



# Probis Club of Sydney

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## Newsletter

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March 2025

Issue 473

### MEETING DATES

MARCH 4

MAURICE CUTLER

Antarctica's Forgotten Heroes

APRIL 1

PROFESSOR CLAUDE ROUX

Director

Centre for Forensic Science

UTS, Sydney.

### ACTIVITIES

March 28 – Western Sydney

Harbour Cruise

April 11 – Guided Tour of

Government House

April 24 – Golf Day at Killara

### CONTENTS

Future Guest Speakers

February Meeting Report

Guest Speaker Report

Social Activities Program

Book Reviews

A Touch of Humour

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### *Gentlemen,*

This is a nostalgic moment for me, submitting my final column as President. Without wishing to be political by comparison with the presidential change across the Pacific, it is pleasing that I can be sure that the handover to our new President will be seamless and uncontroversial, and that you will be in excellent hands with John Doherty and the incoming committee.

I will summarise the past year at the AGM, but wish to thank the committee and indeed all members for the wonderful support in filling the past year with so many enjoyable and interesting highlights, both at meetings and events. I am pleased to see most of the committee have been nominated to continue in the coming year, providing good continuity, but I would particularly acknowledge the splendid work and wise counsel over many years of the three retiring committee members, Adrian Pilton, John Carter and Ted Brogan.

I hope to see many of you at the AGM, which is part of our next monthly meeting on 4th March. Can attendees please be sure to register on the website or at least inform Hugh Hopkins in advance? Last month, 13 members had not registered. It is good to know the numbers so that seating can be set up smoothly, which is very important for a high attendance meeting.

It was great to have 80 at the February meeting, when we were treated to a fascinating talk by Dr Phillip Hellman on rare earth minerals, plus welcome Bernie Haylen as an inductee, and hear interesting LBPs from Stephen Barrow and Peter Caspari. Then 30 attended a tour of St Paul's College, with its blend of history, tradition and modernism, now 50% female, and one third post graduate students, giving an opportunity for an enriched educational and personal experience for students.

**Peter James**

President

**Note:** To Register to attend the March meeting at the Union, University and Schools Club - [click here](#)

MARCH 4

Maurice Cutler

Antarctica's Forgotten Heroes



As an 18-year-old journalist in Sydney with the United Press news service, Maurice Cutler became the first Australian to reach the South Pole in 1956 while covering the United States activities during the International Geophysical Year.

During that expedition he gave personal reports to Sir Douglas Mawson, welcomed Sir Edmund Hillary to the Antarctic and interviewed a survivor of Scott's last expedition. After 4 months in Antarctica, the US Navy took him to North America. He returned to the Antarctic for another four months in 1958.

Since then, he's mainly lived and worked in Canada and is perhaps the only living Australian to have met Edmund Hillary, The Queen, Pierre Trudeau, JFK, Gough Whitlam, Malcolm Fraser, Zhou Enlai and Richard Nixon, etc.

In 1971, Maurice accompanied a Canadian Trade Mission to China, and became one of the first western journalists to enter China during the Cultural Revolution. He returned to China for each of the next two years to cover the opening of the Canadian Trade Fair in Beijing (greeted by Zhou Enlai for a second time), then to cover the first official visit to China by Prime Minister Trudeau.

In 1977 he joined the Canadian Public Service, initially working for the Finance Minister, then as Official Spokesman for the Canadian Foreign Office and later becoming Director of Public Affairs for the Auditor General of Canada.

Since partly retiring about 30 years ago, Maurice and his wife Fran have spent half the year each in Ottawa and Sydney (having a home in each). This avoided the harsh Canadian winters and enabled a lot more golf, whilst maintaining close involvement and interest in international affairs along with family on both sides of the Pacific.

Maurice will focus his talk on many remarkable early explorers who achieved amazing heroic feats, but have not had the recognition they deserve, being overshadowed by Amundsen, Scott and Shackleton.

