



# THE TIMES

**They have changed**

**Edition Number 211 May 2020**

Hamilton Probus Club Inc. 56018 Accredited 14 December 1990

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## **President`s Report: April 2020**

### **GENERAL MEETINGS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

*Another* month has passed and we have not been able to meet or participate in any outings. I was looking forward to my year in the chair but it is not to be. I hope that later in the year we will be able to meet again and go on that trip to Pomona.

I puzzled how to keep in touch and thought of The Bulletin. Soon after PSPL circulated clubs with the same idea. They urged us to stay in contact with other members and I urge you to make calls to club members. I have had some great chats with some and everyone seems to enjoy a yarn

I hope you are finding The Bulletin interesting. I have not included club news as that is for Douglas to include in The Times. The Bulletin will end as soon as we can meet again. Thank you to those who have contributed. We all have interesting stories from our past. I love Neil Peters` poems. Thank you Elizabeth-Anne for giving me his book. Please keep the contributions coming.

Stay well and do what your children tell you. Stay at home and wash your hands.

**Barry Henzell**

## Secretary's Report – May 2020:

Good morrow all. Let us hope that the turbulent times in which we find ourselves come to an end sooner rather than later.

Bear with me. As follow-up in respect of my remarks relating to the Covid 19 virus appearing in the April Newsletter, I make a couple of further observations.

As most of us are already aware, when incidence in our population of infection with the organism, as determined by blood (serological) testing, is plotted against time, the resulting curve is bell-shaped, which is not necessarily symmetrical. Of greater importance is the related, and possibly similar curve, which plots incidence of individual recovery against time. Those in the population who have recovered probably have an acquired immunity to the virus, although, as far as I know, this is not yet reliably confirmed or measurable.

When cohort or population immunity reaches 'critical mass' i.e. when numbers of immune individuals equal or exceed the number still vulnerable to infection, the infection rates will begin to fall and the 'bell curve' will peak and then begin its downward slope. The numbers of individuals the virus is capable of infecting diminishes.

Our Prime Minister has established regulations which we trust will effectively reduce the rate at which infections occur. This happening will 'flatten' the curve and extend the time taken for the incidence of infection to peak and then return to zero, The time taken for all of this to happen is as yet unpredictable, as has already been pointed out elsewhere.

**Of great importance is that an extended but flatter curve might well reduce the pressure on available effective medical care which may be required in the treatment of the critically ill.**

I fear we are in for the long haul, maybe 2 to 4 months or even considerably longer. Regrettably the collateral damage – economic, commercial, and mental health issues resulting – will require a much longer recovery time, and maybe all of this will result in some changes for the better as together we contemplate the future. I shall leave you all to fill in the blanks.

For our well-being, continuing social interaction is of great importance. We continue to communicate, and I commend the Club website to you for perusal. The addition of a Pet Picture Gallery is noteworthy. I am sure John Wright our webmaster would welcome more photographs.

As promised in previous editions of this missive, please find two more of the Ten Commandments for Reducing Stress:-

**No. 6** - Thou shalt schedule time for thyself and thy support network.

**No. 9** – Thou shalt not even feel guilty.

Let us hope that by the time of publication of the June Newsletter there is at least a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel through which we are currently travelling.

Stay well, stay safe, and stay in touch.

**Signed :-** *JBlackford* (Secretary)

**Date:-** 5<sup>th</sup>. April 2020

### **2020 Committee:**

President: Barry Henzell

Immediate Past President: Margot Kirby

Treasurer: Greg McGilvery

Secretary: John Blackford

Membership: Barbara Fitzell

Activities: Anne Gooley

Data Administration: John Wright

Times Editor: Douglas Fussell

Guest Speakers: David McEvoy

### **2020 Members of the Lower House:**

Almoner :Leafy Fussell

10 Min Speaker :Barry Aubrey

Archivist : Anne Gooley

Humour: David McEvoy- temporary

### **General Meeting Workers: [currently unemployed]**

Hospitality/kitchen: Pam Cole

Audio Visual/ Room Setup: Brian Springthorpe, David McEvoy, George McKennariey, John Comerford and advisor John Ladbrook.

