



December 2025



It is with great sadness that we announce the unexpected passing of our dear friend and the President of PROBUS Global, Richard Furlong, on October 24, 2025.

As you all know, Richard was the heart and soul of PROBUS Global. It was his initiative in 2017 that inspired a small group of us to begin work on forming an international community of PROBUS members interested in communicating and sharing our thoughts and ideas.

Richard took over as President in 2021, and his enthusiasm and support for our activities was the very core of our organization.

We will miss him greatly. He leaves some huge shoes to fill.

Richard's obituary and a guest book for sharing memories and condolences can be found at the following link:

<https://www.arbormemorial.ca/en/taylor/obituaries/richard-james-furlong/149891.html>

Rest in peace, dear friend.

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Editor's Remarks

As I write my first words for this Newsletter, it is with a heavy heart that I do so having learnt of the death of President, Richard Furlong, who, judging by your comments, was dearly loved by the Probus Global community; he will be a hard act to follow, as his inspiration, drive and vision brought us all together. We had a few exchanges of emails when he congratulated me on becoming your newly appointed Newsletter Editor and I looked forward to his guidance and fellowship as time progressed, sadly this was not to be. The Probus world has lost someone who was clearly very special to you all. *Requiescat in pace.*

However, I have been pleasantly surprised at the response from those of you sending me your own stories, pictures and reports of your activities. Indeed, the outgoing Editor, Mary Wilson, said that I may have to generate plenty of my own stuff in reserve just in case nothing is received, thankfully this is not the case. But that said, I have compiled a few pieces I hope will interest you anyway.

What I have noticed is the level of activity from Probus Groups in India, Canada and New Zealand, puts the efforts from the UK to shame, apart from a few stalwarts who seem to be regular contributors. Dr. Rau from Hyderabad sent me some wonderful pictures to support their recent anniversary as did the Probus Club of Chennai, who with a Senior Citizens' Association, celebrated the *International Day of the Elderly* at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture, Alwarpet, Chennai.

Liz Smith from New Zealand is clearly actively involved with her Group. Indeed it was during an exchange of emails that she said she had visited the UK on a number of occasions and even visited Wales, where her husband David, bought her a wooden spoon as a souvenir. Well, that sparked my interest and I sent her a message explaining that these are called '*Love Spoons*', traditionally hand-carved in Wales and a centuries old tradition.

So I shall pen an article about their origins in some future Newsletter.



South Africa

I received a report on the activities from South Africa from Charles Sprong, who like many others, struggles sometimes to get volunteers to take on the various roles vital to the success of running a Club, and I also received information about a fledgling Probus Club in Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines. So this international gathering of like-minded, interested people is now spreading further across the globe, good luck to both of them!



Probus Award to Mary Wilson



Mary Wilson who has recently resigned as Newsletter Editor was presented with the Shirley Roberts Award for her dedicated work over the past almost four years and received her award from Merv Richens, Probus

Australia Co-ordinator. Mary was asked to say a few words as to her time as Editor and I have included this for you.

'I joined PG in June 2019, eleven years after my late husband, Geoff, and I chartered a new Probus Club. From our club's inception, I edited its newsletter, which we distributed widely. Previously, I had been a member of Rotary for over 20 years and had also edited my Rotary Club's newsletter for many years.

PG's first President, the late Shirley Roberts, wrote her own bulletins, and after her passing, the search was on for a newsletter editor. Rob Neary from the Probus Association of Queensland (PAQ) stepped into the breach and produced several issues of a very professional newsletter and asked me whether I would take over the PG publication as I had previously won a PAQ competition for the best Probus newsletter in Queensland. At first I hesitated. How could I possibly follow in Rob's shoes, given his production was so impressive and polished? He reassured me that it didn't matter if I didn't own publishing software; the content was what counted, and I was doing well enough with MS Word.

So, I took it on, was left to it, and apart from editing for almost four years, I thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie of the committee and becoming more familiar with Probus worldwide. It was a rewarding experience, and

I was both astonished and humbled to receive PG's Shirley Roberts Memorial Award.'