## FEBRUARY MEETING REPORT

President Peter James welcomed five guests. Ted Brogan reported on a very successful Christmas Lunch at the Royal Sydney Golf Club and advised the members of future events, including a visit to St Paul's College at Sydney University on 12 February and Western Harbour Cruise now fully booked for 50 members and guests on 28 March. He also raised the possibility a 3 day visit to attend the Orange Food Week from 4 to 6 April. Expressions of interest are being sought from members. The President updated members on the Golf Day at Killara Golf Club now booked for 24 April 2025 (further details later in this Newsletter).

### INDUCTION

#### Bernie Haylen



Keith Hartman introduced his friend and colleague of 40 years Professor Bernard Haylen as a new member of the Club. Bernie is renowned for asking “why is it so?” He attended St Aloysius College followed by two years of a Civil Engineering course at Sydney University, which provided a sound basis for his soon to be chosen field in medicine. He completed his Medicine degree at Sydney University in 1977. He has become a world authority on Urodynamics. He has published widely. His crowning glory is that he wrote the updated chapter on the anatomy of the female reproductive system for Gray's Anatomy, the definitive textbook of anatomy for every medical student in the world.

Bernie has recently retired after a distinguished career. A willing participant in any discussion. He has clear views, plays golf, has a boat and a farm.

## LIFE BEFORE PROBUS

### Stephen Barrow



Stephen was born at the Mater Hospital and grew up near the Chatswood Golf Course. He went to school at St Pius X in Chatswood, but declared that he wasn't a great student. His lifelong career has been in real estate, after a suggestion from his father to talk to a real estate agent who lived down the street. He had the job an hour later! After a brief time as an agent, he took up a role in the Chatswood office of the Valuer General's Department in 1970, working around Sydney, but also in Wollongong and the Southern Highlands.

In addition to real estate valuation, he learnt to be an expert witness and gained a lot of experience from the opportunity to value Warringah Mall which was a four month exercise. During ten years with the Valuer General's Department, he completed a four year valuation course, a four year business course and a two year real estate agents licence course, making up for lost time at school.

To learn more about property transactions, during his last two years at the Valuer General's department, Stephen started selling real estate on weekends. As a result of this experience he decided to get into real estate full time. He picked two areas where he saw opportunity to create a property management business, namely Ryde and the lower north shore. The first job that came up was at Neutral Bay so he took the job selling real estate. Six months later he opened his own agency in Cremorne starting from scratch. A bit daunting! After 18 months, an agency came up for sale which he bought and then he bought three other rent rolls. He continued to grow the business by purchasing rent rolls over a period of 25 years. As a mark of his success, he was elected to the boards of the Australian Property Institute, the Real Estate Institute and the Professionals Real Estate Group.

Stephen held the record for the highest sale price recorded in Cremore - \$13 million – a price driven by ego! He then moved to a role with Mirvac as a Project Development Manager at Glenfield on a 1000 lot subdivision for five years – where he observed how poor management could chew up lots of money! Next he was managing director of Lansbridge Property which was an organization set up to help people with real estate problems, particularly financial institutions and property developers.

In 2014, as he moved to retirement, he was diagnosed with Parkinsons. He is about to release a book and produces a monthly podcast to help others in the same position which he finds very beneficial. He and his wife Annie have recently finished the 750 km Camino de Santiago which they thoroughly enjoyed. He managed Sydney University reserve grade rugby team for six years from 2010, proudly winning four premierships. Stephen is married with four children and five grandchildren

## Peter Caspari



Peter's occupation was cardiologist, retiring just twelve months ago from the Royal North Shore Hospital. His parents were German and his father was in a concentration camp in Berlin just before the war. His then recently married mother managed to get his father out of the camp, although it is not known how. Not surprisingly they wanted to get as far away from Germany as possible, arriving in Australia in 1938. Peter was born in Randwick in 1940. He went to Coogee Prep School which was a feeder school for

Sydney Grammar, where his introduction was that he knew how to hold a cricket bat, that being the only requirement. He didn't particularly enjoy school. After Grammar it was on to medical school at Sydney University where on the first day he was in a group of three pupils who were told only one of you will progress to second year. The pupils laughed, but it was absolutely correct. His medicine studies were undertaken at Prince Henry Hospital where he also subsequently enrolled for surgical tutorials. He continued working at Prince Henry for his first year after graduation. In the second year he undertook a pathology course which involved post-mortems, biochemistry, bacteriology and medicine. He graduated from Prince Henry Hospital with an MRACP and subsequently an FRACP.