### **May birthdays: Members and Non Active Members:**

Alf Cavallaro [02] Liz Duguid [02] Tony Hall [05] Dudley Dick [14]

Roy Moore [19] John Walsh [29]



### Membership Report:

*Due to the current situation, we have not experienced any movement in the membership.*

*Stay home, stay safe, wash your hands and keep in touch by phone or email.*

*We will get through this and then we can all meet again with stories of how we filled in our time whilst isolated.*

*Barbara*

### From the Database Administrator:

The database is the source used to produce the Membership Lists that are provided to members periodically. Therefore, it goes without saying that if the information in the database is incorrect, the information on the Membership Lists will also be incorrect.

As we all rely on the Membership Lists to assist us with maintaining contact with each other, and especially during the period of isolation due to the COVID-19 situation, it would be appreciated if any changes or corrections to your residential address, telephone number/s or email address be advised as early as possible by email to [ham.probus.records@gmail.com](mailto:ham.probus.records@gmail.com) Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

**From the Webmaster:** The Probus Pet Basket now has 12 fine looking pets comprising 9 dogs and 3 cats. Thank you for those members who sent in the photographs of your special friend. These photographs will remain on the website, [hamiltonprobus.com.au](http://hamiltonprobus.com.au), under the "Galleries" section until the end of the year. If you have not done so already It is not too late to send in your contribution, just a photograph and the pets name is all that is required.

Your latest Times Newsletters will continue to be uploaded onto the website under "Newsletters".

### **John Wright**

**Activities Report May 2020:** Welcome to this edition of the Activities Report which has no activities to report! I am sure this is a first in the history of our club. Our busy, productive lives are now strangely quiet as we adjust to this social distancing. I am pleased that the term has changed from social isolation as there are so many ways we can connect with friends and loved ones, and this is our challenge.

How are you holding up? I have discovered a new technology tool, Zoom, and this has provided the opportunity for me to link up with my daughter in Perth. She is now working from home and so is my son-in-law so my grand-dogs are very happy. They cannot believe their luck!!

On Good Friday we linked up with some friends using Zoom for a virtual Fish and Chips party. For many years we have spent Good Friday watching the start of the Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht race, and after our walk, we would have Fish and Chips on the beach. It was enjoyable to chat together and forget we were in different parts of Brisbane.

I have enjoyed catching up on my reading, which includes listening to audio books and downloading e books. This has solved the problem now that the libraries have closed. I am also enjoying listening to music and value having Spotify and my little Bose speaker. I am a member of 4MBS and enjoy the beautiful music they broadcast. I cannot miss the opportunity to mention Wednesday mornings from 8.00 am to 10.00 am when you can listen to Light and Bright which our member Dr David McAvoy broadcasts. It is always a delight.

I hope you are looking after yourselves as that is the best thing you can do at present. I do miss all of you and our gathering together but we will have a party when this is past. Elizabeth Duguid, one of our lovely new members has suggested that we make a note of where we have placed our membership badges so that we can find them when we start again and that time will come I am sure in a few months.

There is now more time for reflection. Life is so fragile so we need to appreciate and tell our family and friends how much we love them. I have included below a photo I took on my phone on this beautiful autumn day. The sky is so blue so I hope it makes you happy to see it and forget some of the turmoil. **Anne**



Our Little Book  
Margot Kirby

Corner: thanks to

**The Mirror and the Light** by Hilary Mantel closes the trilogy she began with *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies*. She traces the final years of Thomas Cromwell, the boy from nowhere who climbs to the heights of power, of predator and prey – of creating a modern nation. A great author.

**The Yellow Bird Sings** by Jennifer Rosner, depicts the enduring connection between parent and child – Poland 1941. Unforgettable characters and a multi-layered plot, Rosner shows how both silence and music can become symbols of hope and survival. A mother and her child-prodigy daughter struggle to survive the Holocaust by telling stories and remembering the power of music. It is appearing on the prize lists.

