

# The Times

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Hamilton Probus Club Inc. 56018 Accredited 14 December 1990

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## Hamilton Probus President's report November 2020

We have been able to have our first meeting for the year. The meeting was held at our new venue, St Colomb's Hall in Clayfield. We were forced to move from Merriwee Court, a hall in a nursing home, because of the COVID restrictions. Merriwee Court served us well for 30 years.

St. Colomb's is a larger hall seating up to 120, an increase from 86 at Merriwee Court. The hall is equipped with good audio-visual facilities. Some complained of difficulty hearing. We will investigate this. At the moment we are still restricted to 35 attendees. Hopefully, this will change after the election.

Club activities are starting again. Coffee mornings are well attended and enjoyed by all. John Wright is organising a walking group. At the moment this is planned for the morning of the third Wednesday. The walks are not strenuous so please join us for a ferry trip, walk and coffee.

As we near year's end there will not be many other activities. The trip to Pomona was most enjoyable. The Christmas lunch on 14<sup>th</sup> December will be a celebration of thirty years since the club started on that day in 1990.

Our membership numbers have dropped during the COVID closure. We welcomed two new members at the last meeting and plan two more in November. We still have quite a number on the waiting list to join in coming months.

I look forward to having a full attendance at meetings. In the meantime, stay safe and keep well.

**Barry Henzel**

## **Hamilton Probus Secretary`s Report–November2020**

*We are “live” again! Our first General Meeting since March 2020 was held at our new venue, St. Colomb’s Anglican Church Hall, Clayfield, on 6<sup>th</sup>. October 2020. Thirty -five Members attended, and it was clearly evident that all were very happy to re-establish contact.*

*Our new venue is quite different from Merriwee Court. We have more space; the building is younger and more modern and has an incorporated and dedicated up-to-date audio-visual system. The acoustics of the auditorium space are a little different as well. Catering facilities serve the purpose well. As expected a few ‘teething’ problems were encountered but I consider none of those to be insoluble. With the Hall able to accommodate up to 120 people, we have the option of increasing our Membership numbers a little once Covid restrictions are lifted.*

*At the General Meeting during consideration of General Business, from the floor, a Member expressed concern about the sustainability and viability of our Club into the future, acknowledging the effect continuing restrictions are likely to have. In response I wish to make several observations :-*

- a) I am comfortable with the view that the restrictions that remain in place provide some degree of protection from Covid infection for our age group. We are particularly vulnerable*
- b) As tenants we are bound by those regulations which are determined and administered by our landlord – in this case St. Colomb’s Anglican Church, through the Rector, Rev. Iain Moore*
- c) Currently, as tenants, we make no contribution to this policy-making process*
- d) I hold the view that there is likely to be a gradual but progressive lifting of restrictions over the next few months so that our meeting attendances can increase (as will revenue)*
- e) Outings and other activities in which Members are able to participate will also continue to expand. This, I believe, will be an important part of the adaptive process which will sustain our Club into the future, whatever the future proves to be . In summary, I do not think that the sustainability and viability of our Club is seriously threatened.*

*These and other related matters will be discussed comprehensively at our next Management Committee Meeting in mid- October.*

*I look forward to seeing many of you again at our next General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>. Nov. 2020.*

**Signed :-** *FJ Blackford (Secretary)*  
October 2020

**Date :-** 8<sup>th</sup>.

## **Down Memory Lane - Fiona Bekkers**

Boarding school in the thirties and forties here in Brisbane was still somewhat Victorian in outlook and practice, and based on the English model even to the midnight feasts of schoolgirl fiction being the order of the day, and the boarders at least being protected from the outside world to a degree unknown nowadays. Two Saturdays and one mid-term weekend we were allowed to escape with accredited friends and relatives, who would collect and return us by a stipulated time.

By modern dietary standards, our meals contained too many carbohydrates, but we were certainly adequately if not lavishly fed. One could have butter or jam on bread, but not both and clean plates were compulsory even to the dreaded mashed pumpkin. Woe betide anyone who attempted to slide disliked food onto another's plate. The Senior at our table, more frightening than any staff member, could dispense instant punishment.

The school was ruled by two ladies of great presence and charm, the elder of whom would sweep along the verandahs of the boarding house, university gown flying, as we leapt to attention and almost saluted. (In these less innocent and more cynical days one wonders if they were in a lesbian relationship. Surely not.)

Their successor was a tall lady of imposing mind, albeit with a delightful sense of humour and a twinkle in her eye. She was photographed at a fancy dress function presenting a minute egg cup as a prize, to a "jockey" and her "horse" with the twinkle well in evidence.

