



# Probis Club of Sydney

www.sydneyprobis.org

## Newsletter

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April 2025

Issue 474

### MEETING DATES

APRIL 1

PROFESSOR CLAUDE ROUX

Director

Centre for Forensic Science  
UTS, Sydney.

### ACTIVITIES

April 11 – Guided Tour of  
Government House

April 24 – Golf Day at Killara

May 28 – Port Kembla Steelworks

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Gentlemen,*

We enter the 44th Sydney Probis Year with a continuation of the cohesive feeling and vibrancy that emanates from you, the Members. This Sydney Probis character has evolved from those who have set the scene through the 43 years where membership renewal has ensured that men are drawn from the broad catchment of experience, varying views, business, legal, technical, economic, government, political, moral, religious, and the myriads of activities required to sustain life and family. Every member has neared or retired from their working life's choices, and all have derived pleasure from trying to add benefit and humanity to society. There is little of those 'challenges or competitions' that kept us previously in action, in Sydney Probis, but Members carry the enthusiasm and excellence of their prior days into our Meetings, Activities, Events, and discussion – quite a blessing.

Peter James, retiring as the 43rd President, his committee and you provided this 44th year with a solid foundation, record Membership level, record Meeting attendance, and sound financial state.

We are all 'youthful', maybe the Club's average age has also nudged down by a few months. That is a standard we need to continue as each member encourages a colleague to join.

Maurice Cutler, Antarctic Explorer, the first Australian to stand at the South Pole, spoke to us for the second time, introducing more of the personnel and people associated in his participating and reporting on Antarctic exploration. At lunch we had an Antarctic triumvirate sitting together, Maurice Cutler, David Ellyard and Peter Howson. Alan Locke's summary of Maurice's presentation is included in this Newsletter.

**John Doherty**

President

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

**APRIL 1**

## **Distinguished Professor Claude Roux**

### **From Forensics to Forensic Science - Traces, Signs and Scientific Methods**



After completing his studies in forensic science at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, Claude Roux migrated to Australia in 1996, to develop and lead the first Australian forensic science undergraduate degree and PhD program at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). He is currently a Distinguished Professor of Forensic Science and Director of the UTS Centre for Forensic Science.

His interests are broad and include microtraces / chemical criminalistics, documents, fingerprints, forensic intelligence and the contribution of forensic science to policing and security. His professional motivation has always been driven by his vision of forensic science as a distinctive academic and holistic research-based discipline.

Claude has published over 200 refereed papers, 27 book chapters and co-authored one textbook. He received more than 20 prizes and awards including from the National Institute of Forensic Science, the 2004 AIPS Tall Poppy Award and the 2015 Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Medal for Research Impact and a 2023 Australian Award for University Teaching citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. He has a long and established reputation for effective collaboration with forensic and other government agencies in Australia and overseas, as well as with other academic partners.

Claude is the Editor in Chief of WIREs Forensic Science, a member of the editorial board of six scientific journals and a member of many working and advisory groups in Australia and overseas. He is the immediate Past-President of the International Association of Forensic Sciences (2017-2023), the current Vice-President of the Australian Academy of Forensic Sciences, a past President of the Australian & New

Zealand Forensic Science Society (2010-2016), a Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales and a founding member of the African Forensic Sciences Academy. He has also served on the Scientific Advisory Board of the International Criminal Court (2014-2023).

## MARCH MEETING REPORT

President Peter James welcomed seven guests. Geoff McWilliam advised of the next few guest speakers. Ted Brogan reported on a very successful visit to St Paul's College at Sydney University on 12 February and future events including the Western Harbour Cruise and tour of Government House, both of which are now fully booked. He also raised the possibility of a visit to attend the Orange Food Week in April 2026.

Peter announced the recent passing of Past President Cliff Dodds.

## INDUCTIONS



President Peter James, Bob Eckstein, Phillip Emdler, Peter Moll, Bill Thomas, Colin O'Connor and Chris Luget at the Induction

## Peter Moll

Bill Thomas introduced Peter Moll who he has known for many years as a very good golfer at Killara golf club. Peter was born in Wales but came to Australia at age 22 as a 'Ten Pound Pom' from England, got married and then he and his wife returned to England to see if they preferred Australia or England – Australia won! Back in Australia he joined Royal Doulton. His final job was as Managing Director of Villeroy & Boch before he retired in 2010 and he has been playing golf ever since.

## Colin O'Connor

Chris Luget introduced Judge Colin O'Connor who he has known for 17 years and is a neighbour. He was born and educated in Sydney where he attended St Aloysius. He graduated in law in 1970 and was admitted as a solicitor. In 1973 he became a partner in Ellisons and in 1975 he was admitted to the bar. In 1971 he joined the RAN as a legal officer for the Navy. In 1991 he became a QC and practiced in the Common Law division. In 2002 he was appointed as a judge of the District Court of NSW. He retired in 2022 and joined two golf clubs! He is a keen sailor. He and his wife Sue have 3 children and 14 grandchildren.