Club Annual Subscriptions are now due [\$30.00]. Payment can be by direct debit or by cheque, cash. Payment by direct debit is preferable-please give your name.

Guest Speakers – Dates to be confirmed:

Biology and Conservation of Moreton Bay Seabirds. Dr. Peter Rothilsberg.

The Queensland Ballet, the progressive leap forward. Mr. Paul Boyd.

Riverboat cruising on the Murray. Captain Lindsay Hutton.

Please Note:

Do you have an interesting story that you would like us to know? Now is your chance. Perhaps talking to an audience is not your thing but telling it through The Times or The Bulletin might be. We would be interested to hear from you. Copy needs to be received by 15<sup>th</sup> of any month for The Times, Douglas Fussell, Editor [dandl.fussell@gmail.com](mailto:dandl.fussell@gmail.com) or contact [bmhenzell@gmail.com](mailto:bmhenzell@gmail.com) for The Bulletin.

**The Quiz:** Sadly there will be no Quiz this year.

### Letters to the Editor:

Dear Editor,

I refer to your request to supply an appropriate 'Letter' to maintain viability of this recently suggested column.

I wonder - is our dear Editor a little lonely in these uneasy times? He has no right to be. He has an adoring and beautiful wife of many years standing and has recently acquired a puppy as well – what greed! I digress.

For the life of me, sir, I could find no material worthy of highlight, comment or criticism such is the consistent and high quality of our Newsletter publication.

Instead I offer an article outlining an incident in which I was involved several years ago, and which is entirely appropriate to Anzac Day in these troubled times.

Sincerely,

*John Blackford*

Date :- 22<sup>nd</sup>. April 2020

### John Blackford`s Unforgettable Event:

This incident was totally unexpected and was completely unrehearsed.

Several years ago, I was a Watch leader aboard my beloved ship “**South Passage**”. It was the morning of Anzac Day and we were two days into a four-day voyage with a bunch of Year 10 Secondary School kids - around twenty kids in all.

Picture the scene, if you will.

We were anchored up in the channel tucked in behind the wrecks, a few metres off Tangalooma Beach.

Dawn was just breaking. The tide had peaked and the water surface in the channel was 'glassed out'. There was a fine grey-white milky early morning mist rising and ever so gently swirling around the hull of our ship, at and well beyond the waterline.

Our young charges had just begun to 'surface' in expectation of what lay ahead for the day – bless them!

Some were fiddling looking for items of lost clothing, others queued to access the heads. A few hungry souls were in the galley gently cajoling and encouraging cook to serve breakfast – hunger in groups such as these is a very common phenomenon. Those on duty watch were on the after deck at the helm assiduously polishing brass. Noise levels and conversations on board were beginning to rise.

Suddenly, on the tick of 06.00 hours, the breaking dawn was pierced by the first two notes of the “**Last Post**” – perfect pitch and with extraordinarily expressive sonority. One of our students, a very accomplished brass instrumentalist, had picked up our ship’s bugle – a somewhat battered humble and simple keyless brass instrument. He stood at the top of the companion way between after deck and galley.

A sudden, respectful and absolute hush enveloped the ship and its company.

Said student’s performance was absolutely flawless and had an intangible extra dimension – the stuff of which unanimous standing ovations are made. As the final prolonged note – at an interval of a third above the octave of the keynote – faded imperceptibly and completely into the emerging dawn, the hushed silence continued for a further several seconds, after which sound and activity ever so gradually returned, albeit in a more subdued form.

To have been a part of this experience on that occasion was an immense privilege and honour, and something that will remain etched into my memory for the rest of time. The “**Last Post**” when played on Anzac Day now, has even more significance following that event, than it ever had previously.

I am sure our young people will “Never Forget”.

