



NEWSLETTER

GLENMORE PARK PROBUS CLUB Inc.

No. 162 WEDNESDAY 17th. OCTOBER 2018

probusglenmorepark.com.au



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If somebody offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes - then learn how to do it later! Richard Branson (1950-)

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Here we are at the start of a new adventure! I hope our change of venue goes as smoothly as possible. I am sure we will have to adapt to our new surroundings, but I know what a resilient bunch we are and it will not take us too long to make it seem like home.

No Movies last month, then four this month! First "The Wife", I really enjoyed it, but mixed reviews from the Group. Then, "Ladies in Black", we got a rare thumbs up from Jean Howard, the rest of the Group loved it as well, it brought back a lot of early memories, especially for the ladies. Barbara and I couldn't really relate to it, at the time (1959), we would have been in our very early teens in London, preparing for "The Swinging Sixties". Nevertheless, we found it entertaining, if at times, disjointed. We can't attend the next two, "Small Foot" & "Crazy Rich Asians". 'Ernie's Lunch' was at "The Peach Tree" this month. Although Ernie himself couldn't attend, 13 of us enjoyed a very reasonably priced lunch. The ladies serving the meals were especially helpful and friendly. The next day, 36 of us met at Penrith RSL Club to board our coach to head for "The Japanese Gardens" at Little Hartley. A fantastic day out from start to finish. The coach driver was excellent, he had as many jokes as Ernie Campbell. He even picked up one of our newer members who had made the mistake of going to Penrith Golf Club, he also helped to serve the refreshments at the gardens. Talking of the refreshments, they were top draw, Devonshire tea when we arrived, then a choice of sandwiches or quiche for lunch. The proud owner, assisted by his wife, showed us round the gardens, although not completed, they were still amazing. I for one, will definitely visit again, especially now we have had some rain, the lake for sure needed more water. The only blot that I heard (from my wife!) was that the toilets left a lot to be desired! The following Wednesday, about 17 of our members met up to see the musical "Evita" at The Sydney Opera House. I personally didn't go, not that keen on musicals, I made cupcakes with my 6 year old granddaughter, Zara, instead. :-).



****Good news, you can now pay directly into our Glenmore Park Probus Club Bank account.****

The details are : Glenmore Park Probus Club : BSB: 032278 : Account No: 313219

PLEASE SEE CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR CODING DETAILS FOR INDIVIDUAL EVENTS.

Glen Davis. (Editor)

Two men are playing golf. One of them is about to take a swing when a funeral procession appears on the road next to the course. He stops mid-swing, takes off his cap, closes his eyes, and bows his head in contemplation.

His opponent comments: "That must be the most touching thing I've ever seen. You are a very feeling man." The man, recovering himself, replies, "Yeah, well we were married 35 years."

The Dublin pensioners' club goes on a mystery tour every Wednesday and, to make it interesting, they have a sweep to guess where they are going. Seamus, the coach driver, has won five weeks on the trot.

"We're looking for a Treasurer for the Xmas fund", said Paddy. "Didn't you take on a new one last month?" said Murphy. "That's the one we're looking for", Paddy replied.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOV. 29th - 30th. : 2 day Hunter Valley Christmas Lights Tour. NOW \$280 p.p.+Single supplement \$50. ALL SHOULD HAVE PAID. MEET AT LEONAY GOLF CLUB 7:30am SHARP, FOR AN 8:00am COACH DEPARTURE. WE MAY LEAVE OUR VEHICLES IN THE LEONAY GOLF CLUB CAR PARK, WHICH IS LOCKED OVERNIGHT. * SEE PAGE SIX FOR IMPORTANT PARKING INSTRUCTIONS *

DEC. 6th. : PROBUS CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT "THE LAKESIDE RESTAURANT". Gate A Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith 2750. Members \$40. Guests \$55. Pay latest OCTOBER meeting. Or by DIRECT DEBIT using Reference CL5 plus your SURNAME.

***** PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CLUB CANNOT ISSUE REFUNDS OTHER THAN IN THE CASE THAT THE EVENT IS COMPLETELY CANCELLED AND ALL FUTURE EVENTS WILL REQUIRE A NON- RETURNABLE DEPOSIT OR PAYMENT IN FULL, IF YOU PUT YOUR NAME DOWN FOR AN EVENT, THIS WILL BE TAKEN AS A COMMITMENT TO PAY*****

Glenmore Park Probus Group Committee.

