



## THE MEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VALENTINE Inc

'The Young, Friendly, Fun Club'

NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER 2021

Club Website: [www.valentineprobus.au2.com](http://www.valentineprobus.au2.com)

The official publication of the Men's Probus  
Club of Valentine Inc.

Private and confidential for Probus use only and no other purpose

The Club meets in [The Tingira Community  
Church at 13 Neridah Road Belmont North](#)

4th Monday of each month at 10 am

**Except October 2021 - see below**

Our September Meeting has been  
**CANCELLED** due to  
COVID Restrictions

***Provided the restrictions are eased or lifted to  
allow our October meeting to proceed it will  
be ONE WEEK EARLIER on Monday 18th.  
PLEASE NOTE YOUR DIARIES AS THERE  
WILL BE A SPECIAL EVENT.***

Future Guest Speakers:

October - Dave Sullivan talking on  
NASA Stratosphere Balloon Program

November - Ken Watt talking on  
Cooks Hill to Valentine

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES  
(SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS)**

**WALKING GROUP**  
Meets every Wednesday morning

**GENTLEMEN'S LUNCH**  
First Monday of every month

**CHRISTMAS LUNCH**  
Booked for 14 December 2021

### ***President's message.***

Our Club will reach a milestone at our next general meeting when we can all congregate (subject to restrictions at that time). Your committee is organising something special for the occasion.

If you are not aware of the milestone and would like to provide your suggestions of what the occasion may be please email the editor on - [probusnews2280@gmail.com](mailto:probusnews2280@gmail.com)

I for one am looking forward to enjoying your company over a coffee or tea with biscuits. Better still, participating in a BBQ cooked by Austin Greener and his helpers.

As you are well aware our meeting last month was cancelled thereby no guest speaker or write up. ***If at all possible we will hold our October meeting as per restrictions at that time.*** If circumstances change and we are unable to hold the meeting an advice will be sent to all members.

Roger has earmarked some very exciting Guest Speakers for when we can resume our meetings. So keep your diaries clear for our future general meeting dates.

Our Guest Speaker for this month was going to be a representative from the Rural Fire Brigade Service talking on the fire season preparations. It is most appropriate as the fire season has commenced. Please take the appropriate action to prepare your property.

***Continuing President's message***

If in doubt of what to do make a phone call to your local Fire Station and receive advice on the action required.

You might have noticed our Life of Riley Tour to Jindabyne in October has disappeared from our 'Current Activities' notice. Unfortunately, due to the increased restrictions management of Lake Jindabyne Hotel (LJH) took the decision to cancel all September and October 2021 tours. Sadly this affected our tour but the reasons for cancellation are understandable. As the tour was booked back in July 2019 a full refund was requested from LJH. Members involved have been contacted separately and full refunds of deposit monies have been made. A thank you to Brian Sullivan, our Treasurer, for organising these refunds once received from LJH.

It's been difficult in the lockdown period so I hope you all have been keeping busy in the garden, reading, exercising, hobbies, communicating with family and friends. If you want to have a talk pick up the phone and dial a club member.

In a 'Seniors Moment' I decided to embark on some carpentry. I uncovered my drop saw, saw bench and drill press and located my biscuit machine and sander. I had some merbau decking timber offcuts. I organised myself and replaced an old marble top that was on an old singer sewing machine frame.

*After attaching the new top and applying some linseed oil the result is opposite*



***Continuing President's message***

If you have any projects to share or something else of interest please send them to the editor for inclusion in one of our newsletters.

If you remember the weekend of 11 and 12 September temperatures reached as high as 29 to 30 degrees. As it was like summer temperatures I had my first swim of the season. The water temperature was a comfortable 26/27 degrees. A very pleasant swim mid to late afternoon on the Sunday.

Anyway, enough of me. During the lockdown the committee has reintroduced the 'Telephone Tree' that Joe Gibson initiated. So you should have received a call or two from one of our committee members.

Until next time take care and be safe.

Trevor

***Lake Macquarie Library***

I recently received an email from Lake Mac Libraries writing about a new app that has been developed.

This app provides access to a wide-range of digital resources in one place. It includes all the latest eBooks, eMagazines, audiobooks, music and TV streaming services that the library has to offer.

The app is free to download and you use your library card number for access.