Signed:-..... *FJBlackford* – White Watch Leader/ Secretary, Hamilton Probus

Date :- 22<sup>nd</sup>. April 2020

## The Comerford Files



## TALGAI STATION

Talgai Homestead at Allora is a Heritage listed homestead, having been Heritage listed on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1992. It was designed by architect Richard George Suter for Pastoralist and Politician George Clark, and built in 1868. The substantial sandstone homestead was originally known as the East Talgai, to distinguish it from the West Talgai, which was built by Charles Clark, George's brother. Old Talgai was the second of 3 Talgai's. Old Talgai was first taken up by Ernest Elphinstone Dalrymple in 1840. He was one of the first of a wave of European settlers, including the Gammie Brothers, who drove stock up from New South Wales, to the Darling Downs, following advice from Alan Cunningham who had recently in 1827 discovered and explored the Darling Downs, and who saw the potential of the new-found land. Dalrymple died in 1844. The land was sub-divided: the northern part became North Toolburra. Clark and Hammer acquired Old Talgai which became a well-known merino stud. George and Charles settled on Talgai in 1865: Charles took up the Old Talgai in the west, and built Ellinthorpe Hall. George took up East Talgai in 1874, and built the magnificent Talgai Homestead, large woolshed and many outbuildings: Quite a village. The homestead was of 60 squares, the surrounding verandahs built of hand and pit sawn spotted gum. Other features included a shingled roof, cedar doors and architraves and several chimneys. The kitchen was separate from the house. George and Ellen lived an affluent life. The house was richly furnished with many antique pieces. Wine grapes were planted together with fruit trees in

the garden. George was involved in local affairs and in Queensland Politics, as well as the Warwick hospital, and the Royal Agricultural Society. George died in 1907 and ownership of the property passed to son George Carr Clark, who sold off 5,000 acres between 1860 and 70. The station was a most successful sheep stud, and produced a large wool clip. At its peak there were 20,000 sheep and 3,000 Devon cattle on the property.

## Talgai Skull

The Talgai Skull was discovered on Talgai Homestead area in 1886, by a shearer and fencing contractor William Naish, embedded in the wall of Darymple Creek. It was cleaned and kept in the homestead until 1896 when it was sent to the Sydney Museum, which offered to purchase it. The offer was rejected, and the skull stayed in the Talgai Homestead until in 1914 a Professor Edgeworth David, Professor of Archaeology visited the homestead. He immediately recognised it as an important missing link in the evolutionary antiquity of humans in Australia. The skull is now in the Sydney Museum.

### FOOTNOTE

My late father Joseph Richard Comerford), who was a farmer at Nobby, Darling Downs, purchased a one square mile (640 acres) of old Talgai from a butcher in Clifton (Mr Brown, who had 2 sons and a daughter) in 1940.

**John Cleese:** "I`m not advocating uncontrolled panicking. If you panic for more than a couple of hours, you will exhaust yourself and you may well not have energy to panic later, when you really feel you have to. So try about 20 minutes at 11am, and then another spell at 6pm."

### *A Trip Down Memory Lane - Jack Larkin's Story*

Since I took on the role of the Archivist, I believed that it was important to record stories of our members, particularly those who have been in the club for some considerable time, as their contribution to the success of the club should be recognised, so I started A Trip Down Memory Lane, not only to be recorded in the Archives but to be published in The Times. We seldom have the opportunity at meetings to talk about our lives and I consider that everyone has a story to tell and I love hearing about the interesting lives of our members. There are so many wonderful stories and I look forward to giving you the opportunity to read them in our Newsletters.

Jack has made a considerable contribution to the success of our club. He was Secretary from 2013 – 2015, Treasurer in 2018 and was instrumental in seeing that our club recorded its history.

This is just part of Jack’s narrative, but it highlights his recognition early in life of the importance of family, friendship, education and work ethic. *Anne Gooley*

## EDUCATION, OCCUPATION, POPULATION

How I Moved from a Boy to a Professional Engineer

By Jack Larkin

### PREAMBLE

The key words for the title of my writings are Education, Occupation and Population. But, underlying all this there is the precursor to such thinking as home life where I was prepared for entering a long and satisfying life. Precursors that come to mind include:

- A good home where food, shelter, clothing, and good health are fostered.
- An expectation that one would take on a full education, realise full employment and become self-sufficient.
- The gathering of friends, finding a partner in life partner and raising a family.
- Maintaining a high standard of personal behaviour.
- Seeking to fully self-actualise.
- Realise a lifetime mantra of “people work with me, not for me”.

