



PROBE

Bulletin of the Probus Club of Bendigo Inc.



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A Special General Meeting is held every 3rd Wednesday each month at 10.00 a.m. at the Masonic Centre, McIvor Road.

All correspondence to the Secretary, 38 Mafeking Street South, Bendigo, 3550.

Our Guest Speakers at today's meeting are Peter and Murial Thornton, from the Probus Club of Kangaroo Flat. The title of their program is "A visit to Beijing China".

Our Guest Speaker in June, Jim Downward, gave us a history lesson on the start of communication by telegraph in Australia.

He told us when John Douall Stuart's epic trek from Adelaide to Arnhem Land proved there was no inland sea. Charles Chas Todd who was Govt Astronomer and Superintendent of Telegraphs in Adelaide, wrote in 1861 "The erection of an overland telegraph line to the North Coast should be regarded as a national work."

He envisaged a link to a cable laid under the sea from Bombay to Batavia and then to Darwin.

The South Australian Government appointed Chas Todd to plan and construct the line from Port Augusta to Darwin. Logistically, it must have been a mammoth task.

The line was to be single No 8 gauge galvanized steel wire, 3200km in all, together with insulators, batteries, relays, all of which had to come from England.

A start was made in September 1870 in Darwin when the 1st pole was erected. Meanwhile stores and drays were to leave in August 1870 for the Centre sections of the line. The size of the contingent can be visualized when you consider that 27 sets of 5 horse heavy harness, 300 collars and over 600 hides were used.

It took 1 year and 11 months to construct. Today's evidence of the repeater station at Barrow Creek, built with solid stone, is a lasting memorial to the determination of Todd and his men. It provides a link with the past to many travelling by road to Darwin with the laying of cables under the sea from Java to Darwin in 1872, messages from the outside world were down to hours compared to 6 months by sea.

All this in morse code, and relayed many times, hence messages took several hours to reach overseas. By 1897 Western Australia was connected to a National Grid. Every 200 miles, a repeater station, manually operated by at least two operators.

When the telegraph station at Darwin suffered a direct hit from one of 64 bombing raids in 1942, the radio link was lost. It is difficult to imagine, that in those critical days the only link left was the original single wire and the use of the morse code equipment which was salvaged. Brings one to realize the great strides in communications that we Probians have experienced in our lifetime.

Jim Downward still uses Morse Code from his home, using a telephone line, a modem and interface equipment. He is regularly in contact Australia wide with 40 enthusiasts all using original keys and relays.

Jim was ably assisted by Peter Shaw who displayed and operated the morse code equipment.

They were introduced by Cliff Binks and thanked by Herb Hesse.

SECRETARY

Our grateful thanks to Bob Chenery for filling in to carry out the duties of Secretary at short notice. We now have a permanent Secretary in the person of Arthur Cowling and judging by the applause, his acceptance was a popular one.

MEMBERSHIP BOOKS 1997-1998

Please check details and advise Secretary of any corrections.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Allan Dingle has accepted the task of providing us with Guest Speakers.

THE TATE FAMILY

You have no doubt heard of the Tate Family - they're everywhere!

There is DICK - TATE who wants to control everybody.

RO - TATE who tries to turn things around.

AGI - TATE who stirs up trouble and IRRI - TATE who excites to anger.

HESI - TATE and VEGE - TATE always Procrastinate.

IMI - TATE mimics everybody.

DEVAS - TATE likes to destroy things.

POTEN - TATE wants to be a big shot.

But it's FACILI - TATE, COGI - TATE AND MEDI - TATE who save the day.

Contributed by
Cliff Nievandt.

THE CASINO TRIP

On Thursday 19th June, we journeyed forth to Melbourne to visit the new Casino. Everyone kept our Club's reputations up by being in attendance well before E.T.D. and so we left at 8.30.

The coach was most comfortable and we arrived safely after seeing some new territory as we turned off the Freeway and joined the Western Ring Road. It was a bit further but there were no traffic lights to hold us up until we got over West Gate Bridge.

We were met by the reception committee at the Casino and given an idea of our next 4 hours. It is a truly magnificent building which covers a great area. We were soon surrounded by gambling tables of all types and hundreds of poker machines - the great majority of which were being used constantly. I saw one man pass over \$400 as he tried to win at Blackjack - maybe he won something in the end!!

There were many eating places and snack bars within the gambling area and a great number more out amongst the shops. These were very attractive and there were a great number of them. I priced ties at one place - they started at \$80 and went up to \$140 - I didn't buy one!! From this area it was possible to get out to the river bank and stroll along South Bank to Princes Bridge. It was altogether a most attractive area.

The main entrance was a long way from where we had entered the Casino, but it was a most attractive area with a large stairway up to the Hotel accommodation and at ground level were several areas with water spouts constantly flowing and colored lighting shining through it. There were also several Cinemas within the complex.

Some of our members were lucky enough to win something on the day, but the rest of us enjoyed paying for the privilege of just being able to attend!!

It was an excellent trip with fine weather which everyone enjoyed. Thanks Arthur for another successful chapter in your book of planned trips.

Maurice Pease.

