



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 this month's meeting will be Mrs. Phee Broadway of Castlemaine. Mrs. Broadway will be known by many as the Manager of the Castlemaine State Festival.

At our August meeting members were advised of the resignation of Phil Harper. I anticipate the induction of Jack Rose at this next meeting.

Also in August we had the pleasure of listening to a man of vision, and I would confidently predict that the vision of Sgt. Kel Forrest of the Victorian Police Force will go a long way.

Kel, who received a glowing introduction has had the foresight to apply the computer to his particular area of work and thus improve efficiency.

Early experience with computers came through community involvement - namely fund-raising for the Strathfieldsaye Community Hall. From this experience Kel could see that computer application to stolen property detail could save time and effort.

With this in mind he approached various insurance companies which donated \$3,000 for the purchase of a small computer and complementary software.

After a great deal of experimentation Kel produced a system that allowed colleagues to replace a "mountain of paperwork" by an entry into the system, or a quick search to attempt to match retrieved goods with rightful owners.

Although scepticism was the initial reaction to this initiative it is now "the system" in Bendigo as it has been shown that more goods are being returned to owners, that more thieves are being caught and that

the system thus saves money as well as time.

To help this system - or any other for that matter - it is recommended that you know your property well - keep serial numbers where appropriate and photographs of valuable jewelry.

Members noted that lack of funding could prevent the local system being more universally used.

In response to questions members were advised that the bulk of crime related to burglary and theft and that personal crime was minimal despite press reports. Personal crime was said to be most prevalent at a domestic level.

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme was praised by Kel as he said that it ensured that Police were both "better and earlier" informed of unusual events in a designated area. Community members had to know their neighbours better and thus could detect the unusual.

In response to questions relating to drug use Kel told members that there had been a decline in drug use following the peak period of the early '80s. However usage was again on the increase. He also stated his belief that the greatest problem associated with drug use was the corruption that inevitably occurred as a result.

Kel was introduced by Jim Aitken and thanked by Alf Grierson.

EXTRACT FROM ISSUE No. 3 OF JULY 1985.

"By joining this Club we have all accepted the proposition that our minds need the constant stimulation of contact with men whose lives revolved in the circles common to us all".

TRIPS AND ENTERTAINMENT

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH TO MONDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH: (8 Days / 7 Nights).

TRIP TO HUNTER VALLEY/HAWKESBURY RIVER/SYDNEY/RETURN VIA BLUE MOUNTAINS:

Travelling with Houlden's Tours. Departure at 7.30 a.m. From: Strathdale Community Centre Crook St. (Monday Sept 17th).

"Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable trip".

TUESDAY OCTOBER 23RD: TRIP TO DANDENONGS-OLINDA RHODODENDRON GARDENS

WILLIAM RICKETTS SANCTUARY. Cost: \$16.00 / person. Includes:

Coach Fare and entrances to both attractions. Suggest: Take own Picnic Lunch/Thermos, etc. Snack Lunches will be available at Rhododendron Gardens. Coach Capacity (48), currently full.

Emergencies (30). Depart From: Strath Community Centre, Crook St.

Depart at: 7.30 a.m.. PAYMENTS TODAY'S MEETING PLEASE.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 27TH, WED. 28TH. THURSDAY 29TH. (3 Days / 2 Nights).

TRIP TO GEELONG AREA. Cost: \$150.00 / person. Includes: Coach

Fare, Accommodation, D.B.B. plus entry fees. Especially designed for those who prefer a shorter trip. Day 1. Bendigo to Geelong & sightseeing. Day 2. Geelong to Apollo Bay and return to Geelong (excellent Scenery, beautiful coastline). Day 3. Geelong to Port Arlington, St. Leonards, Pt. Lonsdale Areas and return to Bendigo. Accommodation: At Beuna Vista Motel, Geelong, hosts Errin & John Tigerwood (including concert hour with "Songs of Old with John".

Coach (48). Current Bookings (38). *** VACANCIES EXIST ***.
Deposits: Now due \$20.00 / person. FINAL PAYMENT: (One month prior to date of travel - payments to Houldens).

Good Old Days - Sunday 16th December, Please mark it in your Diary.
STH. PACIFIC PROBUS - "91 RENDEZVOUS - BAROSSA VALLEY STH. AUST.