**'In Flanders fields the poppies blow between
the crosses, row on row' [1]**

An important event across the world is commemorated on Remembrance Day in November and I, together with many others, will be on parade bespoke with medals.

I received a lovely tribute from Allan Evans, Probus Canada, whose late father Flying Officer Allan Llewellyn Evans, RCAF was killed when his aircraft was shot down over Germany on a night bombing raid from the UK. I did some research for Allan and with a name like that, there must have been some Welsh connection, and indeed there was! I have put together his story with the assistance of Allan and this is now on-going as I delve further into the family background.



Throughout many countries across the globe, we remember those who gave their lives during conflict each year on

Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day, also known as Poppy Day, is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War to honour armed forces members who died in the line of duty. The day is also marked by war remembrances in several other non-Commonwealth countries. In most countries, Remembrance Day is observed on 11th November to recall the end of First World War hostilities. Hostilities ended 'at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month' of 1918.

The tradition of Remembrance Day evolved out of Armistice Day. The initial Armistice Day

was observed at Buckingham Palace, commencing with King George V hosting a 'Banquet in Honour of the President of the French Republic' during the evening hours of 10th November 1919. The first official Armistice Day was subsequently held on the grounds of Buckingham Palace the following morning. During the Second World War, many countries changed the name of the holiday. Member states of the Commonwealth of Nations adopted Remembrance Day, while the United States chose Veterans Day and in recent decades, Remembrance Day has been largely eclipsed as the national day of war commemoration by Australian and New Zealand Forces by ANZAC Day on the 25th April.

With all this in mind, I was delighted to receive an article from Allan Evans, Probus Canada Director, Ontario District No. 3, and a Past President of The Probus Club of Cooksville with reference to his late father, Flying Officer Allan Llewellyn Evans of the Royal Canadian Air Force who was killed on the night of 28/29 January 1945, just a few months before the hostilities with Germany ended. He was a member of the crew of a Halifax bomber of No. 426 squadron that first formed at RAF Dishforth and later RAF Linton-on-Ouse, Yorkshire that took off at 1906 hours to take part in a night raid to Stuttgart with 16 other aircraft from the same Squadron to target munitions factories. Bomber Command had tasked over 600 aircraft in the raid. Aircraft NP768, piloted by Wing Commander Fitzroy Cavendish Carling-Kelly RCAF, sustained severe damage from ground fire and the crew were forced to bail-out, some made it and were taken prisoner, but regretfully F/O Evans was killed. He is buried along with some of his colleagues in Durnbach War Cemetery, a village some 50 kilometres south of Munich. His son Allan together with Allan's son, Mark visited his grave for the first time this year.

When I first received this story, I messaged Allan to say that his father's name is typically Welsh and there must be a connection with Wales somewhere, and embarking on some research, indeed there was! His father was born in the South Wales mining village of Bedwellty, in April 1921 a few miles from where I once lived and, with his parents, emigrated to Canada when Allan was 6. Interestingly, the British politician and one-time leader of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock was also from there and on entering the House of Lords, took the title Baron Kinnock of Bedwellty.

So I hope we all remembered these brave young men on Remembrance Day and what they gave in the cause of peace, enlisting at the age of 20 along with many others from the Commonwealth forces, Allan made the ultimate sacrifice!

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning – we WILL remember them!

Requiescat in pace

[1] Written by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John Mcrae. He was inspired to write it on May 3, 1915.



The PROBUS Club of St Catharines Remembrance Day Presentation on November 11 is available for viewing on the [PROBUS Global Youtube Channel](#).

