



Castle Hill & District Probus Club Inc.

Incorporated in NSW. Incorporation No. INC1401281
 Club No N9004055. Accreditation No 2500. District No 9685
 P.O. Box 321, Castle Hill NSW 1765

August 2015

Vol 3 No 5

NEWSLETTER

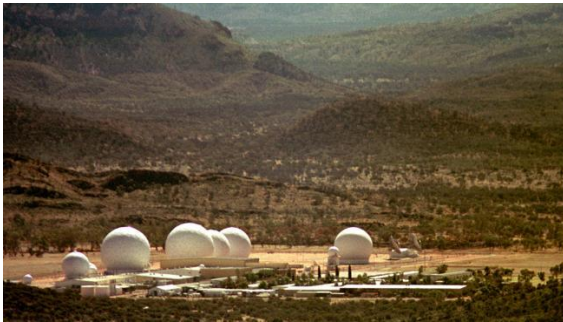
David Rosenberg – Author of the book “Inside Pine Gap. The spy who came in from the desert.”

When David finished his Degree in Electrical Engineering he discovered that his degree made him attractive to the intelligence agencies. He had interviews with both the CIA and NSA and was offered jobs with both. David chose the NSA as it offered more technical work.

He was sent to work at the American and Australian Intelligence Collection Facility at Pine Gap, near Alice Springs in 1990, and stayed there for 18 years. It is here that he worked with the 14 radomes that point to satellites to ensure they stay in their orbit and collect information from them. These satellites are sophisticated and effective passive collectors of information.



Alice Springs was chosen as the site for the Intelligence Collection Facility as it is on the same geographic side of the globe as the Soviet Union, and as the climate is typically clear and dry the signals do not get interfered with by the weather. Alice Springs has a low population, and security services love isolation.



Pine Gap was set up due to the global political situation in the 50s and 60s. The Australian American shared leadership was established in 1966 to detect electrical signals not visible by aircraft, naval ships and submarines and ground based platforms including embassies. Pine Gap intercepts electrical signals from weapons and communications systems from countries such as Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and Pakistan.

The Collection Facility can listen in on signals coming out of the Soviet Union including weapons testing and development. The spectrum analyser can assess how close to perfection and operation missiles are, how the missiles work and therefore implement defensive methods against them. The analysers working at the facility are able to show where and from whom electrical signals are coming. They are mainly looking for the location of signal and can locate a signal as it is moving. Signals can be demodulated in order to hear a voice and the analysers are able to assess whether a signal is a threat or not.

The facility is essential to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology and the protection of Australia against terrorism. Several millions of dollars of security upgrades have occurred at the facility. Interestingly its sophisticated detection and heat systems are mainly set off by kangaroos.

Our next speaker Bettina Deda specialises in down-sizing and de-cluttering.

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Meeting Notes

Ken welcomed all members and visitors to the August meeting and introduced Peter Fowler from 'Computer Pals for Seniors'

'Computer Pals for Seniors' is a national group, operating independently and run by volunteers, to help Seniors with their computer skills. They teach a wide range of subjects including Computer Fundamentals, Internet, Word Processing, Excel, Desk Top Publishing, Digital Camera and Photoshop.

These computer courses do not include Apple Macintosh computers. However, "Computer Pals for Seniors" do teach courses using tablets and smart phones, both Apple and Android.

"Computer Pals for Seniors" is located at the Castle Hill Showground, by the Harvey Lowe Pavilion. The office is open on Tuesdays and Friday mornings. Phone No. 9899 9131. Membership costs are \$40 for singles or \$50 for couples plus a \$20 joining fee.



Treasurer's Notes

Judy Coulson spoke to reiterate concern about events' payments not being made on time. This causes great problems, such as the payment shortfall to be dealt with for the Buttai Barn trip. Please be mindful of the event where you have expressed interest, and the date that payment is due, even making payment in advance if possible. Our Probus Club does have a Tours and Refund Policy which can be read on our website.

*If you are unable to attend an event please contact the event coordinator.

*If you have paid and do not give a minimum of one week's notice that you are unable to attend an event your payment will not be refunded.

As Judy will be away on vacation, Adele House will be acting Treasurer next month.

Membership and Attendance

Jan Mangion welcomed members and visitors, many of whom were interested in joining our Probus group. 143 members were present, as well as 8 visitors. There were 39 apologies. Jan advised us that there were quite a few members who were sick or having operations and wished them all well.



Membership certificates were presented to new members; Margaret Hughes, Judy and Allan Banforth, Anika Corner, Tricia Doyal, Barbara Mak, Karin Hackett.

Events and Excursions

Lyn Street advised those Members going to the Art Gallery on Friday 21st August to take Bus 441, Stand D, at either 9.57 or 10.17 to get to the Gallery in time for the tour.

Don't forget the Eryldene tour on Sunday 23rd August, the price for the tour and high tea is \$35.

