



PROBE

Bulletin of the Probus Club of Bendigo



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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 Bendigo Club.

All correspondence to the Secretary, 49 Emmett Street, Golden Square, 3555.

GUEST SPEAKER at our May Meeting will be Bendigo's Superintendent of Police - Mr. Frank Fox. The subject of his address is not known but I'm sure it will be interesting.

It is with regret, and a sense of loss, that I have to record the deaths of two members, ALAN GEORGE passed away a few days prior to the April meeting and WAL FORBES a few days after. Also, regretfully, I have to advise of the sudden death of Dr John O'Connell - the son of member ALAN and ANN.

At its April Meeting the Bendigo Probus Club in its combined wisdom appointed a BADGER. The Club's first Badger is RAY DOWNIE. Perhaps someone should determine whether his appointment allows him to "hawk goods", imitate a quadruped", "pester other members", or simply "control the badges of members and their partners". Thanks for your continued help Ray.

VIETNAM! This one word still causes a flood of emotions for many affected by the conflict in that country during the 1960s and 70s.

Col BRIAN FLORENCE was an active participant in the Australian contingent that was active in Vietnam and recounted some of his memories at our last meeting.

Brian Florence's army training included a period at the School of Military Engineering and another during which he became an expert in the clearing of UXBs (Unexploded bombs).

With such a background plus command experience it was not surprising that Brian was selected to test the preparedness of the 6th Battalion before it went to Vietnam and was later sent to Vietnam to head the -

active Sapper units.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict will always be controversial. Our first conscripts by ballot formed part of the 50,000 strong force that suffered 500 deaths and 2,500 wounded and caused serious protest in Australian cities. Brian had nothing but praise for the application of the young men involved - whether conscript or volunteer.

Whether one approved of Australian involvement or not is immaterial to some of the Australian achievements. The Australian base at Nui Dat was a high security base. Contrary to US practice the natural cover was retained - no Vietnamese labour was used, and the perimeter was constantly patrolled.

The resultant high security may well have been a major reason why the Australian troops didn't lose a single battle against the Viet Cong.

In concluding - Brian also had praise for the Sappers from North Vietnam. He described these men as the elite of an army that had been fighting for independence for 35 years.

Brian was introduced by Jack Watts and thanked by Frank Budge.

TRIPS AND ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY MAY 19TH: "TRIP TO DAYLESFORD INN - AUSTRIAN NIGHT & DINNER"

Depart Strathdale Community centre at 5.45 p.m. "Austrian Band - "Oom Pa, Paa Music". COST: \$28 per person. Includes: Coach fare and dinner. COACH CAPACITY: (45) Current bookings (38).

If interested: Phone Arthur (43 9162) at earliest. I have to confirm numbers. Outstanding payments: Please pay at May 16th meeting.

"GOOD OLD DAYS" SUNDAY 17TH JUNE 1990 AT 2.00 P.M. IN THE CAPITAL

THEATRE. This is a combined Club function and the Hall has been completely booked by Probus.

Tickets will be available at this meeting at \$8 each. If you have booked a seat and cannot come please notify Allan Dingle 43 3393 so that tickets can be re-allocated, (there are 20 people on the waiting list). There is also a possibility of unsold seats from other Clubs being available.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH TO MONDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1990. (Coach Capacity 44). "TRIP TO HUNTER VALLEY/HAWKESBURY RIVER AREA/RETURN VIA BLUE MOUNTAINS" (8 days / 7 nights). COST: \$470 per person.

Includes: Coach fare, accommodation D.B.B., plus admissions. For those with definite confirmed booking, \$50 deposit / person required. Current bookings: (43) plus 10 emergencies. (If you are interested please place your name on "Emergency List", this is an ideal trip.)

TRIP TO GEELONG AREA: (LATE NOVEMBER: proposed dates) November 27th, 28th and 29th). "Three Day / 2 Night". COST: \$150 per person.

Includes: Coach fare, accommodation, D.B.B. plus entry fees.

A trip especially designed for those who prefer a shorter trip. Day 1 Bendigo - Geelong: Geelong sightseeing. Day 2: Geelong - Apollo Bay - Geelong.

TRIPS & ENTERTAINMENT Continued.

Day 3: Geelong, Port Arlington, St. Leonards, Pt. Lonsdale area and return to Bendigo. A list will be tabled at Wednesday May 16th meeting inviting bookings. If adequate support for the trip, then deposits of \$20 per person required at June meeting with final payment one month prior to trip.