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas [1]

At this festive time, as the saying goes, 'eat, drink and be merry', and we over indulge, spend too much money, fall-out with the in-laws and all have a wonderful time together. Father carves the turkey, Uncle George drinks too much sherry and everyone falls asleep until Christmas cake time at 4 pm. One of the traditions is the pulling of Christmas crackers and the wearing of funny, colourful paper-hats and the groans of telling the corniest of jokes, such as:

What do you call a blind reindeer? - No eye-deer

What do you call a blind reindeer with no legs? - Still no eye-deer

But amongst this background of mirth one has to be careful in expressing ideas, opinions, joke telling, etc. Someone will no doubt be offended, cause an argument and the Christmas spirit becomes mired in apologies, counter-arguments and hostilities; been here before, oh yes. This year, try not to be offended or upset and think of those who will not get a hot meal at Christmas or even a roof over their head as the number of homeless people living on the streets is a shocking statistic.

For example, Nigeria is frequently mentioned as having the largest homeless population, with estimates around 25 million people, Syria is often cited as having the highest rate of homelessness globally, other countries such as the UK, France, and the Czech Republic are frequently mentioned for high rates of homelessness, especially in developed nations. For example, one report indicates the UK has the highest rate of homelessness in the developed world, although there is no internationally agreed-upon definition of homelessness, and data collection methods

differ significantly between countries, making it difficult to get an accurate picture of global homelessness.

However, although Christmas is celebrated by millions across the world, it must be remembered that this is a Christian festival that commemorates the birth of Christ and not all nations across the globe follow Christianity. For example, there appear to be five countries where celebrating Christmas is actually considered illegal.

If you were travelling to Tajikistan for a Yuletide holiday, you would get a very rude awakening when you arrive and find that all festive celebrations, Christmas trees and gift-giving are banned. The south-east Asian nation of Brunei enforces similar Scrooge-like rules, forbidding people from wearing Santa hats - or any Christmas related clothing or accessory. The punishment for gathering for a shindig on 25th December without permission is a fine of up to £16,000 or up to five years in prison - or both. There is a similar attitude in North Korea around Christmas time, as Kim Jong-un's strict regime only allows residents to pay tribute to his family, the ruling party and its leaders, rather than Jesus Christ or Santa Claus. Saudi Arabia similarly vetoed any 'visible signs' of festive fun, because residents and tourists have to follow the lunar calendar and not the Gregorian calendar. People in China appear to be in the same boat - and the nation harshly branded the holiday season the 'Festival of Shame' and 'Western spiritual opium' in wake of the Communist Party's (CCP) crackdown on outside influences. Although the Christmas Story took place in Israel, Christmas isn't widely celebrated there as only about 2% of the population are Christians the day isn't even a public holiday in most of the country.

So if you intend travelling to or celebrating the festive season in any of the above five countries, you have been warned!

[1] Written by Meredith Wilson, first recorded by Perry Como, 1951, Plymouth Music.

PROBUS CLUB OF CHENNAI CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE ELDERLY AND CHILDREN'S DAY

The Probus Club of Chennai, a prominent senior citizens' association, jointly with The Russian Centre of Science and Culture celebrated the International Day of the Elderly on Saturday, 25th October 2025, at the Russian Cultural Centre, Alwarpet, Chennai. The event commenced with a warm welcome address by Probus Club President, Probian M. Annadhurai, who emphasized the importance of active ageing and the value of continued contribution by senior citizens to society. Dr. T. S. Sridhar, IAS (Retd.), Former Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, graced the occasion as the chief guest and delivered an inspiring address highlighting the role of elders as pillars of wisdom, experience, and moral strength in every community.



Probus Recognition Awards were presented to distinguished personalities for their outstanding contributions in their respective fields:

- Kalaimamani Ervadi S. Rathakrishnan

- Kalaimamani Dr. D. K. S. Kalaivanan
- Probian K. Ranga Ramanujam

The Probus Award of Excellence was conferred upon Seva Ratna Dr. V. Santhanam, noted social activist, for over five decades of exemplary service to the community.

Mr. Alexander Dodo, Vice Consul and Director of the Russian House, attended as the Guest of Honour and lauded the long-standing friendship between the Russian House and the Probus Club. Rotarian Prasanna Rajagopalan, Secretary of the Rotary Club of Madras, also addressed the gathering and appreciated the club's initiatives in promoting healthy and purposeful ageing.