ERNIE'S LUNCH'S

OCT. Wednesday 24th. : "O'Donoghues Irish Pub", Great Western Highway, Emu Plains. Meet 12 noon.

NOV. Wednesday 28th. : "The Gaels Sports Club", Richmond Road, Kingswood. Meet 12 noon.

2019

JAN. The "Pioneer Tavern". Aspen Street, South Penrith (Orchard Hills) 12 noon.

FEB. "Warragamba Workers Club" 18th Street, Warragamba. 12 noon.

MAR. Camden R.S.L. 23 Cawdor Road, Camden. 12 noon.

APR. St. Mary's R.S.L. Corner of Mamre Road & Hall Street. St. Mary's. 12noon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **NOV./DEC. ' Jersey Boys ' You can book to go with U3A**
- **DEC: SKATEL CHRISTMAS SHOW.** DETAILS TO FOLLOW. I Have a vested interest in this show as our son & daughter-in-law put this show on every 2 years. This years theme is based on "The Greatest Show on Earth". We can reserve rinkside seats for our members.
- **SEE WEBSITE UNDER TOURS FOR AN ALTERNATIVE TRIP. EMAIL ERNIE CAMPBELL OR SPEAK TO HIM AT OUR MEETING FOR DETAILS.**

UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKERS

October: Rowan Price from Ryde Rotary : Cyber Safety.

November: Trivia Quiz.

December: Helen Hartney : from Cardiac Rehab & General Health.

WELFARE

Carole: Phone call & card to Pat McCall . Phone calls to Roy King & Jean Howard.

MOVIE GROUP

SATURDAY 20th. OCTOBER "Crazy Rich Asians". 1:25pm. session.

Meet at Mountain Blue for Lunch 11:45am.

SATURDAY 10th NOVEMBER "A Simple Favour" Time TBA

NOVEMBER "Searching" Date & Time TBA

ACTIVITY GROUPS

CANASTA @ KAYS HOUSE: 11:00am 2nd,Wednesday every month. Speak to Kay for more details.

WALKING GROUP: Every Saturday 7:30am. Meet at The Coffee Club, Tench Ave. Jamisontown or Glenmore Park. Any members interested, please speak to **Pat Ryan**, Club Secretary, at our meetings or by phone as listed under **Secretary** on the Newsletter heading. **The walking venue varies and suits most abilities.**

CHESS & PHOTOGRAPHY: Any members interested in either of these activities should speak to **Brian Corlis.**

THIS OCTOBER MEETING

This months guest speaker is Talking about Cyber Security

If any member has not got a PSP Card, please see Barbara Davis. There are also printed lists of participating companies available.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1st: Karin Figg. 2nd: Robert Ley. 13th: Pauline Simpson.

16th: Jean Howard. 30th: Ann Johnson.

(A special birthday for Bob, ending in a Zero!)

Our Membership Officer is currently compiling a register of Members who may need transport to and from meetings and events. If you need a lift, or are able to help by giving a lift [in your local area] occasionally, please let Barbara Davis know.

DISCLAIMER

This Newsletter is prepared in editorial format for the information of members. It is written with care and in good faith but does not necessarily reflect Probus policy nor does the Editor accept responsibility for any action taken by any reader because of information contained within.



Barbara Lesley Birchall was born in the Women's Hospital, Paddington, Sydney on 29th April 1944, to John Donahoe Birchall and Mary Christie Birchall, nee Sykes. Both parents were born in Australia. Her father was of Irish Catholic descent, his family settling in Hay, Riverina, and her mother was from a Scottish Protestant family, having joined her new husband on an Australian troop ship returning from WW1 to settle in Queensland. Theirs was a "mixed" marriage. John was "a bit of a rebel". He was a member of the Labour Party, until the ALP/DLP split in 1955, with him remaining with the ALP. This caused his threatened ex-communication from his church, and his younger daughter Pamela being baptised as C of E, not Catholic.