Peter then went to England becoming a resident and then a registrar at the National Heart Hospital in London, where he also undertook research.

In 1973, there was the opportunity for a job at Royal North Shore Hospital – the interview was undertaken by the lecturer, cardiologist and resident in shorts and Hawaiian shirts. A significant contrast to the three piece suit worn by his senior registrar in London. He was offered the job and stayed at the RNSH for 50 years, retiring at the age of 83.

## Dr Phillip Hellman

### What's so special about rare earths?



In introducing Phillip, Geoff McWilliam pointed to his considerable education and experience in rare earths including completing the resource studies leading to the development of the Lynas Mt Weld mining operation in W.A. More recently, he has been engaged in technical evaluations of several potential rare earth projects.

In his opening remarks Phillip referred for interest to a chance meeting he had about 10 years ago with Julie Bishop in which they discussed the differences between rare earths and Lithium.

For many of us the first mention of rare earths may have been in association with the start of the Mt Weld mining operation in 2008. However, the deposit was identified more than 40 years earlier by Australia's Bureau of Mineral Resources using an aircraft fitted with a magnetometer. In the subsequent decades, and particularly the last 15 years, there has been a very considerable growth in the industry with rare earths being used in the electronics (semiconductors), medical (powerful magnets in MRI's) and automotive industries (EV batteries).

Another developing market has been in undersea optic fibre cables where selected rare earths are used to boost the light signals as they travel the long length of undersea cables.

A new type of rare earth mineralisation, known as Ionic Adsorption Deposits, has recently been recognised with Australian exploration companies prominent in new discoveries particularly in Brazil. These deposits are particularly attractive due to their low capital and processing costs.

China now dominates the worldwide industry and have adopted a variety of tactics, including serious misinformation on health and other issues, to counter the Lynas/Mt Weld operation and its Malaysian processing plant.

Demand for rare earths is growing, particularly due to EV's, but prices are volatile and, curiously, have recently fallen during a time of unprecedented demand from

EV manufacturers. Recent reports suggest China is processing stockpiles and flooding the market to depress prices and discourage other industry participants.

Some additional points arising during question time:

- A rare earths recycling industry is developing.
- Lynas is currently constructing the first processing facility in Australia at Kalgoorlie and is building, with US investment, a new plant for US domestic supply of rare earths for U.S. commercial and defence manufacturers.
- While China is dominant in downstream processing and manufacturing, Australia has considerable potential to grow rare earths applications but will need government support.

Phil McCarthy, on behalf of the members, acknowledged that most of us are quite unfamiliar with rare earths and their markets and thanked Phillip warmly for enlightening us.

## MEMBERSHIP

The following members have achieved significant membership milestones over the last twelve months. Congratulations and thanks for your support.

### **25 Years Membership**

David Barnett  
John Thom

### **20 Years Membership**

John Young  
Malcolm Irving  
Frank Barr-David

### **15 Years Membership**

David Castle  
Sean Wareing  
Michael Diamond  
Michael Flynn  
Bob Masterman  
John Boldeman

### **10 Years Membership**

Robert Warburton  
Neil Bird  
Phillip Clifton-Bligh  
Dennis Sligar  
Wayne Jones

**PLEASE NOTE: ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION NOTICES WILL BE SENT OUT IN MID-MARCH**

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

### **Visit to St Paul's College, Sydney University**

Approximately 30 members and the guests visited St Paul's College on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February and were given a guided tour of the old and new buildings of what is Australia's oldest University College. The visit concluded with a buffet lunch and a welcome address by the Warden Rev. Ed Loane in the gothic inspired Dining Hall, a total contrast to the modernistic new wing recently built to house Graduate students, a gym, theatre and performance space.



