



PROBUS Global Newsletter September 2020



**Shirley Roberts,
President PROBUS Global**

As we enter into the Autumn then looking back since March we have been joined by many new PROBUS Global members. It is good to have you with us and I hope you are enjoying your journey of making new Probus friendships around the world and picking up good ideas along the way.

These last months have been a testing time for all of us, yet we have been creative in facing adversity by increasing our level of communication with extra newsletters, Zoom and Webex club meetings, etc thus overcoming the feeling of isolation in some areas of the world at a time when you are unable to be with your family due to regulations.

The website gives us the opportunity to relax, have a chuckle, read some poetry, and distract us from the woes of Covid19 in the media.



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To help you to get to know your fellow PROBUS Global members better, why not take a trip to the members page and update or add some detail to your profile, maybe add a photo as well, even though it might show a few wrinkles or long hair as you have not been able to visit the barbers or hairdresser.

Fortunately my granddaughter did an excellent job for me!!! We have recently enjoyed some relaxation in regulations in some countries but here in the UK it is being tightened up again to prevent a spike during the colder months ahead.

PROBUS needs to continue as an important part of our lives with or without meetings or venues. You can help by telling your club members about PROBUS Global.

Regards and stay safe, Shirley

October 1 is PROBUS Day

Thursday 1 October marks the **International Day for Older Persons** - a United Nations initiative that encourages the celebration of seniors in our community, the date also marks the launch of **Probus Day**.

Probus is all about social connections in retirement. Probus Clubs provide the opportunity for retirees and semi-retirees to come together in their local community, make new friends and participate in a wide range of activities.

Silvana Martignago is the CEO of [Probus South Pacific](#) which represents over 110,000 members in Australia and 14,000 members in New Zealand.

Ms Martignago said, "During the pandemic, the majority of our Probus Club members have remained connected with each other by phone and/or technologically, minimising the increased risk of isolation and loneliness."

"Our Clubs and their members are embracing the recent challenges with video conferencing regularly and with restrictions permitting, many Clubs are conducting their activities on a smaller scale complying with health guidelines and restrictions."

"We are acutely aware that social contact is essential in today's world, now more than ever. It is widely accepted that older persons that are members of social groups are less likely to develop mental health issues. Probus provides essential friendship based social connections for members." She concluded.

The inaugural Probus Day theme is all about Staying Connected with many Probus Clubs down under planning celebrations during the month of October to mark the day. While some of the celebrations and events may be constrained or conducted in a virtual format, depending upon the level of restrictions, the key is to celebrate retirement and Probus members are experts in demonstrating just that.

Ms Martignago encourages anyone that is approaching retirement, semi-retired or retired, to find out more about how Probus can help them to extend their social circle and stay connected.

Words from the Webmaster

We now have over 260 members from 186 clubs in 12 countries. Drop by the website and say hello.

Members meeting members



The new [Meet and Greet page](#) has become the popular place to meet members interested in engaging in conversations by email with other members.



Make a new friend by sending them a message and starting a conversation. We are all friendly.

Type a question in the Message Board and see who answers.

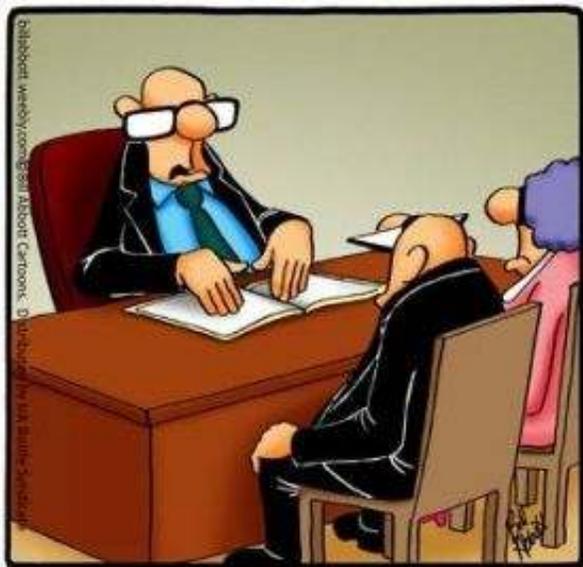
Remember to [update your profile information](#) and add a photo if you feel like it.

Member Chat Room

The [member chat room](#) has been open to anyone for discussion since February, 2019. There have been thousands of messages posted by members like you.

Drop by and say hello. There are always members from the UK dropping by, so all you have to do is talk about the weather. It is expected.