Fathers' Day Picnic. So far only one photo of a Father between the ages of 3 and 10 has been received, more photos are required please. This picnic is for everyone and will be a fun day out.

Club Activities

Chris Shirbin thanked members for the great response to the survey. We are placing the groups the most members chose up onto the stage, please come up and put your name down. We also need members willing to run the new groups which only takes a couple of hours a month.

Members who ticked the Social Events Group were asked to give Chris a better idea of what sort of activities they were interested in, for example: a monthly dinner, lunch, theme night. Please put your ideas on the form to give her some further information.

Chris and Paul are organising the first BBQ group outing at Fagen Park on Thursday 15th Oct. Hopefully someone will come forward to continue running this popular group.

Suzanne Holgate has offered to run the Board Games Group which will meet at her house on the second Thursday of the month, please put your name down with Suzanne if you are interested.

Ken Carroll advised he will be running The Day Outings Group, which will have a name change to the \$2.50 Club. As this group is now up-and-running, information about the group will be found at the Activities Table at the next meeting. Anne Paice will be organising the Walking Group from now on and we look forward to some new and interesting outings.

Tours

Ian Moore informed us that he has some brochures for the South Australia tour in September next year to Broken Hill and the Flinders Ranges to Adelaide. Tours of the Clare and Barossa Valleys are included.

If you have some interesting and fun "Travel Tales" it would be great to put them into the Newsletter. Please send them to Pennie Burrows, the Newsletter Editor, before the 15th of the month.

Craft Group

Sixteen members were present at our last meeting. Barbara Ferris kindly hosted the meeting and we enjoyed a delicious morning tea.



Our main activities were knitting squares for Wrap with Love and card making.
Jeanette Joyner.



Ten Pin Bowling Group

On Tuesday 21st July we had a total of 16 bowlers and we welcomed our Vice President Leigh Pickard to the Group. He scored a very pleasing 230 for his two games so for a first timer he did pretty well and we hope he will return for future meetings even though he complained of aching muscles. Another of our bowlers Bill Joyner scored a total of 290 a personal best for Bill who is showing great improvement in his game, along with all of our other bowlers. A few of us die-hard bowlers also bowled on Tuesday after our monthly meeting all scoring pretty well in what was basically a practice session. As stated in our meeting we would welcome anyone who wishes to join in for a couple of games which is then followed by lunch at the Castle Hill Tavern no experience necessary. *Chris Shirbin.*

Book Club

It was good to see so many of you at the meeting (18), especially the new members. Thank you to all of you who let me know you were/weren't coming. It made it much easier for preparation and knowing we didn't have to wait for people who weren't coming. I hope we'll be able to repeat this for every meeting.

The 2 books this month were very different. Before *I Go To Sleep* by SJ Watson is a psychological thriller about a woman who loses her memory every time she goes to sleep, so she has to start again every morning. It is emotionally disturbing as she has to work out who she can and can't trust. We had mixed reactions to it - it gripped some from the start, others found the storyline repetitive and a bit boring. Ratings varied from 2 to 3 1/2 stars. We eventually agreed on 3 stars.



The Little Paris Bookshop is a very gentle book, almost a travelogue, as Jean Perdu sails his bookshop barge, *The Literary Apothecary* on a journey from Paris to the south of France in search of a lost life (and love). The characters are quite eccentric and how they deal with their problems is very interesting. The book is full of amazing quotes and is very well written. We gave this book a 3 1/2 star rating.

Due to the unavailability and unsuitability of some books we have changed the next couple of month's books around. August: "The Happiest Refugee" by Anh Do and "A God In Ruins" by Kate Atkinson. September: "The Hare With Amber Eyes" by Edmund de Waal and "A Fifty Year Silence" by Miranda Richmond Mouillot.

Until the next meeting, happy reading, *Anne Chinner*.

Walking Group

22 members completed a sometimes difficult walk from Bondi to Coogee on 11th August. It was a beautifully sunny day and a light breeze kept us cool for the trip. The first part of the walk from Bondi to Tamarama is the section where Sculptures by the Sea are held. After Tamarama the walk takes us past Bronte, Clovelly then onto Coogee. We all stopped for lunch at the famous (or infamous - if one knows the story) Coogee Bay Hotel. A wonderful day was had by everyone.

From next month the Walking Group will be led by Anne Paice. I would like to thank all walkers who have come with me over the past 2 years and I look forward to seeing everyone at future walks. *Ken Carroll*.



Sri Lankan Dinner at The Blue Elephant, Pennant Hills.



The Blue Elephant raised his trunk in welcome to 29 Probus members and friends who came to dine on Sri Lankan food on 30th July. For many, this was a first time experience and many were a little wary of how hot the curries would be.

The staff did an amazing job and the food was easy on the palate. The onion pakora and fish cakes were excellent

entrees and the buffet of various mild curries, rice, string hoppers and other dishes, were very good.