## Phillip Emdar

Bob Eckstein introduced Phillip Emdar. He attended The Scots College where he was Dux of the school in 1969. He then studied medicine at Sydney University before becoming a general pediatrician at Sydney Children's Hospital and Bankstown Hospital where he was Head of Department at both. He is a keen bushwalker and defender of the environment. He is also a keen tennis player and golfer. He is married with 2 daughters. He is interested in history and current affairs.

## 43<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

President Peter James then opened the Annual General Meeting and presented his report for the year.

### **President's Report to AGM 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

Thanks to you all for your contribution, support, ideas and enthusiasm that have helped make the past year so enjoyable and successful for our club.

Membership has risen by 8 to 137, including 17 new members.

Attendance at meetings has grown to around 80 for the past few months, when up to 60 have been coming to lunch, which is an important part of the camaraderie as we meet each other to discuss further the presentations we have just heard, and look at solving the problems of the world – quite a challenge just now.

I sincerely thank all the members of the committee who have worked so hard in their specific responsibilities, and also offered wise counsel as we have navigated the year together.

I especially wish to thank the 4 members who are retiring this year after numerous years contributing so much:

- Bill Cheshire helped us navigate the technology which has so rapidly evolved, including zoom when that was needed during the challenging times that covid imposed, until he moved to NZ a few months ago.
- Ted Brogan, who has arranged such a wonderful variety of activities, including Christmas and Winter lunches which need a lot of organisation.

- Adrian Pilton, who was President and in the past couple of years edited the newsletter which is such an important part of communicating among us, including with members unable to attend but who enjoy hearing about our speakers and activities, and
- John Carter, who was President and before that organised such interesting activities, and who was a very helpful mentor to me.

Our mantra is to provide a wide variety of interesting speaker topics and activities, roles in which Geoff McWilliam and Ted Brogan excelled. Our special thanks go to them, along with all the other committee members, who have provided such fine management of secretarial responsibilities, finance, systems, membership, the newsletter, liaison with UUSC – all of which are so important in the success of our club.

I would also particularly like to give my personal thanks to our Vice President John Doherty, who has been so constructive with innovative ideas and help, always with a sense of humour that helps the smooth relationships that enhance the enjoyment and effective management of our club.

It is very pleasing that I hand over the chain of presidency to a person who I know will do a great job in guiding the club into a promising future to the great enjoyment of us all.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Wayne Jones presented the audited accounts for the past year. The club is in a sound financial position with a surplus of \$5,541 for the year (compared to a loss in the previous year. He proposed that the Treasurer's Report and the Auditors' report be accepted. The motion was carried.

The Treasurer advised that Derrick Docherty, who has served as an auditor for many years proposed to retire and he thanked him for his service. Sean Wareing and Ian Lansdowne were proposed as auditors for the year commencing 1 January 2025 and were approved by the meeting.

