning.

Elaine Hayne, along with Helen Armstrong and Jan Shinnars, have continued to arrange some very enjoyable outings. Wendy Fishley has also arranged very popular exhibition visits. It has become very apparent that we do enjoy each other's company and some very firm friendships have been

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made through regular support of our events. Sometimes the fun we have together is the main feature with the venue being "just somewhere to get together and have fun"

Other gatherings of members where details are advertised in the newsletter but no booking or collection of funds needed, have worked very well with walking, picnics, dinner outings being enjoyed by a number of members. These events are important as they take little organization and give members a choice without the pressures of minimum numbers.

There are some exciting plans with some new ideas for trips being investigated, but we welcome any suggestions and practical advice from all members, concerning events, and their planning, and management.

A lot of work has been done by the people mentioned in finding places and things to go to and finding out what the members want. They have also promoted events strongly at meetings and in the newsletter.

## **Club groups**

### **Theatre group**

Ellen Boyd and Joan Planck managed with their own busy schedules to organize some theatre events over the year with a monthly Friday movie meeting starting up earlier in the year.

Unfortunately both Joan and Ellen have had to give up this role with our club due to their busy lives. June Duncan and Lois Mason will be arranging theatre visits in 2005.

### **Collections and Museums**

Wendy Fishley continued the popular visits to the Johnson Collection with a lunch afterwards and has more of these popular visits along with Museum tours planned for 2005. The events do require planning and often collection of deposits prior to the event and Wendy had done a great job of managing these outings.

### **Golf**

John Mugridge started a golf group that has really taken on a life of its own. There are over 20 members who regularly participate in regular games and lessons. They have also taken overnight trips to country courses. Other members not regularly involved in golf are always encouraged to take part.

John, Leon Magree and Lyn and Jeff Crosbie and of course the competitors, have all contributed to making this group very successful

### **Tennis**

The small tennis group started by Irene Baird has had some congenial competitions with a handful of members. They are always looking tennis partners to make this activity more fun

### **Reading Group**

A book and reading group meets regularly thanks to Helga Braun's efforts.

### **Games Group**

Marion Cummings volunteered to start a games group and has instigated regular games nights in cards, mah jong and other fun activities. There have also been a series of bridge lessons commenced.

### **Singing Group**

Wilma Pontefract got together a group to enjoy singing evenings at her house. Several evenings have been enjoyed by these members.

### **Scrap Book Group**

Verity Moore has a home run business in supply of materials for making scrap books of family activities or history. Verity has had several gatherings at her home for members wishing to find out how to get a good scrapbook together. Some members have since set up great family history scrapbooks. Verity has agreed to set up a scrap book for the club with club providing funds for the materials.

## **Our Membership List**

During our first year, it became apparent that our membership was quickly increasing so the committee decide to limit our membership to 130 members. This is now included in our by laws. Our numbers very quickly reached this limit and we now have a wait list of around 30 names. Some of these are partners of members who are still in the workforce but intending to retire in the near future. We have had only three resignations over the past year. All of these were congenial and we parted with good wishes. When a vacancy arises, the earliest waitlist applicant is asked if they wish to join and if they decline their date of application is changed to the current date

We do get attendance numbers of up to 90 to 100 members at fellowship along with several guests each month. Normally around 50 attend the lunch afterwards.

## **Our Newsletter**

Without the Newsletter, the club could not function properly. It is important that all club "happenings" are communicated to members quickly and in time for decisions to be made and before fellowship meetings. Fortunately I have had marvelous co-operation and encouragement from committee and members. Most of the feedback I have received is positive and encouraging with support for the changes that have been made.

The newsletter is printed off on my faithful HP printer on the Wednesday before the meetings. I then rush off to Officeworks and print off about 100 copies, then home to fold, staple, address and stamp them with help from Elaine and friends. Then rush them off to the post box before 6pm. This provides the 90 or so copies posted out to members for delivery on the Thursday before the next meeting, and leaves some over to have on hand at meetings and send to interested parties outside the club. A few members have volunteered to have newsletters emailed to them and we are hoping to start emailing them during the next year.

## **Our connection with local council**

Manningham City Council maintains contact with most organisations in the municipality and we get regular correspondence from them regarding their events and plans. One of the Council events we have had participation with, is the Citizenship Ceremonies. Due to communication from the council, some members have represented us at these ceremonies.

## **Our Connection With Rotary**

Manningham Rotary Club were our foundation sponsors and we will be eternally grateful to them for instigating the club and supporting us whilst we were in the formation stages. It should be emphasized however, that although we are associated with Rotary, we are not a subsidiary group nor are we a fund raising organization. (We are a "FUN" raising organization).

However, we would expect that as we grow, many of our members will participate in volunteer community help activities as Probus groups and this would be welcomed and encouraged. Our contribution to the Tsunami appeal was a good example of how we can make contribution this way.

## **The Financial Report (The Treasurer Lorraine Cooper)**

Attached to this report, is the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports which in a few pages do not fully reflect the dedication that Lorraine has put in to ensuring the integrity and accuracy of our financial reporting. We owe a lot to Lorraine for taking on the responsibility and hard work needed to achieve this. It is apparent that Lorraine has also had a lot of assistance and I am sure, advice from her member husband Ray. Terry Pearlgood has also contributed in providing advice and doing the audit for us.

## **Summary**

The Probus Club of Templestowe Valley Inc has been an outstanding success in its first years of operation. Membership has quickly reached a sustainable level and we have a substantial wait list of potential members. Several successful events have been planned and enjoyed by members and friends. Administration procedures and rules have been developed and other management tasks such as incorporation and liaison with local council and other clubs have been worked on along with other tasks planned for the future by the committee.

### **Probus Club of Templestowe Valley Inc. - Secretary's Report**

The Foundation Committee have all nominated to stand for re-election for 2005. Should they all be re-elected the momentum will continue into 2005 with the task of management of new membership being now reduced, the business of the "FUN Raising" mentioned earlier in this report can be focussed on.

Once again I would like to thank all of the committee and members for their support of their Secretary. Without your support I could not have had whatever success I have had in doing the job.

Doug Hayne

Secretary, Probus Club of Templestowe Valley Inc