Until the age of 3 months Barbara lived in the Birchall family home at Bondi, until John, having done war service, was given a War Loan, which enabled him to buy a property at Carlingford, north-west Sydney. Before the war his occupation had been as a tyre builder. After the war he drove a truck for Marchant's Soft Drinks company. Feeling unfulfilled he trained at Rydalmere and Macquarie hospital to become a Psychiatric Nurse. In 1953, when Barbara was aged eleven, he joined with two other like-minded friends and bought a large old house in Strathfield, which they turned from an old people's home into a 42-bed psychiatric hospital, where they treated schizophrenics, alcoholics and drug abusers.

Barbara was the eldest of four children, having two brothers and a sister. She attended Carlingford Public School, starting at the young age of four years and nine months, which she says had interesting consequences with her always being too young within her peer groups. She remembers spending most of her time at primary school defending her younger brother whom, she recognises today, was dyslexic. The Carlingford Area after the war had a lot of orphaned children's homes, and many of her fellow pupils came from these homes. When the time came for high school, nine girls in her year, including Barbara, were sent to Strathfield Girls High School, a new Language School. They had to catch a steam train to Clyde, an electric train to Strathfield and a bus to get there. Here she learnt French and Latin, alongside the standard subjects. She was the first person in her family to go to high school - neither of her parents had - circumstances dictated that they had to leave school early, aged 14. She was a good girl at school. Her plan was to be a school teacher, but her Father had different ideas. Leaving in year 5, after passing her leaving Certificate, she would go on to TAFE to learn short-hand and typing to become a secretary, "like a female should".

Her first job was in the Department of Customs and Excise, where she stayed for two years, before going to work at English Electric. Then, turning twenty-one her father swooped, and she went to work for him, running the administration side of his hospital, which she did until 1986. Aged twenty-three, Barbara married Ian Steer, a match that her father was not happy with. Her first rebellion against her father. She met Ian at Vic's Dance Hall in Strathfield. "In those days the pubs closed at 10pm, and the men fell out of the pubs and into the dance halls". "Ian couldn't dance ... but he would then". Ian was an electrician, one of six children, son of the Secretary of Queensland Vehicle Builder's Union and a housewife. After five years at TAFE Ian had left home working his way up the coast of Queensland then onto Darwin. With mates he then drove down through Alice Springs, ending up in Sydney. The couple married in January 1968, honeymooning in Perth. They drove, crossing the Nullarbor Plain, where they broke down! They started married life in a flat in Strathfield, near the hospital. Three years later they had twin boys, Mark and Phillip, and decided that the flat was too small for them now, so they had to move. They bought a block of land in Leonay, "the end of the world, back then"! but the only place that they could afford. They built a house, moving in in 1970, when the twins were 3 months old. Another son, Geoffrey, was born in 1974

Barbara continued working at the hospital, travelling to Strathfield, from Leonay until 1986. By 1984, Leonay was becoming too built up for Barbara and the houses too close together. She wanted to go back towards Castle Hill to live, but the whole family had all become so involved in the Cub Scouts, with Ian being a Cub Master that the boys wanted to remain in the Emu Plains locale. So, they bought a block of land at Mulgoa, and built the house that they still live in today, thirty-four years later. The boys started at Leonay Public School, but due to all the travelling backwards and forwards to Strathfield and all the extra-curricular activities they were interested in, it was easier to move them to the Trinity Grammar School, Summer Hill, where she worked in the Canteen and was on the

Mother's Club Committee.

Then, one day in 1986, Barbara's father walked into the hospital and just said "I've sold the hospital". No consultation. He'd told no-one, not even his wife, he just did it. Barbara and Ian then took the family on a trip to Europe! Barbara, now free to do what she wanted, worked for a time at Hopewood, Wallacia for a couple of years, followed by a time at the Nepean Hospital. The hospital then sent her to work at the Hawksbury Mental Health, where she ended her career. Once her boys finished their schooling it was Barbara's turn. In 1996 she took herself to University at the University of Western Sydney to see if she was as smart as the other siblings - she was the only one now without a degree. She wanted to study Welfare, but was not allowed. At this period of time it was not considered very PC for "white", "old women" to be telling others how to live. She began to study Sociology and Social Policy, but it wasn't what she wanted, so she changed her course to a BA in Anthropology and Psychology. She was two years into the three-year course and Anthropology, as a subject, was cancelled. If she wanted to complete it she would have to drive back and forth to Canberra for a year (luckily, she had a niece whom she could stay with during the week). Next came an Honours degree in sociology 1st class. The one-year course took her two years to complete, as during this time her father became ill and passed away. Now "having nothing better to do" she began a PhD course. However, she was two years into it, in 2004, when she decided to remove her grandson from his mother (it was a dangerous environment for him to be growing up in). This would involve going to court and all that it entailed. Her younger brother died in the October, her mother died in the November and in December Barbara was diagnosed with breast cancer. She decided to not finish her course.