The dessert of fruit salad and wattillapam was yummy, so yummy that one of the ladies on our table went back for a second helping.

There was much congenial chatter around the dining tables and a very friendly and relaxing evening was had by all. Thank you, Carol for organising this event. *Kaddi Hockley.*



Judy Smith, Carol Solomons and Susan Osborne



Yuletide at Buttai Barn

Our 68 members made up a goodly proportion of the 150 people enjoying lunch at Buttai Barn on 17 July. With an early start from the Bowling Club, and after a short comfort stop, we arrived at Buttai Barn for morning tea.



A couple of delicious scones with jam and cream set us up for an hour or so of entertainment from Kent who told tall tales, cracked jokes and sang some of the golden oldies.

A good quality, two course, lunch was well organised and quickly served. More entertainment followed, including a visit from Santa Claus. While he

was there we sang carols in candlelight. It was well done, all in good taste and with no delays at all – the day just kept moving.

Eventually it was back to the coaches to make our way home.



The drama was yet to fully unfold however, as, on Pennant Hills Road, one of the coaches broke down. Traffic was chaotic but the RMS were quickly on the scene with a huge tow truck, preparing to move our coach into a safer area.

Fortunately for us, an empty Pegasus coach was passing. It stopped and took us back to the Bowling Club. The whole drama only cost about 30 minutes. It was a very good day. *Rodney Dredge.*



State Theatre Visit

On Monday 10th August, 11 of our members attended a tour of the State Theatre. It was a fascinating and somewhat nostalgic experience for those who, like me, remember the days when the State was the most glamorous movie theatre in Sydney. Our tour guide was Stuart, whose knowledge of the theatre's history was amazing.

The theatre opened in 1929 and was one of 28 movie theatres which flourished in Sydney for many years. The State was for many years threatened with demolition as developers claimed it did not reflect any single style of architecture. Fortunately, that alone made it a significant building and it is now protected by the Heritage Council.



The theatre today is no longer a cinema except for occasional movie festivals, but is used for live performances of all kinds and even the odd wedding reception for the very well heeled. It is nice to know that such an iconic building seems assured of a secure future. *Glenys Wearne.*

The Calendar

A very good (and potentially more up to date) activities calendar is on the web site at: http://www.probusouthpacific.org/microsites/castlehillanddistrict/Activities_Calendar

Regular meetings:

Unless there is a clash with school or public holidays, in which case the change of date will be published in the newsletter

Mah Jong Every Monday	Craft Group 3rd Monday	Book Club 4th Monday	Walking Group 2nd Tuesday	Ten Pin Bowling 3rd Tuesday
Cards Group Last Tuesday	Board Games 2nd Thursday	Movies Group 2nd Thursday	Art Group 4th Thursday	Luncheon Group 2nd Friday
\$2.50 Club Last Friday				

Wednesday 19 August	9.30	Café Saligna	
Friday 21 August	10.30	Art Gallery of NSW. Guided Tour of Archibald Prize	\$12.00
Friday 28 August	10.00	\$2.50 Club trip to Manly, meet at Circular Quay	
Sunday 23 August	1.15	Guided Tour of Eryldene	\$35.00
Friday 4 September	11.30	Fathers' Day Picnic	\$15.00
Friday 11 September	12.00	Luncheon Group. "Nobles" Hills Lodge	\$30.00
Wednesday 16 Sept	9.30	Café Saligna	
Wednesday 23 Sept	11.00	Burning Log Comedy Theatre	\$45.00
Sunday 27 September	4.30	Castle Hill Players "The Fall of the House of Usher"	\$21.00
Friday 9 th October	12.00	Luncheon Group. "Il Lago" Bella Vista	\$25.00
Thursday 15 th October	11.30	BBQ Group, Fagen Park	
Friday 16 October	12.30	Spring Summer Fashion Parade	\$25.00
Wednesday 21 October	9.30	Cafe Saligna	
Sunday 25 October	8.45	Blue Mountains Coach Tour, Gallery and Radio Play	\$78.00
Tuesday 27 October	1.00	"Anything Goes" at the Opera House	\$80.00
Tuesday 3 November		Melbourne Cup Lunch after November General Meeting	
Friday 6 November	1.30	Crazy Whist at the Bowling Club	\$25.00
Friday 13 November	12.00	Luncheon Group. "Baulkham Palace" Baulkham Hills	\$28.00
Wed 18 November	9.30	Cafe Saligna	
Friday 20 November	4.30	Wine and Cheese Night	\$25.00
Sunday 29 th November	4.30	Castle Hill Players "A Bad Year for Tomatoes"	
Friday 4 th December	10.00	Tour of Female Orphan School, Parramatta	\$20.00
Tuesday 8 December	12.00	Christmas Lunch at Springfield	\$50.00