All our boarding house mistresses seemed old to us. Occasionally one of these became engaged to be married, amidst great excitement. Matron looked after our physical well being and was a great believer in Waterbury's Compound as the cure for all ills. She possessed an undershot jaw and the unfortunate juxtaposition of teeth caused her to spit when speaking, especially when excited. To those of us far from home and mother she had to explain the facts of life when the

first signs appeared of approaching womanhood. This she did with great tact and kindness, though the spitting tended rather to distract from her words of wisdom.

One's new maturity led to another problem. Modern hygienic methods were unknown and we were forced to rinse our towels every month ourselves. The boarding house was out of bounds after school and before the bell rang to change for dinner. This included the laundry so to avoid embarrassment and obtain privacy one perforce had to break the law.

Bells ruled our lives. Bells to get up, go to breakfast, then to school, for lunch, afternoon tea, dinner, homework and lights out. Some of the younger ones would fall asleep in prep, so special dispensation allowed them to go to bed early. As one grew older the day could be extended by huddling under the blankets with a book and a torch in the hope that no prowling mistress would see a glimmer of light.

Our summer uniform was a white blouse and a tie in the school colours with a navy tobralco tunic decorated at the side pleats with three buttons, and three more on each shoulder. These buttons were the bane of our lives as they were always working loose. Black stockings, gloves and a large panama hat which turned smaller children into mushrooms completed the ensemble. In winter we wore a long -sleeved white blouse and tie with a navy serge box-pleated tunic. For church a white frock, cotton in summer, garbardine in winter was worn with white stockings and gloves and black shoes. One's parents' shopping preference was indicated by the motif on our church frocks, a stylized rose for Finney Isles and an abstract design on Allan & Stark's model. In these we went to Church every Sunday, rain or shine, demure crocodiles two by two wending our way past the excited cooking swells of the ethnic neighbourhood to Presbyterian, Methodist or Church of England.

Bolder souls would change their allegiance from term to term depending on the minister and the length of his sermons. This was our only weekly contact with the outside world, apart from forays to the dentist always accompanied by a staff member. Before such

expeditions we were minutely inspected. Shoes must be brightly polished, hat at correct angle, stockings seams straight, gloves clean and mended. We were each allocated part of a wardrobe and two drawers for belongings, which had to be kept in apple-pie order and inspected.

Sunday afternoons were devoted to the writing of letters home which were then presented for censoring. Threepence of our 1/- pocket money went for a stamp, threepence was for Church collection, threepence to the Self Denial Fund and threepence to splurge on ourselves at the tuckshop.

Letters out of the way we were set to learning six verses of a psalm chosen by the mistress on duty who then heard our stumbling efforts in the beautiful marble-floored entrance vestibule, light filtering through the stained glass windows depicting Shakespearian characters. All these years later splendid rolling phrases, unappreciated at the time, are still ingrained in the memory.

Saturday afternoons were our own, to play sport, chat or sitting on rugs listening to the wind-up gramophone and the latest hits. The strains of "Five o'clock whistle", "Chattanooga Choo Choo" and "Don't fence me in" would echo round the grounds.

Every Tuesday we queued before a staff member with our fine tooth combs to have our hair combed out onto pieces of tissue paper. These were carefully inspected for head lice but no memory remains of anyone actually contacting this dread disease.

Boys, for those of us without brothers, were beings from another planet. In our Senior year there was a tremendous innovation when we were allowed to invite the Senior boarders from a neighbouring boys' school to a dance. They came en masse and the pairing off was somewhat arbitrary – "You both come from islands," "you two are the tallest in the class" etc. Our dancing lessons paid off at last though after years of "leading" it was sometimes hard to remember that this was a male prerogative. There was great excitement when, in return, the boys invited eight of us back to their Senior dance. Dressed in our frilly pink organdies and elbow length gloves a corsage pinned somewhat precariously to the bosom, we were called for by a stretch limousine, rather like a hearse, which took us all plus our chaperones. Transported to and from and under constant supervision, there was no opportunity for dalliance. The only exception was the sophisticate amongst us, who wore a stunning white figure-hugging gown slit to the knee with a silver fox fur slung around her shoulders. During the evening, to a chorus of

wolf whistles she strolled across to the bandleader with a request for a number. How we envied such poise!

One of us, due to changing circumstances, became a day girl in her last term. She recounted to the fascinated boarders how, having business in the area, she found herself unwittingly outside the gates of the boys' school, her feet having led her there of their own volition.

The War brought changes to our way of life when the U.S. Army commandeered our school for their communication headquarters. We boarders were evacuated to Stanthorpe where the regime was less strict. Acquiring bicycles we spent happy hours cycling round the countryside, picnicking in the bush and helping to gather the fruit and vegetable crops in the district. School was held in the icy cold converted garage of the rambling old homestead and many a serge tunic bore large patches on the seat as we attempted to get warm round the oil-fired heaters. War seemed far away, for we were never allowed to read the newspapers and the transistor radio had not yet made an appearance.