Sport and gardens often come up as well. What is in season in your garden?



“I’ve crunched the numbers in your retirement account. It’s time to figure out who will be wearing the mask and who will be driving the getaway car.”

A woman noticed her husband standing on the bathroom scale, sucking in his stomach. “That’s not going to help,” she said. “Sure, it does,” he replied. “It’s the only way I can see the numbers”.

Video Chat Room

Would you like to see who you are chatting with and talk instead of typing?

There is now an open chat room that uses the camera in your computer or phone to show your face to the person you are chatting with.

Don’t want people to see your face? Point the camera out the window and let us see the view from your home today. Or just turn it off.



This is the view from my window right now! Yes, I am very lucky to spend my summers at the lake in Canada.

By the time you read this, I will be at my desk at home in the basement anticipating the first snowfall.

Ladies SIG?

Before PROBUS Global, there was the IPN (International Probus Network) and an important Special Interest Group was the Ladies SIG.

It has been suggested that we should have a special message board for the Ladies to meet and greet. If you would participate in the SIG, please [let us know](#).

Zoom into PROBUS Club Meetings around the world

With lockdowns and restrictions due to COVID-19, PROBUS clubs have turned to holding online meetings using Zoom.

This has created an opportunity to invite guests from other PROBUS clubs around the world. PROBUS Global members have been attending meetings in Canada and enjoying the presentations. The guest speaker's talks can be interesting, but it is also interesting to see how meetings are run at other clubs.



PG Members at the Newmarket Club Meeting

Scheduled meetings are announced on the [Meetings and Presentations](#) page of the probustglobal.org website and members can request an invitation to the meetings they are interested in attending.

In many cases, the meetings are recorded and, when permission is granted, the video is available for viewing. If your busy schedule, or your timezone makes it difficult to attend the meeting, you can watch the video.

Why not invite some PG members as guests at your next meeting?

Help us keep the club information current. Take a look at what we have for your club and let us know if it needs updating.

[Show Club Information](#)

Derek goes to Downing Street

Derek Treagus, [Locksheath PROBUS Club](#)

It was 1986, Sir John Fairclough (at that time, plain John Fairclough) had just been seconded from IBM where he had been Managing Director of the Hursley Laboratory to take the position of Chief Scientific Adviser for the UK Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher.

Being keen to ensure that he had the appropriate tools available to him and perhaps also keen to show the value of IBM equipment to Government (IBM Hursley was later to go on and win two Queen's Awards for Technology), Sir John asked for the newly announced PC/AT (manufactured at that time at the IBM Greenock site in Spango Valley) to be sent to him for use in his office.

All it needed was someone to install the required software and then install it in the Cabinet Office itself. Having run a number of IBM PC projects at universities across the UK. There was one obvious candidate..... ME!

With the IRA still active two years after the Brighton bombing, security was tight. The PC was taken from Hursley for security checking and delivered to Downing Street in an unmarked van (his office was in the Cabinet Office next door to Number 10). Once it had been delivered I was similarly taken up to Downing Street in an unmarked car.



Whilst I don't remember the exact details of my entry into the Cabinet Office, I was taken to Sir John's office where the PC (serial number 00000003 from memory, pity it wasn't 007) was waiting to be installed. Duly setup, John (IBMers always used first names regardless of their position within the company) arrived, introduced himself and I set about explaining the machine. It didn't take long as he was well versed in and used to using new technology himself.

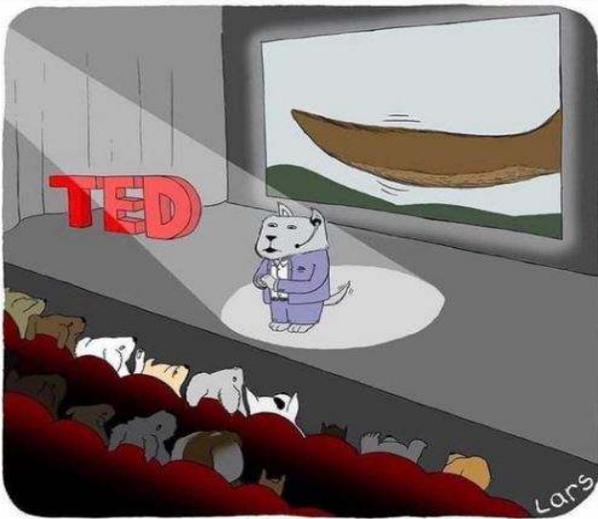
My final memory is of him showing me the entrance to No 10 Downing Street. Probably the closest I have ever been or ever will be to the Prime Minister and the seat of Government of the United Kingdom.