THURSDAY APRIL 18TH TO SUNDAY APRIL 21ST (INCL) 1991 - 4 Day / 3 Nights.

Cost: \$255.00 / person. Includes: Coach Fare, Accommodation (Twin Share), Bed & Breakfast, (Entry). Note: The Bendigo Ladies Probus Club is arranging the trip and currently has vacancies for 10 couples. A list seeking expressions of interest will be tabled at meeting and these will be passed on to Gwen Bloomfield. (39 5399).

THREE NOTABLE EVENTS

Arranged the lives of Bendigo Probians this month. Frist was a visit to the new H.M. Lodden Valley Prison; not as a guest of Her Maj. (one has to qualify for that), but as a citizen who, one way or another is footing the bill for this very modern 'Office of Correction'.

At first glance some hackles would rise that such 'luxury' was being made available to accommodate malefactors for whom the community has little sympathy (the Media has done its bit to foster this impression). But if one starts to see it as a prison with the gloom and dirt removed where prisoners are considered to be human beings and not animals of the lowest order it is easy to see what the authorities are aiming at - Rehabilitation.

Firstly, a prisoner does not go direct from Court to Castlemaine. He has to demonstrate that he can 'take it' by serving an Apprenticeship in Pentridge or some other such House of Horror. When it is considered that he has a good chance of picking up his life and joining the community at large as an honest citizen he will be given the chance to do so - at Castlemaine, where he will serve the latter part of his sentence. Here he will be introduced - perhaps for the first time in his life - to the great joys of honest work.

The emphasis at the new prison will be Work; every prisoner will work for seven hours a day. Not soul-deadening tasks like sewing mail bags or cracking rocks in the old-fashioned way, but work activity in which he can take pride and which, hopefully, may fit him for a job outside. To simulate a normal work-day in many cases the prisoner will be provided with a cut-lunch.

A labourer is worthy of his hire. For his days work he will be paid an amount between \$5 and \$7 out of which will be deducted 20% to form 'a purse' to carry him into the world on his 'retirement'. The remainder he may dispose of as he pleases. The amount will be unlikely to be sufficient to sustain a thriving heroin habit but if he has spendthrift tendencies he may blow it at the gaol shop on some little luxuries not provided in the regular curriculum.

But for all that, in the mind of a resident of H.M. LVP a prison is a prison is a prison and when the day's work is over and he has eaten

his meal prepared in the immaculate kitchen and served on the laminex table; when he has had his game of Pool or Carpet Bowls and the clock strikes 8.00 pm comes time for meditation or a TV session in his self-contained 'apartment'. As the solid steel door with the formidable locks and the small peep hole to ride him of his privacy slams shut behind him he will realise that he is, indeed, 'in the Clink'.

It is a brave new world in corrective services and, far from knocking it, let us all hope that Castlemaine Gaol (as it is bound to be called) will return to the community many hundreds of useful citizens who will never again see the inside of any sort of prison. In that case it will be money well spent.

ITEM TWO was an exercise in Fellowship when we demonstrated the value of Probus as we mingled with fellow-Probians from Forest Hills (and, by coincidence, from Moorabbin), for lunch at Bendigo Pottery. After our 'play-lunch' (it was BYO), and Kath Eaton had done her bit for Bendigo by describing the joys of life in the City of Gold and Dragons to a group of visitors Ken Hesse conducted a veritable potted Cook's Tour of the district as Guide and Mentor on the visiting bus. An experience enjoyed by all who were able to attend.

BENDIGO TELECOM was the venue for our third event when a large group of members, wives and friends were transported into the bewildering world of advanced electronics.

Here we learned that all telephone signals coming via satellite from ground stations, (and some off-shore installations), all over Australia were routed through Bendigo. This amazing system made it possible for a mining company operating in the Simpson Desert to conduct a three-way Conference with it's principal office in any city. Six men controlled the system in Bendigo!

In a whole world of sophisticated buttons, flashing lights and busy computers, (some 'talking' to each other!), the thing that impressed your scribe most was to be handed a small length of fibre about the thickness of the thinnest fishing line and to be told that two of these fibres, acting as a pair, can relay 8,000 telephone conversations simultaneously. The mind boggles!

One could go on - but space and the patience of the Editor does not permit.

Suffice it to say that the visit should open the door for visits to many other surprises available right here in Bendigo.

REG V. BROCK.

(Thanks Reg - Ed.)