Back in Brisbane we found the Americans still ensconced in the school library and we were the first to hear the news of Japan's surrender. Unexpectedly the air raid siren sounded during morning assembly bringing the glad tidings that the war was over. Strictly forbidden to fraternize with the soldiers, in the relaxed atmosphere of that day one of the officers approached a group of us to say how much he admired Australian girls, so fresh and unspoilt compared with the "hard little dynamos back home". One of his brothers-in-arms unsteadily arranged six empty beer bottles around a newspaper front page proclaiming "Peace" in large letters, which he solemnly photographed.

That evening by chance we attended a concert in the City Hall. Afterwards wending our way sedately to the tram in the traditional crocodile, we were fascinated by the celebrating city. Rubbish bins were lifted from their mounts and dragged clanking through the streets, as large crowds surged and sang and everyone was happy. The days of knitting hard and knobby washers and unsuitable woolly scarves for tropical servicemen were over and food and clothing rationing were phased out.

Leaving the protection of school for the post-war world was a challenging experience. We knew little of life and were ill-equipped for “ the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.” Innocent as we were, we’d had the opportunity to grow up without the pressures of the present day, with its permissiveness, promiscuity and drugs. Life was fresh, exciting and new, there was so much to see and do, and it was all before us. Perhaps we were lucky.

I hope you enjoyed this story “The Life We Lived Together” written by Fiona Bekkers which tells a interesting story of life at Boarding School during the Second World War. Fiona was well known for her excellent writing skills and Peter has kindly given our Club this story for the Archives. I am sure you enjoyed it .

Anne Gooley \_ Archivist

**2020 Committee:  
Lower House:**

President: Barry Henzell  
Immediate Past President: Margot Kirby  
Secretary: John Blackford  
Treasurer: Greg McGilvery  
temporary  
Membership: Barbara Fitzell  
Activities: Anne Gooley  
Data Admin.: John Wright  
Times Editor: Douglas Fussell  
Guest Speakers: David McEvoy

**2020 Members of the  
Upper House:**

Almoner: Leafy Fussell  
10 Min talks : Barry Aubrey  
Archivist : Anne Gooley  
Humour: David McEvoy -

**General Meeting Workers:**

Hospitality/kitchen: Pam Cole

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

## November birthdays: Members and Non-Active Members.

[01] Rama Naidoo [01] Susan Wright [06] Robin Edwards [07] Dave Francis [07] Lex Lowien [08] Sonja Comerford [10] David McEvoy [14] Leith Fussell [23] Douglas Fussell [26] Peter Bekkers



## Membership Report:

At our General meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup> at St Colomb's Church we were delighted to induct Christina Llewellyn and Frank Hill and we look forward to their company at future meetings and morning coffees.

We have many waiting in the wings to join Hamilton Probus and they would have been fully inducted members by now if it hadn't been for Covid restrictions, so we hope that from now on we can hold regular meetings and bring in these lovely people that have been waiting so patiently.

The future of our club is guaranteed just by the sheer volume of people that are applying for membership.

*Barbara Fitzell*  
*Membership Officer*

## Dates to Remember:

|                                 |  |             |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct.    | 2: 00 pm. Barefoot Bowls Northern Suburbs Bowls Club, 175 Edinburgh Castle Road, Wavell Heights  | <b>\$15</b> |
| Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> Nov.   | 9:30 am General Meeting St Colomb's Anglican Church Hall Clayfield. (Bookings required)  |             |
| Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> Nov.   | 10:00 am Men's Coffee morning Cruisers Alfresco Portside   |             |
| Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov. | 10: 00 am Ladies Coffee morning Cruisers Alfresco Portside   |             |
| Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec.    | 11:30 am for 11: 45am Christmas Lunch at Royal Queensland Golf Club. Celebrating 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Accreditation of our Club | <b>\$60</b> |

**Anne Gooley**

## *Activities Report November 2020*

Dear Friends,

After nine months in its execution, yesterday 30 members and friends in great anticipation entered the bus for our Outing to the Majestic Theatre Pomona. We were not let down, as it was a wonderful day.

A good start was our first stop at the Maroochydore Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha. The bus company, 360 excelled themselves in providing a very enjoyable morning tea which we enjoyed in the beautiful bushland Botanic Garden which showcases magnificent native plants and wildlife. Unfortunately, we could not stay long but many thought it worthwhile taking a visit up there again next year.

On arrival at the Majestic Theatre Pomona we were greeted by volunteer staff who rose to the challenge of giving us a wonderful day. I believe they enjoyed it as much as we did.