Whilst Education. Occupation and Population are obvious paths to follow, the people link underlies it all. Nothing can be achieved without the interaction of people. One hopes, in a work environment, emerging talent is both recognised and utilised.

This is a story of the life of John (aka Jack) Larkin, born on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1933 in Murwillumbah. It tracks his life from 1939-1954, a period when he was educated at school and college, backed up by substantial work experience. During this time, he lived in the town of Corrimal, a suburb of the City of Greater Wollongong. By a process of Education, Occupation and Population (i.e. exposure to people in the workplace) he rose from a skinny, immature and relatively shy boy to a high achieving engineer in the development of high capital cost projects in mining and metals around Australia and overseas.

The Illawarra region (where the mountain meets the sea) comprised a growing area with many suburbs defined by their beachside location set between rocky headlands. Significant coal reserves were found in the mountain side. Whilst there had been agricultural and timber activity, these faded over time due to the growth of mining and metallurgical enterprises. Excellent port facilities were available at Port Kembla. As the impact of world war two subsided, there was an influx of immigrants from the United Kingdom and Europe. Australia was in a strong growth period and infrastructure projects abounded. These demanded skilled labour whose influx changed the culture status quo decidedly from British to a more broadly based version. I met many people who grasped firmly opportunities available to them. It was an exciting time and presented huge opportunities to people, people such as me.