If you want more information or sign up to their newsletters email -

[lakelibraries@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lakelibraries@lakemac.nsw.gov.au)

### *Music Segment*

Have you been listening to your favourite music? Dusted off the old vinyls you have and played them on your turntable or upgraded and gone digital? Who are your favourite musicians singing your favourite songs? Let's have a think. We'll start with the fifties, how about:

Tony Bennett	Rags to Riches
Dean Martin (1917 - 1995)	That's Amore
Ray Charles (1930 - 2004)	Hit The Road Jack
Johnny Mathis	Too Much, Too Little, Too Late
Andy Williams (1927 - 2012)	The Impossible Dream
Louis Armstrong (1901 - 1971)	What a Wonderful World
Frank Sinatra (1915 - 1998)	Fly Me to the Moon

Coming into the Rock and Roll era was:

Fats Domino	Ain't That a Shame
Elvis Presley (1935 - 1977)	Jail House Rock

This is just the tip of the iceberg, there are many, many more as you know.

### **GREATER BANK.** *Payments to the Club*

Details for making payment either on-line or at a branch.

BSB 637-000 and  
Account no. 780356294 and  
(record your 'surname' + one word as a brief reference covering the purpose) e.g. "FEES"

### Share with a Friend

Don't forget to send our newsletter on to a friend or direct them to our website :

<http://www.valentineprobus.au2.com/>

Encourage your friends to come to our meetings. We have great Guest Speakers.

### *Puzzle Segment*

*Last month questions and answers:*

56. Tell a person to think of any number, say 12; multiply by 3, equals 36. Add 2, equals 38. Multiply by 3, equals 114. Add the number first thought of, equal 126. If he tells you the answer you can tell him the number he first thought of.

Answer: Cut off last figure of his answer.

*What about this one:*

89. Which would you prefer: a ton of half-sovereigns, or half a ton of sovereigns?

### **Have you any to share?**

### **Readers Corner**

No new titles in our library. What would be of interest to you? One of the books is 'Nemesis, The Last Days of the American Republic' by Chalmers Johnson.

Chalmers was an American political scientist specialising in comparative politics, and professor emeritus of the University of California, San Diego. He served in the Korean War, consultant to the CIA and chaired the Centre for Chinese Studies at the University of California, president and co-founder of the Japan Policy Research Institute.

Chalmers wrote a number of books based on his knowledge of the system. Does he interest you?

*What have you been reading?*

I recently read a Dan Brown book. Like all good fiction writers they keep you involved and interested right to the last page.

Dan's plot was mainly carried out in Florence, Italy and ended in Istanbul, Turkey. If you have visited Florence the places that are involved in the book will definitely bring back memories. Iconic places like the Duomo, the Museum of Costume and Fashion in the Uffizi galleries which encompasses the Boboli Gardens, House of Dante and many more. The climax to the story ends up in Hagia Sophia a Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.

If you haven't visited Hagia Sophia it is very worthwhile to google and take in the enormity of the mosque. Not only the size but construction as well.

Do you know the book I have read? Yes, it's 'Inferno' the fourth book in a The Da Vinci Code series.

### **Technical Section**

*If you missed Alan Carter's email of 16 August 2021 then you have a second chance of reviewing his suggestion.*

Service NSW is now providing a COVID-19 CHECK IN CARD as an alternative to using the QR code on your mobile for identification.

Below is the link to create with the option of having it posted or emailed to you. If emailed, you just have to print it.

Because it is only a new feature, not all shops have the necessary scanning equipment at the moment.

This will be a great feature for those who are uncomfortable using the mobile phone to scan QR codes.

Here is the link to get started:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/create-covid-19-check-card>

WHO HAS  
SOMETHING  
TO  
CONTRIBUTE?

*Geoff Black recently replied to an article in the Newcastle Herald (NH). It was published on Saturday, 11 September 2021 appearing on page 21. You can read his extended version in our newsletter as follows:*

### **Why it is doubtful that UFOs exist**

Superstitious people love stories about UFOs and conspiracy theories. As science advances, superstition should retreat. But this is not the case. That is why books on UFOs, like that of Ross Coultart, *In Plain Sight*, still sell.

Life must abound in the cosmos' almost infinite number of stars and galaxies. The edge of the observable universe is moving away from Earth, faster than the speed of light. So, the universe is even more vast than we can observe. The updated Drake Equation almost proves that resilient life must have evolved everywhere, built from simple molecular building blocks. But not necessarily intelligent life. Intelligence is irrelevant in evolutionary survival. Selfish, uninspired intelligence may even be a handicap.