I think we were all in awe listening to Ron West as he played the organ on our arrival. We were then seated at tables to watch the movie followed by lunch. Most impressive was Ron who is not only skilled in playing this beautiful instrument, but his talk at the beginning was very interesting and painted a clear picture of the history of the Theatre, his love of having the privilege of being successful, with the help of staff who also have a love for the Majestic Theatre, in running the world's longest running silent film theatre.

John Blackford was given an opportunity to also play this wonderful instrument and he said he could have easily spent many hours exploring the instrument's capability.

From the laughter that surrounded us, everyone thought that the silent movie was very entertaining and of course it was our first experience of seeing such a film.

We headed home after some of the members invested in the plant shop next door. Good company, lots of laughter and interesting conversation made a happy day out.

**Don't forget to put Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December in your diary** – our Christmas Lunch celebrating 30<sup>th</sup> years since our incorporation. The cost is \$60 and you can book by contacting Robin Edwards Email: [robinehood4010@gmail.com](mailto:robinehood4010@gmail.com) Ph: 3262 6237. Mob: 0419 772 322.

More information will be sent out in November.

***Anne Gooley – Outings Coordinator***

Thought for the day: Great things are done by a series of small things brought together. Vincent Van Gogh

## Guest Speakers:

- . Mr. Denis Weyper “ The Three Tenors” November.
- . Biology and Conservation of Moreton Bay Seabirds. Dr. Peter Rothilsberg.  
December.
- . The Queensland Ballet, the progressive leap forward. Mr. Paul Boyd. 2021
- . Riverboat cruising on the Murray. Captain Lindsay Hutton 2021

**DON`T FORGET THAT “THE TIMES” WELCOMES ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS**

## Book Corner:

### **Phosphorescence by [Julia Baird](#)**

How we can find internal happiness - the 'light within' that Julia Baird calls 'phosphorescence' – to sustain us during the darkest of times. There are a few core truths to the science of happiness. We know that being kind and altruistic makes us happy, talking to people, making friends, helping others, all help us achieve happiness. But how do we retain happiness? When our world darkens, when we're overwhelmed by illness or heartbreak, loss or pain, how do we survive? Absorbing, beautiful, inspiring and deeply moving, Julia Baird has written exactly the book we need for these times. It is certainly worth a read.

### **All Our Shimmering Skies by [Trent Dalton](#)**

The bestselling author of Boy Swallows Universe, Trent Dalton, returns with All Our Shimmering Skies - destined to become another Australian classic. Darwin, 1942, Japanese bombs rain overhead and motherless Molly Hook, the gravedigger's daughter, turns to the sky for guidance. All Our Shimmering Skies is a story about gifts that fall from the sky, curses we dig from the earth and the secret we bury inside ourselves.. A buoyant, beautiful and magical novel filled with warmth, wit and wonder, a love letter to Australia and the art of looking up. Margot Kirby

# The Comerford Files

## MARMARAY TUNNEL ACROSS THE BOSPHORUS

It was opened 29<sup>th</sup> October,2013.It is owned by the Turkish National Railways. It is 13.5 km long,and consists of 2 single track tunnels. **It is the deepest immersed tube tunnel in the world**, lying 60 metres below the sea level. It runs from Sirkeci on the European side, then under the Bosphorus to Uskudar on the Asian side. Currently 328 scheduled trains (which included freight trains) pass through the tunnels per day. It uses the

European rail gauge of 4'8½". It connects with the Turkish Railway network in Turkey, and with the European network on the European side. Over page

See map over page.



### Walking Group:

We have added another “Interest Group” to our Club with the success of the Inaugural Group Walk on Tuesday 29 September.

Nine (9) of us walked along the Riverwalk from the Teneriffe Ferry Terminal to the Powerhouse where we enjoyed a coffee break and lively discussions at Mary Mae’s Bar and Kitchen. The walk was taken at a leisurely pace with individual walkers able to stop at points of interest including sculptures, memorabilia and historical plaques along the route describing the wool stores, the wartime submarine base and the CSR sugar refinery. We started and ended the morning with enjoyable trips on the City Cat, taking in the sun and viewing the everchanging riverfront developments.

The Walking Group’s next walk is on Tuesday 20 October which will have taken place by the time your Times Newsletter goes to print. It is

hoped to arrange a Group Walk on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month so the following walk will be on Tuesday 17 November, which will be confirmed at the General Meeting on 10 November, pushed forward a week due to the Melbourne Cup.

**John Wright**



## Inaugural Group Walk

One of these days these boots will walk right next to you. Are you ready boots?

Watch this space for more walkers on the loose.



New  
Members :

Christine  
Llewellyn  
and Frank  
Hall



Robin organizing our annual Dominos Pizza  
Picnic in the Park

# Pomona - at last



Members about to join the bus trip to Pomona



Morning Tea



Choir Master helping the host, Ron West, at the organ