The celebration also featured the presentation of mementos to senior members who had reached milestone ages and to Probians who had completed 50 years of marital life, a gesture of gratitude and respect for their enduring contributions.

A special highlight of the event was the release of the club's 32nd Annual Book, titled 'The Probus Way of Vibrant Ageing.' The publication, reflecting the creativity and life experiences of senior members. Winners of the recent senior citizens' sports and games competitions were also honoured with prizes during the function. Over a hundred senior citizens participated enthusiastically in the event and were later treated to a delicious breakfast and lunch.

The program concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks proposed by Joint Secretary, Probian S. Sappani Pillai. This marked the end of a memorable celebration that truly embodied the spirit of dignity, joy, and fellowship among elders. It is gratifying to see that the club also caters for the younger elements of society by hosting events on Children's Day in November, which was attended by many senior figures

and dignitaries; a colourful fancy dress competition added joy and creativity to the celebration [picture 2].



Whilst we are in India, I should mention the sterling efforts of Dr. Rau, who for the past twelve years, has been editor of the Probus Newsletter, in the beautiful city of Hyderabad, the largest city in the Province of Telangana, previously known as Andhra Pradesh in Southern India. It is the fourth most populous city in India and known as the 'City of Pearls' as it had once flourished as a global centre for the trade of rare diamonds and emeralds as well as natural pearls. Today Hyderabad has become a hub of trade and commerce and an international centre for information technology; pharmaceuticals, cigarettes, and textiles are also among the items manufactured here. Currently, the Club has 40 members, 24 male, 16 female and like most Probus Clubs they meet monthly at The Plaza Hotel. They celebrated their 25th anniversary on 4th September 2023 and produced a souvenir book, describing its history, highlighting major events of friendship and fellowship and appreciating the factors that make them so successful. Their formal monthly meetings usually

have a guest speaker and informal meetings where they meet socially for entertainment, friendship, food and fun. We wish them well for the New Year and their continued growth.



Japan

I was very pleased to receive a short report on the activities of the Tokyo Hino Probus Club who celebrated their 15th Anniversary on October 16th. Also on October 26th, there was the 30th anniversary of the Tokyo Hachioji Probus Club at Keio Plaza Hotel, Hachioji. A commemorative lecture was given by Mr. Shigemi Kitahara, Chairman of the Medical Corporation KNI, entitled 'changing medical care and the world with wisdom and healing.'



The event drew members from across Japan and a special award was made to Ms. Fumiyo Tachikawa, who had dedicated herself to the Hachioji Probus Club since its founding and was presented with the award from Mr. Mochida,

President of Hachioji Probus Club.

These are further examples of how the Probus world spreads the word of its existence across the globe; well done to all of you.

South Pacific and Australia

A 'Head's Up' has come my way from Judith Maestracci, Director, Probus South Pacific, regarding their monumental anniversary in 2026 when Probus Australia celebrate 50 years of coming together. Celebrations will be held on board two sea cruises, one organised by the Queensland Probus Association (PAQ) departing Brisbane, whilst Carnival Cruise heading for the South Pacific is now fully booked. The second is planned as a 10-day party aboard Celebrity Solstice departing Sydney on 31st October visiting Tasmania, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide, Melbourne, Eden and returning to Sydney. There are a limited number of cabins still available, **overseas Probus members would be most welcome** to join the fun and friendship. All of these events and initiatives will begin with a celebration morning tea function hosted by their first club, the Probus Club of Hunters Hill's (Sydney) 50th anniversary on 3rd February. A further report will appear in the March Newsletter, forgive the pun, but Probus Australia seems to be really 'pushing the boat out' celebrating this important event. Further details from: Judith at; Tel: +61 418721066

New Zealand



Angela Philbey sent in a report about Logan Village Probus Club, which celebrated its first birthday on the 15th October. The response from the community was phenomenal with 120 members in the first 10 months.