Her grandson, Blade was aged two in 2004, when she was given custody of him. After returning to his mother for a short time in 2006, The Court finally decreed that Blade had to live with his father. Father and son returned to Mulgoa to live with Barbara and Ian. Barbara kept the boy at his Liverpool school, "to keep him stable", driving him there every day, but it all became too much for her, so she moved him to Surveyor's Creek Public School in Glenmore Park, where she worked in the school library and canteen. Finally, he moved to St Dominic's College for his High School years. She tried always to give him stability. During this time her son, Blade's father, who also lived with them, suffered a brain aneurism, which thankfully he recovered from.

Although no longer working Barbara was always kept busy. She joined Al-Anon, having experience of alcoholism in the family. She became a delegate, representing the State, in Melbourne. She worked for a while at Recovery Resources based in Narrabeen. This was when she got her first mobile phone - one the size of a brick, in case she broke down whilst driving. She did lots of soul-searching, joined lots of committees. Her whole family became involved in the RFS, Barbara too, working on the telephones during the fires of 2005, and now she is their treasurer. Two of her sons are still in the RFS, as well as being "over educated" truck drivers, the other is a policeman. She has two granddaughters, as well as her grandson. Ian continues working 3 days a week as an 'advisor'.

As a teenager she played tennis and basketball, and in her twenties was a Drum Majorette. These days she enjoys line dancing, walking and family history. She and Ian have enjoyed travelling. In 1990 they went to Asia, 2009 they had a Cruise to New Caledonia and Isle of Pines, a Kimberley cruise followed in 2014 and this year for their 50th Wedding Anniversary, Antarctica. Barbara is still caring for her grandson, fourteen years on, but now he's becoming an adult and more independent she feels it is time for her to do something for herself. Her friend Joy Hotson, Probus member, invited her to come to Probus, which she eventually did. She now belongs to the walking group, the movie group, and enjoys the lunches and meetings. We spent an interesting couple of hours chatting with her, whilst she was recovering from a bad fall. We're looking forward to her returning to the walking group soon.

JAPANESE GARDENS AT LITTLE HARTLEY



All Photographs : Courtesy of Barbara Davis

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**'Ernie's Lunch' at 'The Peachtree Hotel', Penrith.
Photo, courtesy of Barbara Davis.**



**THE INDUCTION OF HELEN SKEPPER &
LIBBY BERG BY PRESIDENT RAYELLA HAINES**



SOME OF OUR GLENMORE PARK PROBUS GROUP AT THE OPERA HOUSE TO SEE 'EVITA'
Photos courtesy of Clarence & Barbara



Various members of the walking at Jordan Springs, Nepean River & Claremont Meadows.



An appropriate poem from Carole for The Newsletter
New beginnings by Lloyd Fell

*Every end is a new beginning
Every failure is something learned
Every loss was a chance at winning
Unrequited means truly yearned*

*Every tumble leads to rising
Every hurt is the need to heal
Every grief yields sympathising
Every pain shows that you feel*

*Difficulties are debentures
Problems are a challenge really
Even mishaps are adventures
Setbacks show the path more clearly*

*Every wrong is a cause worth righting
Each mistake is a chance success
Every miss improves the sighting
And every more is also less*

**IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS WHEN
PARKING AT LEONAY GOLF CLUB -
PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU PARK IN THE
TOP CAR PARK AT THE REAR OF THE
CLUB HOUSE.
WHEN ENTERING FROM THE FRONT
GATE, GO TO THE RIGHT OF THE CLUB
HOUSE TO ENTER THE TOP CAR PARK.
WE DO NOT WANT TO INCONVENIENCE
THE GOLF CLUB MEMBERS!**



**Come join us on FaceBook, like Kay,
Irene & Mandy have done. Just
search Glenmore Park Probus Club**

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