A MATTER OF POLICY

Your committee - after protracted deliberation - recommends the following policy with respect to the allocation of places on a Club Activity where applications exceed vacancies.

Priority 1 - Members and their Partners.

Priority 2 - Widows of former Members; irrespective of their individual membership or otherwise to other Clubs.

Priority 3 - Prospective Members and their Partners; included on official Membership Mailing List.

Priority 4 - Members of other Probus Clubs or friends of Probians.

POLICY GUIDELINE REMARKS

1. The Club Activity Organiser be given full discretion to allocate where necessary - especially considering realities such as: late cancellations or activity not appearing to fill to capacity, etc.
2. Activity bookings may either be made by:-
 - (a) Registering name on list tabled at meeting, or
 - (b) Contacting Activity Organiser following publication of Activity in "Probe". (This applies only if Member cannot attend meeting).
3. Acceptance of bookings for activity will be in order of receipt - subject to priority rating as above, and Remarks Item 1 above.
4. Emergency Listings - as for Remarks Item 3 above.
5. In rare cases of insufficient time to publish activity in "Probe", Activity Organiser and / or Members to "ring-around". The Activity Organiser gives full discretion to application of above Priority Policy; realising under these rare instances, that a time pressure situation could be dominant.
6. Listings to be sorted according to above priority until alphabetical listings prepared (usually after first meeting at which list is tabled); further bookings are then to be separately accepted in order of receipt and at the discretion of Activity Organiser.

The latest and most ambitious tour arranged by Arthur Eaton was to Hong Kong and Singapore.

We had 4½ days in Hong Kong and 4 in Singapore, and in this short time a great deal was seen.

One feature which came out first-class was the hotel accommodation, the Royal Pacific in Hong Kong and Pan Pacific in Singapore, both new buildings and both absolutely superb for most of us I think.

The supreme experience was on the last evening in Hong Kong when we took a Dinner Cruise on the harbour in M.V. Pearl of the Orient.

The sight, as we slowly cruised around, of Hong Kong island all lit up like the most immense Christmas tree, and their reflections in the rippling waters is unforgettable. Part of the cruise took us close to Kai Tak airport, where we saw a jet take off close enough to the water's edge for the lights again to be seen reflected in the water.

Another experience, this time in Singapore, was a visit to Sentosa Island. We travelled over the narrow strait between the two islands by cable car and returned by ferry. On the island a Monorail took us around to see the century old Fort Sentosa with underground tunnels, ammunition bunkers, gun emplacements and so on.

We also saw History World which portrays the history of Singapore from the arrival of the British; also Surrender Chamber, recording the surrender of the island at the fall of Singapore, and the surrender of the Japanese in their turn.

Besides these events we went by hydrofoil from Hong Kong to Macau and then into Zhongshan country in China; We took a trip from Singapore over the causeway to Malaysia and Kukup fishing village. We went on the Peak Tramway up Victoria Peak, seeing the panorama of Hong Kong Central, the harbour and across to Kowloon. We shuttled back and forth on the Star ferries to Hong Kong, and back to Kowloon (in Singapore). We had a tour of Chinatown, Little India and Arab Street, besides visiting the Botanical Gardens. We also took a bus to Stanley on the seaward side of Hong Kong island.

So much seen in so short a time, we were all in need of a rest when we got back to Bendigo.

Congratulations Arthur on a magnificent effort. (ALEC CROTHERS).

BARMAH FOREST TRIP

After an uneventful drive to Barmah we continued through the open red-gum forest to our first significant stop at the Dharnya Centre. This centre is controlled by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.

The modern building that forms the display centre contains a variety of exhibits including a number of aboriginal artifacts. Of particular interest was a bark canoe. The minimal freeboard of these craft was a surprise.

Also at the centre were cleverly constructed displays showing how the rivers of the area had changed direction over time. Other aboriginal and wild-life displays are also available.

Lunch on the bank of the mighty Murray was followed by the arrival of our afternoon transport - the M.V. Discovery - which nosed ashore, lowered a short gangplank and we were away.

Our captain gave us a guided tour back to Echuca with a full commentary on historical sites and events including a possible explanation for the taste of C.U.B. products - John Elliott has pumping rights at one point.

Quote of the day - Ralph Michel on seeing the wreck of the Barmah Punt, "I wouldn't punt on that!" Thanks again Arthur.