Being involved in starting a new club was a rewarding experience. From working through the bureaucracy of incorporation to

getting to know the members and finding interesting things for them to do was a challenge but nothing a good glass of 'red' didn't fix.

In their first 12 months they have had many interesting visits to a variety of venues, including *inter alia* stargazing with the Scenic Rim Astronomy Group as well as much interclub activity. Members also volunteered at the University of Newcastle Science and Engineering Challenge, a nationwide STEM outreach program in partnership with Rotary and Griffith University. They also had many and varied wonderful guest speakers. They were taken on journeys to many parts of the world such as Saudi Arabia, Antarctica and South Africa, while others expanded their knowledge in other areas of interest. 2026 is shaping up to be another rewarding year for them with more interesting adventures to be had together and lots of fun, friendship and fellowship.

The Garden Group visits Linda & John Todd's garden, 08-10-2025



Kapiti Central Probus Club marked a very special milestone in October as it was their 15th Anniversary. With a membership of 150 and large turnouts at each meeting, they have a very active programme of events with many interesting sub-groups covering many activities. Many thanks to both Grace and Richard Moulton for keeping this very active group going and I

am very envious of their Christmas lunch menu, which looked very tempting.

Many thanks to Liz Smith from Levin Combined Probus Club for sending me their newsletter celebrating their 30th anniversary. I sent her the history of 'love spoons', which I briefly mentioned in my editorial comments and the celebrations surrounding 'Guy Fawkes Night' in the UK, which is something celebrated in many other countries.

Canada

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Barrie Morgan sent me this. 'Back in the 1950s, when I was a young lad in my 20s, I lived with my parents in a small coal-mining village in Northumberland, North-East England.

Although I recall a busy life working in a bank, playing rugby for my local team, cycling, going to dances and socialising in pubs with my friends, I felt there should be more to my life.

My on-off relationship with my girlfriend Freda came to an end when she had similar itchy feet and went to work in London, so I decided to go to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in West Africa where I joined the Head Office of the Government Bank as Cables Officer, and then Head Teller.

I flew out to the capital Accra in a BOAC Stratocruiser, which was a commercial version of the B-29 Superfortress, surplus from World War II. My contract allowed for a first class ticket, very plush seats, and a circular staircase led down to the first class horseshoe shaped bar with free drinks and sandwiches. It was in the spacious

converted bomb bay and I recall hoping the pilot would not accidentally 'pull the lever'.

When my two year contract expired, instead of flying back to England, a friend who was also ending his contract decided to join me in driving north back across the Sahara Desert to Tripoli, Libya on the Mediterranean coast. We had to apply to the French Consulate for a permit and also agree to a specific timeline with a list of mandatory materials. We had to have bottles of water, cans of gas, wire grids for getting out of sand drifts, and a long rope to access deep water wells if needed.

The main starting point of the Sahara was Ouagadougou, capital city of what was once Upper Volta, but renamed Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso in 1984. We had to book in with five Foreign Legion posts with a deposit in case we were overdue and they had to send out the Camel Patrol to look for us.

As it turned out, our plans were cancelled as my friend had an emergency flight back to the St. Pancras Hospital for Tropical Diseases, now contained within University College Hospital, London. A seed had become implanted in his facial pores and a plant was literally spreading its roots through the veins, it looked like a spider's web, and I remember having nightmares about it, like in a horror film.

So I ended up flying back alone, but the bright spot was that after regularly corresponding through air mail letters, Freda met me at London airport, and this eventually led to us getting married, and starting a new life and we have been together for the past 65 years.'

Ed's comment: what a lovely story from Probian Barrie Morgan from Guildwood and one unlikely to be repeated in the present

day due to on-going hostilities and inter-tribal conflict throughout the Region. Barrie tells me that his real title is: 'Laird Balfour of Guildwood', after he purchased some land near Loch Ness. His son Stephen has an even grander title: Lord Ashton of Whitby.