St Paul's College. Members and guests enjoying lunch in the historic dining hall designed by Edmund Blacket.

**Future events** (please see the website and emails for details)

On Friday **28th March 2025**, a voyage for 50 members and guests with the Naval Historical Society exploring the Western Sydney Harbour. We have a waiting list for this popular event.

On the morning of Friday **11 April 2025**, a guided tour of Government House, Sydney has been booked for up to 20 people. Subject to demand, another tour is planned for later in the year.

We have reserved Monday **14 July 2025** at Royal Sydney Golf Club for the Winter Lunch. The Speaker will be Dr Stephanie Ward, a geriatrician and a star of the ABC TV series 'Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds'. Please add this date to your diaries.

***Ted Brogan***  
***Events Coordinator***

**POCS GOLF AT KILLARA: Thursday 24 April**

A golf event for POCS members will be held at the Killara Golf Club on Thursday 24th April. Tee times will be about 8.30 am, followed by drinks and lunch ordered from the bar menu and paid individually.





Registration will be via our website next month including payment for cart fees etc for all players, plus green fees for non-KGC members.

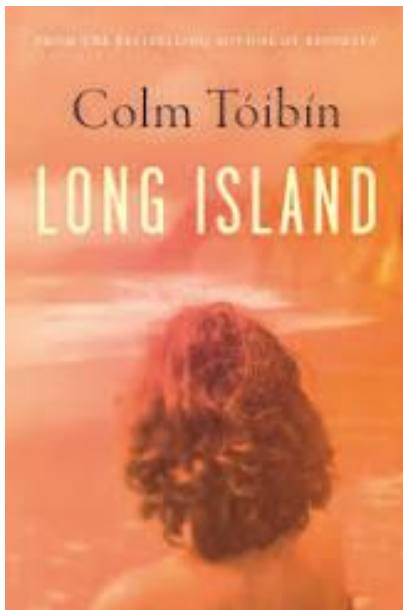
If you have not already done so, please contact Bill Thomas or Peter James if you are interested to play or need extra information. Those no longer members of a golf club and whose handicap has lapsed are welcome to play.

Non-golfers will be welcome to join us for the informal lunch from about 1 pm.

*Peter James*

## BOOK REVIEW

### Long Island by Colm Toibin (2024) – 288 pages – fiction



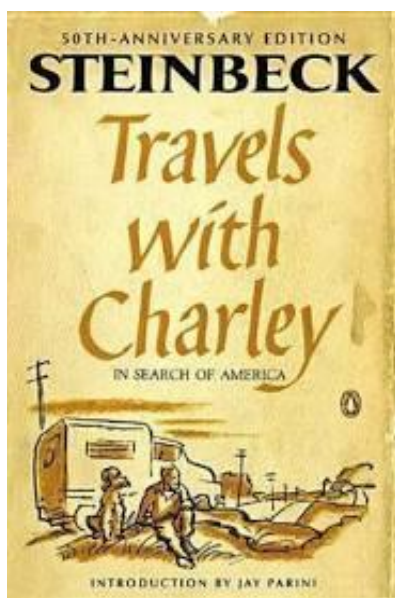
This is a brilliant successor to “Brooklyn”, although it is not essential to have read or seen its predecessor. It is set some 20 years later, but with the same (or similar) main protagonists and the same (or similar) dilemmas. Small-town Irish in Ireland and small-town American Italians in New York are major players. She is originally from Ireland but married into an Italian family in New York. He has never left Ireland.

In “Brooklyn”, she made the difficult decision to return to her new secretly married husband in New York from a visit to Ireland, where she fell in love with the Irishman. In this book she returns to Ireland from New York under stress, to visit her mother, and faces the same (or similar) dilemma as to whether to go back.

The nuances and attention to detail come from a writer at the top of his game. His intimate knowledge of small-town Ireland is unparalleled. Ethnicity and place feature strongly in a story that is hard to put down.

