



THE MEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VALENTINE Inc

'The Young, Friendly, Fun Club'

NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2021

Club Website: www.valentineprobus.au2.com



CHRISTMAS EDITION



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

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

**Our next meeting is Monday,
24th January 2022 at 10am**

CURRENT ACTIVITIES (*SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS*)

WALKING GROUP -

Meets every Wednesday morning, contact
Ron Tooney our coordinator for more details.

GENTLEMEN'S LUNCH -

First Monday of every month commencing
7th February, contact
John Benson our coordinator for more details.

Website Information

When our Guest Speakers and activities are
locked in for next year the information will be
on our website and in our January newsletter.

Check our website for the photos of our
Christmas Luncheon.

President's message

Merry Christmas and a Happy New
Year to you all.

There is no general meeting this
month but we certainly enjoyed the
friendship, fellowship and fun at our
annual Christmas Luncheon.

Our guests were introduced and
received a warm welcome.

There was a lot of organisation
involved and thank you Bernie, Joy
Higgs, Alan, Robert and Brian
Sullivan for their generous efforts. A
thank you also to everyone who was
involved in making the day so
enjoyable.

Bernie was instrumental in the lucky
door prizes and the 17 guests who
received one of them I hope will
enjoy. The last bottle won by 'heads
and tails' challenge was Ray.



President's message continued

We took the opportunity to present John Gatt with his OBE which he accepted graciously. The presentation was going to be at our November meeting but John's family had other ideas and took him away for a weekend of celebration.

Nearing the end Alan handed out a calendar and Robert followed with a pen. It was mentioned that once everyone arrived home to write our monthly general meeting dates on the calendar (referring to our website for the correct dates), gentlemen's lunch and walking group dates. Once Roger has locked in the extraordinary and exciting guest speakers they can also be added. In this regard you won't miss out on any of our exciting events.

Nearing the end of the celebrations a further surprise was added to the already great afternoon. The Hunter Women of Note Choir were kind enough to sing a couple of Christmas Carols for us, they had exceptional voices. We were fortunate they were enjoying their Christmas celebrations in the next room.

A thank you to everyone who attended for supporting the club. It is acknowledged that some could not attend due to family commitments and health issues.

If you attended or were unable to attend have a look at the photos taken which are now on our website.

Whatever you may be undertaking over the festive season enjoy.

Continued in next column



President's message continued

Safe travels to those who are venturing away from beautiful Lake Macquarie.

Looking forward to seeing you all next year.

Cheers 🍷🍷🍷🍷 Trevor

Bill Davidson was kind enough to pen our write-up of Ken Watt's presentation at our November meeting.

Our Guest Speaker, club foundation member and a young 94 year old Ken Watt.

Ken opened his presentation by talking about the history of the Cooks Hill, Tighes Hill and surrounding districts in so far as the naming of the suburbs and streets.

It was noticed that from that point on Ken didn't refer to his notes but talked from memory.

Ken was born in Union Street Newcastle behind the Arnotts biscuit factory. Walking through their carpark they were given broken biscuits and during the festive season were lucky enough to receive a piece of Christmas cake.

Guest Speaker continued

It was a time when Australian Agricultural Company (A A company) had most of the coal mining rites in the district. AA Company had their 'Sea Pitt' where Bull and Brooks St is now an intersection in Cooks Hill. Ken continued to say the company went on to become a monopoly on coal in the district for some time. Can you imagine coal trains in Hunter Street and sand dunes in Darby Street, times have changed. Sand was not only in Darby Street but right across the landscape of Cooks Hill, Bar Beach and The Junction.

Ken also remembers the arrival of a Red Cross train at Broadmeadow station carrying prisoners of war with armed guards.

The war years saw Newcastle under attack by mini submarine and Ken recollected the damage was not as great as he had imagined.

On the work side of Ken's life he started as a fitter and turner apprentice at the Cardiff Railway Workshop. He mentioned the Newcastle Ship Yards. He and a few of his work colleagues were transferred to Junee and Ken completed his apprenticeship at the Roundhouse in Junee (now a museum).

Ken became involved in the football club at Junee and travelled the Riverina District. He mentioned 12 towns that he visited including Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga, Temora, Gundagai, West Wyalong, Cowra and Boorowa.

While in Junee he meet his wife, Joyce, who played basketball at the time. He said he grew up mentally and Joyce had a say in that aspect of his life.

Continued in next column

Guest Speaker continued

He and Joyce frequented the local theatre where they knew the owners and were lucky enough to watch some movies 'sitting in the gods of the theatre' known as the projection room.

Ken became restless and as so many of us did, bought a block of land at Marks Point for 120 pounds and subsequently built their home. He admits he should have hung on to it. If my memory serves me correctly they moved from Marks Point to Valentine. Ken will tell us if we are incorrect.

At the time of purchase Ken was looking for a change. He obtained his leaving certificate at Hamilton Evening College and then 2 years at Newcastle Teachers College. On completion gained a position as a secondary school teacher. He also undertook an Industrial Arts Diploma and taught part time at TAFE (Technical and Further Education) at night). He retired from his teaching career many years later.

Ken dropped some words of wisdom, "life is made enjoyable by the people you meet and the experiences you have had all add to the wisdom of the future". I think we can all relate to this.

Ken finished his address with "Everybody has a story to tell" and on this we all agreed. Ken's experiences from Cooks Hill to Valentine was a most interesting story.

George Bolton passed the vote of thanks to Ken for such an enjoyable talk. After George presented Ken with the certificate of appreciation and small gift, questions continued.

A big thank you to Ken.

See some photos on the next page



True Story

My cousin and his son are very keen fishermen and this is their story about their last fishing trip along the Murray River.

This is a true story, even if hard to believe.

Last week we managed to get up to the Murray for a day, to fish off the river bank, after a couple (or more) Murray cod.

The day began badly, got worse as we lost more lures to snags, and soon we had only one lure left between us.

My son bent down to the water against the bank to clear the lure of weed, and yelled “hey dad, there’s a red-bellied black snake down here with a small frog in its mouth. Those frogs are great cod bait. I’m gunna’ get it he said...with the lures lost we need that bait, and the snake can’t bite me with the frog in its mouth.”

True story continued

So before I know it he’s put his rod down, reached out to grab the snake behind it’s head, gently removed the frog and put it in his pocket.

But now he has the problem of how to safely release the snake. I cried out, “hang on, I’ve got my hip flask of Glenfiddich malt here, ---just in case the weather turns cold---- a touch of that will do it.” So I pour just a teaspoon of the whisky down the snake’s throat, and sure enough, in less than a minute the snake’s eyes roll and it goes very relaxed. Marc releases it well away from us, on the water’s edge, and we get on with our fishing.

Nothing much happens for half an hour , and then I hear a rustle in the grass nearby, and as I look around I feel a bump—a sort of a tap-tap -tap on my boot. I look down and--- you wouldn’t believe this----- its that damn snake looking up at me with a couple more frogs in its mouth. !

Dinkum.....absolutely true!!

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
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Welfare/Attendance	Vacant	
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Roving:	Kevin Hepplewhite	4946 7775
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Support Officers - appointed by the Committee		
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Book Exchange:	Vacant	
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