Patricia Bayley (Durham Central Probus, Canada) has just published 'PLAIN SAILING' her third book of poems. Her previous two books enjoyed strong sales and the first printing of her latest book, which appeals to a senior readership, sold out in just one week. The book is available from: bayleydennis93@gmail.com at \$25 Canadian plus postage.

United Kingdom

Llandrindod Wells Probus Club mid-Wales recently honoured their oldest member



Kenneth Lush who was made an Honorary Life Fellow. Ken recently celebrated his 102nd birthday and received his congratulatory letter

from the King. He was originally from a village in Somerset, where the family owned a butchers shop, he attended private school and later became a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm, flying the Fairey Swordfish torpedo bomber from aircraft carriers to attack the German fleet. He served on operational tours throughout the world and met his wife Diana when serving in Northern Ireland when she was in the Royal Navy; he retired with the rank of Lieutenant. Ken is the longest serving member of Probus and we wish him many more years of health and happiness.

Trouble at the Top

I received a 'missive' from some concerned ladies who joined a Probus Club in England and were invited to join their committee; five of them agreed to join, and were offered three positions to commence with immediate effect, President, Secretary, and Speaker Secretary, and one offered to be Treasurer. However, it was obvious from an early stage that any suggestions for change and improvements to move the club forward by attracting new members, advertising, etc., was met with negativity and disdain.

Things didn't improve as the hosting venue served food that was poor and overpriced and there was no central heating. When a change of venue was suggested, this was met with hostility by the Treasurer who said that she would not consider a change, and threatened to resign, which would have seemingly solved their problems, but was persuaded to stay by the two other members of the original committee. They had several meetings, where it was blatantly obvious that this was not a Probus Club but a private club run by one lady who was not even the President, just the Treasurer. Meetings were disruptive, as the President was 91 and deaf, which caused her to shout, above everyone as she did not hear the points they were trying to discuss and suggestions for change were never considered. This scenario became very curious and worrying, and one of them telephoned Probus and was informed that they could not offer assistance, as it appeared there is no control over how individual clubs are organised.

Ed. comment

I was concerned to receive and read this, but it may not be unique to other Probus Clubs or indeed any other committee led organisation where power plays are embedded by certain

types of individuals. Probus Clubs and any other club that we may belong to should be working towards a harmonious and convivial atmosphere that welcomes not only new members but sensible suggestions for change. As there is no central overarching body that sets standards of behaviour and lays down operating conditions to work under, each Probus Club can basically do what it likes as many have no written Constitution to guide them especially here in the UK, unless I am proved wrong?

A Perspective of UK Probus Clubs

Robert Scott of Rhyl, North Wales Probus Club sent me this interesting article. 'having put a toe in the water of Probus Global Website. I am amazed at the difference between UK Probus Clubs and other clubs around the World as apart from UK clubs being completely autonomous without any national 'steer' in administration or finance, it seems apparent that the demographic is quite different.

In particular, the UK Club's members tend to be further from their retirement age and consequently no way near the 'activity' levels of members on other continents. I understand that they comprise mainly men in the majority of UK Probus Clubs who have become 'single' and the emphasis is on the availability of regular social contact. That is not to say that there are no ladies only clubs but they appear to be less usual.

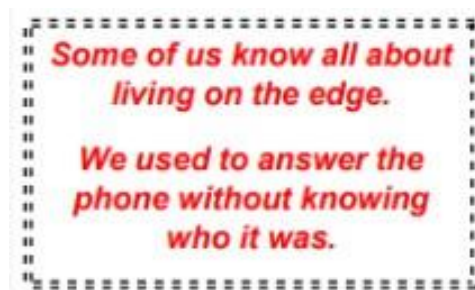
However, it is apparent that men only clubs are obliged to invite ladies to reverse the lack of early retirees to replace those who have become too incapacitated to attend or have joined the ultimate association above. Mixed sex clubs seem to be coming into their own, with couples joining and in fact ladies are encouraged to continue after losing a partner member, it's good to see them introducing a friend with them. This all helps to reverse the

current trend of non-participation, especially in the voluntary and charitable societies generally and not just Probus.