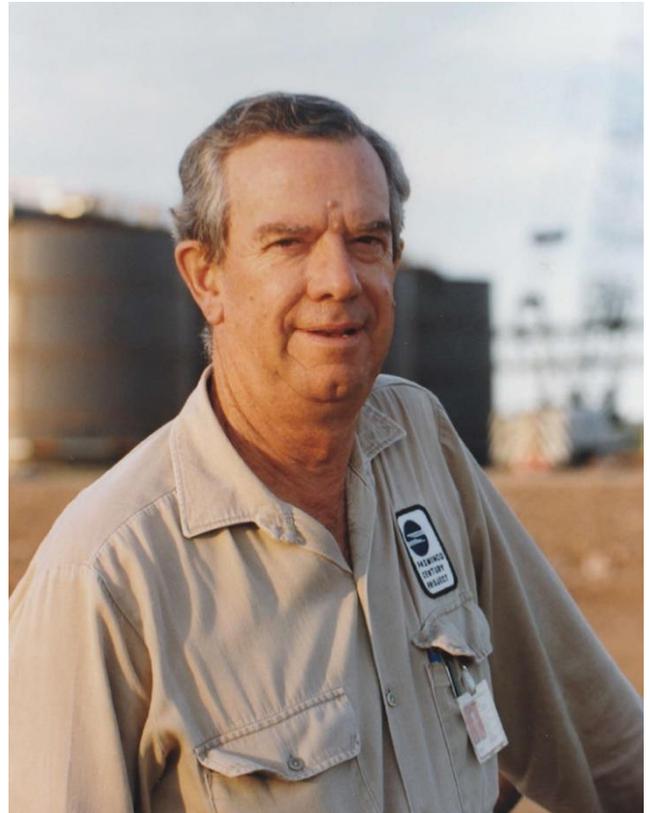
## EDUCATION

Corrimal Primary School 1939 to 1944 Discovering Life Outside the Family Home

I started in the lower school and learnt that walking was a significant part of living. There was no option. This public school was located on the eastern side of Princes Highway, the main road from Wollongong to all points north. The Catholic School was located on the western side of the highway, directly opposite. It was literally a case of 'east is east, and west is west and never the 'twain shall meet'. This was a time of free milk each day and vaccinations. It was a happy and non-threatening environment. The 'big' school was a different matter. The teaching was a more serious learning experience. Spelling can be learnt but good writing is a different challenge, one that I have never conquered. My grade 5 teacher, Phoebe Anderson, recognised my potential and being worthy of encouragement. She recommended reading outside the curriculum, supported by the Encyclopaedia Britannica we had at home. World war two had an influence on our learning with making camouflage nets, knitting quilt squares, learning Morse code and flag semaphore, as well as which side of the trench to lie during an air raid. I left this school well able to read, write and do arithmetic. I narrowly missed being school dux for 1944.

Wollongong High School 1945 to 1949. Advancing through Adolescence

Travel to school now as walk, entrain and walk again, both ways. Secondary school options were limited for a 5-year curriculum. Technical and Home Science options offered 3-year periods only. I spent the first 3 years in the A class but was downgraded to the B class for the last 2 years. My basic subjects were English, French with an oral content as an option, two mathematics subjects and finally chemistry and physics. In earlier years I studied Latin, which was a struggle but useful in later life, history and music. These last two years were life changing for me. I was young compared to my peers and certainly a late developer. My result for



English was poor and physics was worse. So, year 5 became a perform or perish time. I abandoned poetry in English, it being a prerequisite to obtain an A in this subject. Pickwick Papers was the book and Macbeth the Shakespearean play to study. I enjoyed reading and internalising the content to such a degree that I gained an A result after all. Physics was my next challenge. After 4 successive exam failures, I scrambled a B result, as I did in all other subjects, including an oral in French.

During this late high school period, I established ways to aid study outcomes. Firstly, I found my circadian cycle was early in the day. So, I would rise at 4.00am and make a cup of coffee from a small tin of Nescafe, yes in 1949! I would study hard then until time to prepare for the day at school. I also found it sensible to allocate time periods to each question. If I was not able to complete, or found I was on the wrong track, I would write a note in my paper advising I was in trouble but then writing what I would do, time being available. It worked.

#### Wollongong Technical College 1950 to 1954 Becoming an Engineer

I matriculated with ongoing study at Sydney University available. But this was not affordable, so I was accepted by the BHP plant (Australian Iron and Steel) at Port Kembla as a Trainee Mechanical Engineer. Metallurgy was an option but my decision for engineering was a good one for me. Traineeship involved completing a 5-year Diploma at the Wollongong Technical College, whilst practical training at the very large iron and steel making complex. 'Tech' provided night lectures from 6.00 to 9.00pm plus one full day every second week. Work commenced with a four-year fitting and turning apprenticeship, followed by experience in instrumentation as well as plant water and gas services. The last year was spent in the drawing Office. Being away from the adolescence of school, study at College was amongst adults who came from trade or draughting experience and wanted to improve their pay arrangements by obtaining tertiary qualification. I were accepted into the group and there were even times when help was asked of me when problems with understanding arose. Being part of this work and study scheme, there were no College social links beyond the lecture contacts. A big advantage of the traineeship was the interaction of study content and application of such in the field. Another major point was the interaction of Education, Occupation with Population, i.e. the people involvement. Increasingly, one assessed the value of contributions made by the individual in the workforce. When leadership comes, people selection and development come to bear strongly. One's experience, over time is invaluable.

#### Summary

There is much that can be written about my occupation as a fully qualified engineer. Experience in construction, design, project management, occupational health and safety management, study management and importantly people management. There was even an opportunity to work closely with the Waanyi, Minginda, Ghuthaarn and Kukach people in the Queensland Gulf Country. My plan would be in future to focus on the first and the last major project appointments. The first was an iron making facility at Kwinana, WA and the second, the Century Zink Mine north of Mount Isa.

## Anzac Day 2020:

While Anzac Day will not have had the same ring to it this year- no bands or cheering crowds in the city. I expect many will have raised their glasses to the “Boys of the Old Brigade”



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11066.001

Editor`s father with periscope Quinn`s Post Gallipoli August 1915