Humankind is rapidly destroying Earth, their only home, along with Earth's other species. There is no Earth 2 to which many of us could escape. To survive a self-inflicted extinction event, such as a nuclear war, or global warming, or a natural extinction event, the late Stephen Hawking suggested that we need a back-up plan. He suggested that we need to colonise space. Hawking suggested that some of us could live on mega space stations, or in moon colonies, or in colonies on other planets.

But, in my view, the problems of living elsewhere in our Solar System are too difficult. Conditions beyond Earth are just too hostile. Humankind has evolved within Earth's environmental conditions. We would need to create and duplicate Earth conditions in all our space colonies. Moreover, we are still learning about these conditions. Subtle differences in the conditions provided could cause huge health problems for colonists. We are all adapted to live on Earth, not in space.

Duplicating Earth conditions elsewhere would be very expensive, even if we could. It may be better to clean up Earth, manage population and avoid future extinction events. For example, detect incoming extinction-sized meteorites. Having detected them, we should learn how to break them up or deflect them.

Returning to life elsewhere in the cosmos.

An expanded SETI exploration project might soon discover an intelligent radio signal amidst the background radio static of the sky that originates from beyond the Solar System.

The deep space telescope, James Webb, will be launched later this year. It will seek to detect signs of life on Earth-like exoplanets orbiting stars within our galaxy.

Simple life may be much closer.

The Mars Rover, Perseverance, landed on Mars' surface in February 2021. It is currently exploring the Jezero Crater. Jezero Crater was a lake bed 3.8b years ago, when Mars held liquid water on its surface. Perseverance is trying to sniff out microbial life or its fossilised remains in the crater's sub-soil. Since its onboard experiments are limited, Perseverance will lay aside samples, in sterile tubes. These tubes will protect the samples from the cosmic and solar radiation, that constantly bombards Mars' surface. At a future time, NASA aims to pick up the Perseverance samples and bring them back to Earth. Back on Earth, microbiologists will examine the samples in their more sophisticated laboratories.

These microbiologists might show that life on Earth originated on a warmer, wetter Mars. Life on Earth may have been seeded from Mars. This may have occurred, long ago, during the 'late heavy bombardment' when comets and asteroids smashed into the inner planets, 4.1b – 3.8b years ago. Maybe ejecta from Mars' surface from one such meteorite impact, eventually brought simple, deep frozen life to Earth. If this was the case, we might all be Martians.

### ***Geoff Black's letter continued***

Einstein's special relativity and the vast distances between stars, precludes visits by UFOs or humankind ever visiting exoplanets orbiting neighbouring stars. Moving at currently attainable speeds, it would take a space craft 20 000 years to reach our nearest stellar neighbour, Proxima Centauri, 4.2 light years away. Such a journey would be purely scientific and robotic, since Proxima Centauri is extremely unlikely to possess habitable planets. Proxima Centauri is a dim red dwarf or flare star. Any habitable planet within its CHZ (circumstellar habitable zone) would be tidally locked and stripped of any water and air it ever possessed by Proxima Centauri's solar wind.

A 20 000 year journey is just too long anyway. If humankind wants to go to the stars, we need to accelerate a starship towards or beyond light speed. But this presents real problems. Light speed is the universe's speed limit, but matter cannot go at this speed.

Propelling a starship at a significant fraction of light speed requires unattainable amounts of energy. Or else, we would need to control the conversion of matter to energy and convert the energy back to the same matter: for both the starship and its occupants. Both these things are impossible.

Travelling beyond light speed is forever science fiction. It would require the warping or folding of the 'fabric' of space-time. In the SF story of Star Trek, the starship *Enterprise* somehow manages to travel faster than light (FTL), or, as it called in the show, 'warp speed'. But, in a FTL starship, time would do more than slow down, as happens with all moving objects. For occupants of such a starship, time would go backwards. Passengers would arrive at their destination before they set out – clearly ridiculous.

Using black holes and wormholes, à la *Interstellar* is also out. Wormholes are theorised in astrophysics. They may connect supermassive black holes (SMBHs) at the centre of galaxies. If this is the case, the nearest wormhole is at the Milky Way's galactic centre, 24 000 light years away. Even if we discovered a nearby black hole that led to a wormhole, where would the wormhole lead? How would we use it to navigate to our destination? Also, as a starship approached the black hole entrance to the wormhole, gravity would rapidly increase, eventually becoming infinite. Even light cannot escape from a black hole. Gravity would pull in, 'spaghettify' and crush any space vehicles and their occupants into nothing, as soon as the vehicle crossed the black hole's 'event horizon'.