Although there are some clubs enjoying socialising over coffee rather than a lunch, more especially now that their rising cost continues to be a larger drain on their resources. Contrary to that is the fact that approx half of the membership in some Probus Clubs are loyal to a 'mid-month' outing, preferably somewhere different but not too far away, that includes lunch for a reasonable cost. Such outings are an ideal opportunity to car share thus enhancing the Probus watchwords of friendship and fraternity.

Another important element of the UK Probus monthly lunches is that of a speaker on virtually any topic at all, whether from within the club membership or external. Charities seem happy to provide someone, presumably with the intent of engendering more interest, awareness or donations. It is becoming much more of a problem to encourage members to take on roles to keep members interested with fresh ideas. Regrettably without such members, willing to accept positions on committees and become officers, the result is collapse as has frequently happened. This has been to the advantage of neighbouring clubs, with at least one officer with the drive to enthuse their members, and to welcome those who have thus become 'homeless' when their Club folds but still wish to be Probians.

A challenge to submit a similar perception of non-UK Probus Clubs would be interesting.'



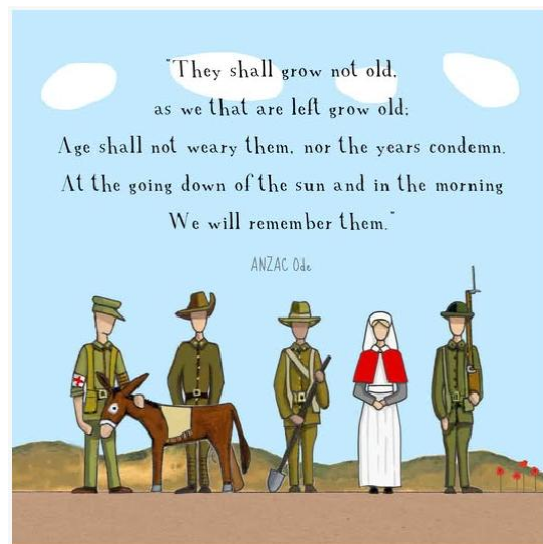
Photos of the Month



Karin Schraeverus from Probus Namur in Belgium, captured this atmospheric image of a river cruise ship on the Moselle and the Rhine. It makes you want to drift away on a lazy river cruise, enjoying some fine wine and the local cuisine.



This lovely picture shows the poppy cascade for Remembrance Day. These displays appeared all across the country in various locations, the largest being at the Tower of London; this one is from Ledbury UK.



Wellness

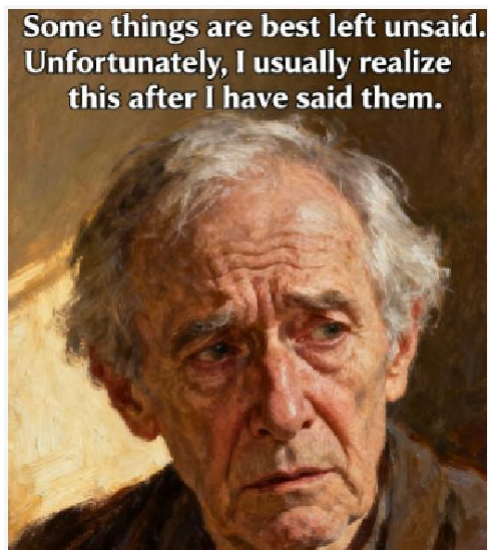
One of the on-going articles included in some of the newsletters that I have read, covers the all-important subject of 'Wellness'. Although I shall mention this in my first newsletter, I probably won't be including this as a regular feature unless some startling new piece of research highlights a new 'miracle cure' for all ailments that some of the readership may suffer from.