A PROFILE

To all those relatively new members, who enjoy the fellowship of our Club, I wonder if they know who was responsible in forming our Club. He was also our first President and the person you meet each meeting with a hearty welcome and a handshake, known as our 'Badger'. He is one of the few of us who can put a name to everyone in our Club.

Ray Downey has been the driving force to form groups of people to provide fellowship and friendship in this city and beyond.

I refer to his tireless energy by his involvement in the Charter of the Rotary Club of Bendigo-Strathdale and the Probus Clubs of Corowa, Eaglehawk, Bendigo Ladies, Sandhurst, Kangaroo Flat, White Hills, and Spring Gully.

His energy could be attributed to an induced E.M.F. (Electro-motive force) due to his close association in controlling High Voltage Systems at S.E.C. installations - so here is a brief history of Ray Downey's career.

Born at Wallace near Ballarat, Ray was educated at the Wallace State School, Ballarat Junior Technical School and later the Ballarat School of Mines where he gained Diplomas in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering.

First employment was at Ronaldson Bros. and Tippett Engineering works in Ballarat from 1932-36.

In 1936 joined the S.E.C. as an electrical operator, working at Terminal Stations at Yarraville, Richmond and Brunswick and in the System control room as Assistant System Supervisor.

Transferred to the Electrical Supply Department and had a period with the Metropolitan Branch before transferring to Ballarat as Assistant Distribution Engineer. After a short period at Horsham as the first S.E.C. engineering officer, appointed to the Wimmera area (where he first met Jack Watts) was appointed

Distribution Engineer at Bendigo from 1956-59. During this period Allan Court and Ray were opening bowlers for Kennington in the Churches cricket competition.

Next move was to Mildura as Manager. It was there he joined Rotary. Four years at Mildura 1959-63 was followed for similar periods at Castlemaine and Colac before the final move back to Bendigo in 1971.

And there's more: Ray is a Past President of the then Home and Hospital for the Aged, a Council member of what was the White Hills Technical College and inaugural Treasurer of Strathaven. For his service to the Community, he was nominated as Citizen of the Year in 1987 in the then, Shire of Strathfieldsaye. As a dedicated Rotarian, he was elected District Governor for the year 1977-78. Truly a great record of community service.

TRIPS INFORMATION

THURSDAY JULY 24TH, 7.00 P.M. "MID YEAR DINNER AT TAFE BENDIGO".

Maximum (60) Current (52). (3 Course Dinner and Entertainment). At the TAFE Hospitality Restaurant, McCrae Street, Bendigo. An opportunity to sample some of the delights prepared at the TAFE Hospitality Centre. "A special, arranged for those not going North". Entertainment arranged. Cliff Binks has arranged a first class night out at reasonable cost. COST: \$17.00/person inclusive, includes a free raffle ticket. (Dinner for two - value \$33.00). Outstanding payments at July 16th meeting please.

THURSDAY AUGUST 28TH - "FLICKS OF THE FOURTIES" - CAMPBELL THEATRETTE. 7.00 p.m.: Pre show nibbles, finger foods and drinks. Film show: 8.00 . p.m.. Program includes: Newsreel, Cartoon, Documentary, Shorts, Interval - live "enter- tainment", Feature Film. (All of the 1940's era). Cliff Binks has arranged an evening at the R.L. Campbell Theatrette which is of special interest for our age group. Family members and friends invited to share the experience. A memorable and enjoyable night is assured. Maximum Bookings (156) Current (60). COST: \$6.00/person. **PAYMENTS at July 16th Meeting, also **Tickets will be issued, please collect yours.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18TH - TRIP TO MELBOURNE - VISITS/TOURS TO CARLTON BREWHOUSE AND VICTORIAN ARTS CENTRE. Max (49) Current (55). The Carlton Brewhouse and Brewery Tour (personally escorted by C.U.B. Guides), presents the old age art of brewing in an innovative and interesting way. At the Victorian Arts Centre, we again have guided tours of this modern complex which comprises three Theatres and the famous Melbourne Concert Hall. At lunch time we will be near South Gate Complex on the bank of the Yarra. Great

variety of low priced foods available, or bring your own. *Emergencies required.
COST: \$22.00/person, includes coach fare and entrance fees. PAYMENTS: July 16th Meeting please.

TRIP OF THE YEAR - FRIDY OCTOBER 10TH TO TUESDAY OCTOBER 14TH, 1997. 5 DAYS/4 NIGHTS - MARY LYNN - (MARYSVILLE). Max (46) Current (73). COST: \$300/person, includes coach, ensuite accommodation, all meals, supper, use of all resort facilities, coach tours (daily) to local attractions. Evening entertainment. **FINAL PAYMENT by August 21st meeting please.

TRIP TO POINT COOK R.A.A.F. MUSEUM AND WERRIBEE SAFARI PARK - THURSDAY NOVEMBER, 20TH 1997. Max (53). COST: \$23.00/person includes coach fare and entrance fees. LUNCH: Bring your own picnic, morning tea, and lunch. (Full details August Probe).

LISTING: At September 17th Meeting. PAYMENTS: October 15th Meeting.

**When making payments, correct money please or endorsed cheques.

Arthur Eaton.
Trips Organiser.