### **Management Committee**

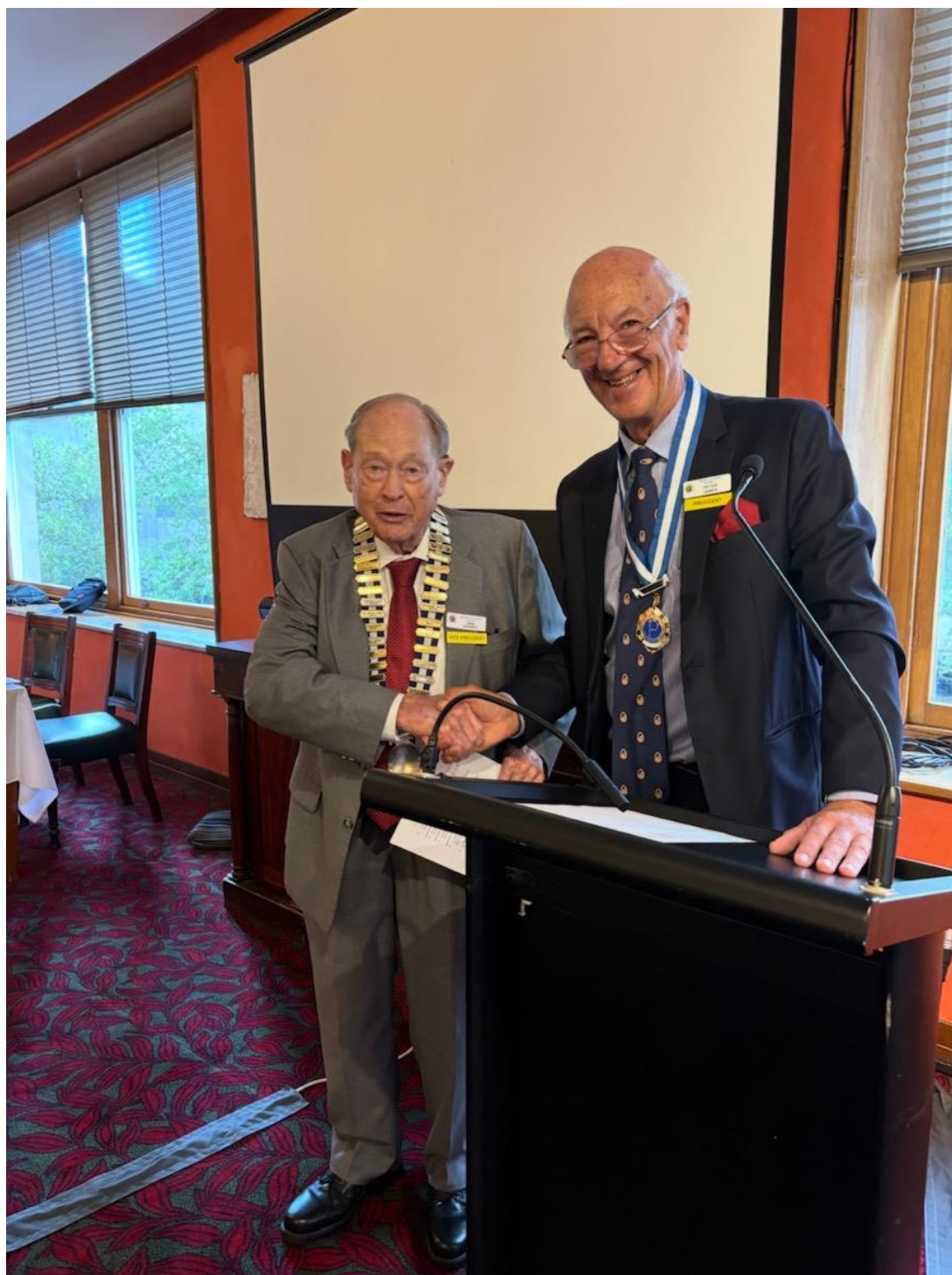
The President announced that, since the number of nominations for the management committee were equal to the number of positions available, all nominees were elected. The members of the committee for the year will be:

President	John Doherty
Vice-President	Rod Binsted
Secretary	Chris Luget
Treasurer	Wayne Jones
Guest Speakers	Geoff McWilliam
Activities	Kim Oates
Membership	Hugh Hopkins
Newsletter	Rod Hanson



Club Services            Robert Warburton  
System Administrator Tony Andrew  
Past President            Peter James

Peter James then handed over the chain of office to the new President.



President John Doherty being congratulated by Immediate Past President Peter James

President John Doherty then addressed the meeting with a message of thanks to the immediate Past President for an excellent year. He also thanked the staff of the UUSC. He then declared the AGM closed.

## Maurice Cutler

### Antarctica's Forgotten Heroes



Following a warm introduction by Geoff McWilliam, Maurice Cutler proceeded to give us an informative and memorable talk highlighting examples of:

- Extraordinary personal endurance
- Brave, exemplary leadership
- Important Australian participation, some not widely recognised

Maurice's talk focused on exploration of the Ross Sea (south of New Zealand), the Victoria Land coast, The Ross Ice Shelf and the South Pole. He had worked as a Journalist in these areas on two Antarctic expeditions in the 1950's.

To give us a sense of the extreme conditions prevailing on the Ross Ice Shelf which is a floating body of ice about the size of France with ice cliffs as high as 75 metres. Maurice spoke of the final expedition of Captain Robert Scott, a renowned Antarctic explorer who, with his two companions, expired in their tent on the Ross Ice Shelf and are now preserved, frozen within the ice.



Maurice Cutler in Antarctica as an 18 year old

Maurice subsequently commented that:

James Cook, surprisingly, was the first Antarctic explorer in 1773 in the small ships Resolution and Adventure. He crossed the Antarctic Circle twice and, unknowingly, circumnavigated the Antarctic continent which was covered in pack ice. A more definitive view of the Antarctic continent was obtained in 1840 through the voyages of Captain James Clark Ross who had previously discovered the magnetic North Pole and calculated that he got to within 1300 kms of the magnetic South Pole. (Both Poles move over time). In exploring by ship in hazardous, ice-laden waters Captain Ross displayed exemplary seamanship and is one of Maurice's Forgotten Heroes.

The first person to put a foot on the continental shore of Antarctica (in 1895) was Norwegian-Australian, Carstens Borchgrevink, discovering insects and plant life unexpectedly. He subsequently convinced a UK media magnate to finance a major expedition in 1898 with 31 men and 75 huskies. Of the 4 qualified scientists on board, two were Australian. As with Ross, the expedition was thwarted by the high mountains, winters that involved 24 hours/day of darkness and temperatures of 30 – 40 degrees below zero. They reached 78 degrees south but did not reach the magnetic south pole.