But it is an accepted axiom that exercise, diet, fitness, lifestyle and a stress-free social environment should lead one to a reasonably healthy and long life, so there is no need to continue reinforcing these. However, that said, a recurring theme emerging from current thinking is one element that appears to stave off ill-health, which is to have a wide circle of interests.

Research suggests that loneliness is emerging as a public health crisis viz: *'The high rate of loneliness is particularly worrisome because loneliness negatively impacts psychological and physical health and is associated with a 50%, 29%, and 26% respectively of increased risk of*

developing Alzheimer's disease, coronary heart disease, and premature mortality', (American Journal of Preventative Medicine, March 2022, 25:63(1): pps. 141–145). From the decline of the traditional office to the rise of single-occupancy dwellings, streaming services and home food-delivery, there is almost a conspiracy to discourage us from going out and not seeing or talking to another human being; apparently younger people tend to suffer the most due to their usage of mobile devices. We in Probus have a unique bonding. When I read the activities that you are all involved in, it lifts my spirits to know that the connections that bring us together with a strength of purpose that allows us to foster these interests as cornerstones of friendship, fun and food may go in some way in combating these debilitating conditions. A conclusion reached by the researchers focused on a new model for overcoming loneliness described as a 'Model of Friendship – the 3Cs for combating loneliness: Confidence, Connection and Community.' I prefer to use the 3F model, 'Fellowship, Friendship and Fun.'

I rest my case!



PROBUS Edibles



The **Aurora York Central PROBUS Club in Canada** celebrated its 30th anniversary by handing out cookies and biscuits with a PROBUS logo printed on the icing.

I was lucky enough to be welcomed to their November meeting. The cookie made for a delicious tea-time treat.



Although I ate mine, I suspect that some members will squirrel them away as a souvenir like those who still have pieces of Queen Victoria's wedding cake in the attic.

I look forward to being invited back for another cookie in 5 years.

- Peter Jennings

My friend applied for a job at a sandwich bar, but the roll had already been filled!

My friend got a job on a refuse cart, but there was no training given, he was told he would pick it up as he went along!

I read a great book last week called, 'reverse gravity' - I just couldn't put it down!

When I was a young lad I drank some invisible ink, I waited in the hospital for hours just to be seen!

White Christmas

'I'm dreaming of a white Christmas,'
Some stupid poet said,
But if he really wants one,
He can go to Switzerland instead.

In England's white, unpleasant land,
The roads are blocked with snow,
No planes take off, no trains can run,
There's nowhere you can go.

So stay indoors and keep quite warm,
Until there's loss of power,
Then try to ring up British Gas,
You'll wait for hour on hour!

The Council try to clear the roads,
Of that there is no doubt,
But if you're off the beaten track,
Then dig your own way out!

Dave Wilson

For more of Dave's poetry visit the Poetry Section of the PROBUS Global website.

Editorial End Note

Well, Probians, this is the end of my first newsletter to you and I have to say that I took on the role of Editor with much trepidation! However, that said, I have been so very impressed with all the information sent to me from across the Globe, so much in fact, that I have had to edit down your efforts to fit it all in. So the layout has changed somewhat from that that went before and even then this newsletter has stretched beyond the number of pages originally suggested.

So can I say a very big 'thank you' for making my new role a stress free one and especially to Peter Jennings who must have been exasperated with my lack of knowledge of Google.Docs, which is used to produce the final product ready for publication. I have attempted to input some of your personal stories, which I hope you will find interesting, but I want to emphasise that this is YOUR Newsletter, YOUR stories and especially YOUR Probus. As Editor, I am merely the one that views, edits, amends and suggests layout, so please keep sending me 'stuff' in readiness for the next edition and suggest ways in which any of my efforts can be improved. My objective as Editor is to continue improving what we have, growing the readership across the Probus family and bringing the Probus Brand to those who have yet to belong to it.

So on a final note, once again many thanks for your contributions, enjoy Christmas and the New Year with your loved ones as I wish you all good fortune, good health and happiness for 2026.

Nadolig Llawen iawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd; bendith Duw arnoch chi gyd.

Geoffrey