Lovers of “Brooklyn” will welcome this sequel, as will lovers of this writer. Those new to Toibin are in for a treat.

## Travels with Charley in Search of America by John Steinbeck (1962) – 210 pages – fact



Re-discovering Steinbeck after so many years is a welcome return to the masculine world of the mid-20th century. While Steinbeck wrote his greatest novels earlier in his career – *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1939 and *East Of Eden* in 1952 – it was not until 1960 that he embarked on his voyage around America. Accompanied only by his dog (Charley) and in a specially designed caravan-like truck, his lofty ambition was to rediscover America. Sadly, he was not really able to fulfil this ambition.

This, relatively short, travel adventure in 1960 was intended to help him rediscover America after many years away. Although he was only about 58 of the time, he died some eight years later in 1968.

In many ways, this is a disappointing book as he was only able to explore north-eastern America,

California and New Orleans – in any depth. However, his skills as a novelist shine through in his return to his roots in California, in covering racial segregation in New Orleans and in other flashes of brilliance. Also, his trip coincided with the end of the old world and the beginning of the new. That is before, and on the cusp of, racial integration, care for the environment, the internet and the world as we know it today.

So it is an easy re-introduction to the great works and magic of Steinbeck as well as providing a cameo of America in 1960. A good opportunity to rediscover his earlier great novels, which I am in the process of doing.

*David Castle*

### A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

#### Ten Commandments for Seniors

1. Talk to yourself. There are times when you need expert advice.
2. 'In style' means clothes that still fit.
3. You don't need anger management. You need people to stop irritating you.
4. Your people skills are fine. It's your tolerance for idiots that needs work.
5. The biggest lie you tell yourself is: "I don't need to write that down. I'll remember it."
6. 'On time' is when you get there.
7. You've noticed that people your age are much older than you.
8. Ageing might have slowed you down but it hasn't shut you up.
9. You still haven't learned to act your age and I hope you never will.
10. "One for the road" means having a pee before you leave the house.

## A Brave Man

- Wife: "I have a bag full of used clothes that I'd like to donate to St Vincents."
- Husband: "Why not just throw it in the bin. That's much easier."
- Wife: "But there are poor starving people who could really use those clothes."
- Husband: "Honey, anyone who can fit your clothes is not starving."

## An Oldie but a Goldie!

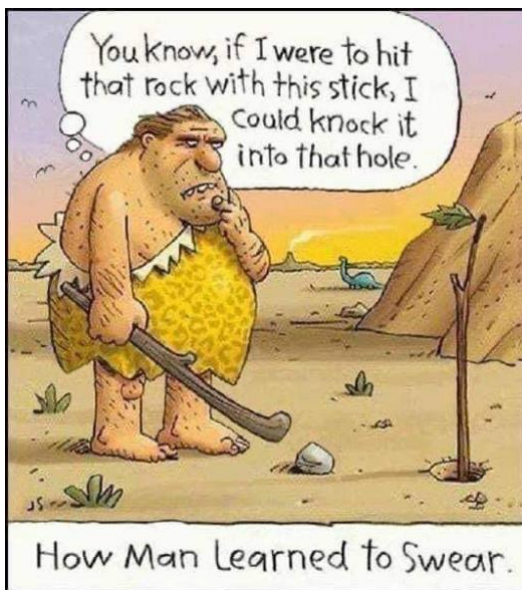
A teacher was giving a science lesson to her class. She put four worms into four test tubes. In the first, she added beer. In the second, wine. In the third, whiskey and in the fourth she put mineral water.

The next day the teacher shows the kids the results. The worm in the beer was dead, as were the worms in the wine and the whiskey. However, the worm in the mineral water was alive and healthy.

So the teacher asked the class: "What do we learn from this experiment?"

A child responds: "If you drink beer, wine and whiskey you won't get worms".

## Hole in One?



## HOW TO CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER

To contact any committee member [Click here](#)

**Please use email where possible or telephone if you require urgent contact.**