Two more realistic and slower modes of space travel are the generational starship, and an AI-controlled starship in which human passengers would be cryogenically frozen as they set out and defrosted and awakened by robots when their starship arrived. But these modes of space travel still remain science fiction. Any starship would need shields to protect its passengers against cosmic rays and invisible interstellar space matter. This may be possible, but as yet, such shields haven't been invented.

Geoff Black's letter continued

The discovery of life within our Solar System, on Mars or some other planet, may occur soon. When and if this discovery is made, many religionists will need to accept that life is not unique to Earth and that it has evolved or been created elsewhere. Many may abandon their religions.

SETI may struggle for decades or centuries according to the Fermi Paradox (if there is intelligent life out there and they know about radios, where is everyone?). Any radio signal that SETI dishes on Earth received would need to come from a radio-savvy alien civilisation. But such a signal may be from a far distant, and long-extinct alien civilisation. We might never know.

Do any ETs know that we are here? Maybe not. The first radio signal left Earth in 1900 when Marconi sent it. Since 1900, the sphere of weak "intelligent" radio signals has expanded to 121 light years. It has reached only 75 star systems nearby. Only a handful of these stars possess habitable planets on which intelligent life may exist. Again, the ETs would need to be radio-savvy and point their dishes in Earth's direction in order to pick up our weak signals. But what would aliens make of morning radio discussions and music of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century? What would they make of 'I love Lucy' or Hogan's Heroes?

Some ETs within this limited 121 light year radius, may know that humans are here. But they may not want to communicate with us. They may consider us too unintelligent or dangerous. Would we talk to bull ants? Would we be curious enough to approach or stand on a bull ants' nest and observe them, if we knew that the ants were there? What can bull ants possibly teach us? We might end up stamping on them, as they stung us. It may be fortunate for us and for the ETs, that ETs cannot visit Earth.

If SETI ever discovers an 'intelligent' radio signal coming from beyond our Solar System, this will be even more challenging for religionists. Humankind might not be God's ultimate creative achievement - "a little lower than the angels" (Psalm 8:5). Also, what is God playing at? Why has he made interstellar places and beings that live there, forever unreachable to us? Is he trying to humble humankind and exult his own majesty? Really!

Although we may discover the existence of intelligent ETs on exoplanets, we will never physically "shake hands" with them. Even a conversation with nearby ETs will take decades or centuries.

Since Einstein's special relativity has proved immutable, UFO reports must be stories made up by people seeking notoriety, honest human observational mistakes, or as yet, unexplained physical phenomena.

*Geoff Black*

# Memories of Yester Year



**These are the LAW!**  
**SIX hand signals you should always use...**

Wood used! It is your responsibility — to use these hand signals! Failure to do so in an appropriate case is an offence punishable by law. Your neglect may also affect your liability in the event of an accident. Make your intentions clear, early . . . give the CORRECT HAND SIGNALS . . . BEFORE you act!

Issued by the  
**QUEENSLAND ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL**

*Observe Road Safety Laws*  
**FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND FOR OTHERS**



## Committee Members 2021

President:	Trevor Brown	4946 9119
Vice President:	Geoff Black	4972 2143
General Secretary:	Robert Rae	0411 141 823
Membership Secretary:	Alan Carter	0411 425 668
Assistant Secretary:	Bruce Helman	4946 7974
Treasurer:	Brian Sullivan	4946 1153
Events Coordinator:	John Benson	4948 1339
Asst. Events Coord:	John McGrath	4946 7460
Program Officer:	Roger Wakefield	4954 4373
Newsletter:	<b>Vacant</b>	
Webmaster:	Alan Carter	0411 425 668
Welfare/Attendance:	<b>Vacant</b>	
Historian:	Kevin Hepplewhite	4946 7775
Roving:	Kevin Hepplewhite	4946 7775
Roving:	<b>Vacant</b>	

## Support Officers - appointed by the Committee

Public Officer:	Brian Sullivan	4946 1153
Book Exchange:	<b>Vacant</b>	
Morning Tea Coord:	Ron Tooney	4958 7910
Walking Group Coord:	Ron Tooney	4958 7910
Computer Support:	Alan Carter	0411 425 668
BBQ Coord:	Austin Greener	4946 9192