Maurice then proceeded to describe examples of perseverance, endurance, survival, self-sacrifice and tragedy:



Mawson and two colleagues dragged a sledge 2000 kms in a successful search for the magnetic south pole and carrying out some very useful mapping of the area. (When being picked up by the ship Nimrod Mawson fell into a 6m crevasse and was aided out, at great personal risk, by First Officer, John King Davis, admired by Maurice as one of the greatest of modern Antarctic Navigators and another of his Heroes.

Raymond Priestley and his party of 6 had been landed by Terra Nova on the Victoria Land Coast for summer work then stranded there when their ship was unable to reach them at the onset of Winter. This led to the party living in a snow cave for 9



months, eating penguin and seal meat, being covered in a black greasy combination of smoke and oil, experiencing no sun for 110 days, having no fresh clothes and, later, having to walk 500 kms back to Base Camp at McMurdo!

Shackleton with his 27 men and their ship Endurance were stuck in ice and marooned. After 500 nights at sea or stuck in ice, Shackleton decided to sail a small 22 foot boat with 5 companions 1500 kms through rough seas (and no GPS) to the small island of West Georgia to seek assistance. Four months later and after several attempts Shackleton rescued the remaining 22 men he had left behind. It has been recognised as one of the greatest survival stories ever told, and an extraordinary story of leadership. Less known is the story of the Ross Sea Party who in their efforts to support the Shackleton expedition endured terrible physical conditions, dragging sledges in gale force winds and sub zero temperatures, with scurvy and ice floes leading to the tragic loss of three lives. "In the annals of history there are few parallels for their courage, dedication, determination and self-sacrifice"

On behalf of all members David Brand thanked Maurice for a most informative talk highlighting quite extraordinary feats of endurance and leadership.

**Alan Locke**

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

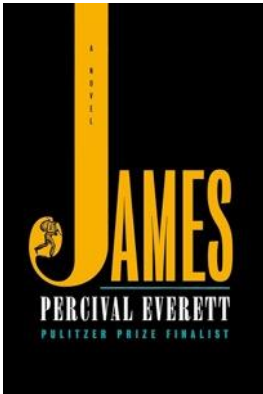
The tour of Government House, Sydney on Friday **11 April** is fully booked with a waiting list. Given the popularity of the tour it is hoped that another tour will be possible later in the year.

We have reserved Monday **14 July** 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'. The Christmas lunch will be held at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron on 8 December. Neither of these events are yet open for bookings but please mark them in your diaries.

Other events during the year will be announced on the website and at our meetings when they have been confirmed by the Events organiser for 2025, Kim Oates.

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

### James by Percival Everett (2024) – 303 pages – Fiction.



Shortlisted for the 2024 Booker Prize, Jim, the poor black slave in Huckleberry Finn, tells the story from his point of view. It is 1861 on the Mississippi River and the outlook for Blacks at that time was appalling.

Unlike Jim, in Huckleberry Finn, this thanks Jim, can read, write and speak as well as any educated white man. And that is just the beginning. So this is all about the life of a black slave in the southern states of the USA before the American Civil War.

The book is brilliantly written and full of “adventures”. The treatment of slaves at that time was horrific and the new Jim (or James) becomes a hero and puts to shame (and worse) the very many “whites” who ill- treat him.

So whether or not you have recently read Huckleberry Finn, this is an amazing tale, well written and hard to put down. Aficionados of Huckleberry Finn (the book) may not be as enthusiastic.

*David Castle*

## A TOUCH OF HUMOUR!

### The Bookkeeper and the Lawyer

The Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper, Guido, has cheated him out of \$10 million. His bookkeeper is deaf. That was the reason he got the job in the first place. It was assumed that Guido would hear nothing and could therefore never have to testify in court.

When the Godfather goes to confront Guido about the missing \$10 million, he takes along his lawyer, who knows sign language. The Godfather tells the lawyer, "Ask him where the money is."

The lawyer, (using sign language), asks Guido, Where's the money? Guido signs back, "I don't know what you are talking about."

The lawyer tells the Godfather, "He says he doesn't know what you are talking about." The Godfather pulls out a pistol, puts it to Guido's head and says, "Ask him again or I'll kill him!" The lawyer signs to Guido, "He'll kill you if you don't tell him."

Guido trembles and signs back: "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed at my cousin Bruno's house. The Godfather asks the lawyer, "What did he say?"

The lawyer replies, "He says you don't have the guts to pull the trigger.

Don't you just love lawyers?

### Cartoons



**The first professional soccer player to be vaccinated.**



**I'm no expert but I think this monkey may be drunk!**

## 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.**