PG Member Feedback

Would you prefer to receive newsletters?

- As a PDF attachment to email.
- As a link to a PDF download.
- As an email with text and images.
- Once a month.
- Once a quarter.
- Less often.

Answer by reply to the email or [on the website](#).



"What if I told you that the thing you've been chasing your whole life ... has been a part of you all along."

The Virus

Maurie Wright, [Gympie Probus Club](#)

Life was good, with lots to inspire us
Then along comes this thing called Coronavirus,
It took some time to make its mark
Perhaps we all thought "a walk in the Park".

First in China and then in Italy,
Be on our doorstep soon, quite literally,
Aussies weren't much concerned by this caper,
But everyone went shopping for toilet paper.

Then we took the chicken, the pasta, the flour,
Shops were stocking shelves by the hour,
But still not ever enough to go around,
Shoppers in aisles going round for round.

Our leaders' step in, lives to preserve,
They tell us we need to flatten the curve.
New rules abound, brought in with persistence,
Now we practice the required social distance.

Shut pubs and clubs and here's the proof,
Alcohol sales went through the roof.
No flying, no parties, no gatherings, no fun
Be like this till the virus war is won.
No fishing, no shooting, no groups over two,
Businesses closing because customers are few,
Perhaps goodbye to the world that we knew,
Hope it's a better place when we are through.

Follow the rules, treat each other like family,
The objective is to keep away a calamity,
If we do the right thing, the virus can't spread,
And before we know it, back to normal instead.

In pre virus days, we could do as we please,
Just one tiny bug brought the world to its knees,
We hope for a vaccine from the design team
One that will stop, this COVID 19.

Stay safe in your homes, and keep occupied,
Till this wretched thing has been knocked aside,
We won't be beaten, we will prevail,

And never see it again on this scale.

When the Emus won the war

Mary Wilson, [Holland Park Central Probus Club](#)



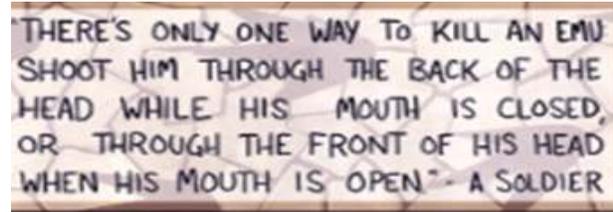
Some in Australia are luckier than others. We in Queensland have COVID under good control and have been back at socially distanced Probus meetings and outings since July. At the time of writing, Victorians have been in lock-down and curfews for months and Probus is only virtual. Obviously other countries have their lucky and unlucky members. So to lift the spirits of all, here is an Australian historical (hysterical?) fact about our very large, indigenous bird the Emu, and the army.

Australia cannot lay claim to any great empires or epic conquests, but we do have one distinction that no other nation on Earth can boast: we are the only country in history to lose a war to birds – flightless ones at that.

In 1932, the farmers of Western Australia, fed up with the 20,000 emus that kept eating their crops, went to Defence Minister, Sir George Pearce, to demand he take action. Pearce decided that what the emus needed was a hefty dose of good old-fashioned military might. And so Major GPW Meredith of the Royal Australian Artillery was sent, along with two soldiers, two Lewis guns, and 10,000 bullets, into the scrubland to show the emus just which was the more highly-evolved species. The emus refused to be herded and dispersed, the guns jammed, and on the few occasions an emu was actually shot, it proved resistant to bullets to an unsettling degree. At one stage the men tried, unsuccessfully, mounting the gun on a truck and chasing the birds.

Very few emus died. Meredith's official report noted that the men had suffered no casualties. The Emu command

had evidently ordered guerrilla tactics, and its unwieldy army soon split up into innumerable small units that made use of the military equipment uneconomic. Almost all the bullets were wasted. A crestfallen field force therefore withdrew from the combat area after about a month.



The question, which still remains unanswered, is why, blessed as we are with a native animal that is essentially a cross between an armoured car and a velociraptor, our military didn't take advantage of the emus by training them for combat duty in the Australian Defence Force.

Would you like to contribute to the Christmas newsletter?

Send us an interesting article about yourself, your club or your town. Or anything else you think might be of interest.

If your club newsletter is available for viewing on the web, send us the URL so we can link it on the Newsletters page.

Feel free to share this newsletter with everyone at your club.

Send a copy to your own club newsletter editor and suggest they sign up for regular delivery.

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