



PROBE

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PROBUS CLUB OF BENDIGO

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Meets 3rd Wednesday each month - 10am at Bendigo Club.

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THE SPEAKER SAYS:

NEXT WEEK Veteran journalist and fellow-Probian CYRIL MICHELSON will entertain us with a talk aptly titled, "Ramblings". Appropriate the title is, since Cyril has 'rambled' through the pages of the history of Bendigo for many decades. He has met them all - the High and the Low - and has an inexhaustable fountain of stories to tell. Look forward to this one!

TAKE AN ART COLLECTION worth ten million dollars, put it in the largest Art Gallery in provincial Australia and calculating insurance adds up to sleepless nights for any insurance broker.

This was the dilemma revealed by Bendigo Art Gallery Director Mr. DOUG. HALL, guest speaker at our last meeting. Curiously, it was caused by the recent visits of two eminent experts in the world of art, Mme Helen Toussaint, Curator of the Louvre Museum in Paris and Mr. Jeremy Maas, art historian and dealer from London.

They revealed what many people had suspected, but never confirmed, the the collection of art in the Bendigo Gallery is of world standard and contains many genuine works of art of a value never contemplated.

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, 21st. AUGUST AT 10.00 a.m.

COMMENT

As I was leaving the meeting last month a document materialised in my left hand. I am unable to put a name to the donor, but I thank him for it.

Called "The Third Age: A New Age of Opportunity" it is a new concept of life that had its genesis in Melbourne at the end of 1984.

Sponsored by several Universities and CAE's the term "third age" refers to the post working life, after childhood and adolescence (first age), and working life (second age).

Oriented towards the older people (although people of any age may join) it involves groups who are desirous of furthering their knowledge of any subject using the facilities of the tertiary colleges. Apart from a small joining fee all courses are free; tutors and organisers give their time voluntarily.

In a brief but informative description of 'The University of the Third Age' (U3A) the article describes it as composed of people who have gained a lifetime of experience and expertise, joining in an exchange of knowledge. People who want to teach others for the pleasure of passing on their experience; and people who love learning for no other reason than wanting to know.

So far this year more than 600 members are meeting to learn more about such things as languages, literature, music, history, nutrition, economics and human relations, geriatrics, current affairs, car maintenance, geneology, herbs, video -- the list seems endless

Members suggest subjects they would like to learn and anyone is free to offer themselves as teacher (whether or not their subject has been suggested by members).

The significance of all this is to confirm the growing theory that 'there IS life after retirement' and is best summed up by the final paragraph:

"The dramatic and immediate success of the U3A's is just further evidence that no-one is ever too old to learn or teach and that the notion that mental ability deteriorates with age is in almost all cases untrue (and this has been confirmed by recent research). Furthermore it shows that older adults have a rich and diverse store of experience and insights that they are, in most cases eager to share with others.

So - isn't that what PROBUS is all about?

KNOW YOUR MEMBERS



Born (1921) to a Footscray working-class family, facing a devastating depression in his formative years, battling his way to University through a hard-earned Scholarship only to have it interrupted twice by a shortage of cash, ending his working career as one of Australia's top munitions engineers and finally having his work recognised by the award of the Order of Australia Medal. Such is the calibre of

THOMAS ALBERT (TOM) ROBERTS, OAM

Economic problems faced by a father rearing a family on a blacksmith's wage in the great depression caused middle son Tom to abandon his ambitions to be either a farmer or a doctor. Footscray Technical School was within walking distance of the family home so Tom was destined to follow a technical career.

At age 13 he chose Aeronautics as a third ambition, but lack of facilities in Victoria made this impossible. In 1937 he worked at the SEC Yarraville Terminal Station Laboratory.

Then fortune seemed to smile - he won a free place Scholarship to Melbourne University. But ill-luck struck again and he was forced to get a full-time job; this time at the Sunshine works of H.V.McKay Massey Harris.

'Flushed' with cash once more in 1940 he resumed his scholarship at the University only to be forced to abandon it through the tyranny of the old enemy - economics. He accepted a cadetship in Engineering the Department of Munitions and Shipping.

From there it was a steady climb through the complexities of defence munitions. This included two overseas study tours during which he visited U.K., Switzerland, USA, Japan, Italy, Holland, Germany and Denmark, researching matters concerning engine manufacture.

Late 1960 saw Tom appointed General Manager, Australian Government Engine Works, servicing and repairing large engines involved in Merchant and Naval shipping propulsion.

In 1976 he became General Manager, Ordnance Factory, Bendigo - his first appointment outside Melbourne.

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TAKE AN ART COLLECTION (cont. . .)

Bendigo has good reason to be proud of its Gallery, grateful to the many citizens of the past who have left this priceless legacy and thankful for the services of a Director so capable and astute as Mr. Hall.

Probian Jack Watts spoke for us all when he tendered thanks for a most informative address.

KNOW YOUR MEMBERS (cont. . .)

This set the pattern for his retirement in 1984 in the Premier Town and Bendigo gained another distinguished citizen.

In a busy professional career Tom Roberts has found time to play a vigorous part in community pre-school and post-school activities, serving as President on a number of committees dedicated to improving educational facilities, notably at East Beaumaris, Mentone and Footscray. For five years he was senior Vice-President of the inaugural TAFE Board for the Loddon-Campaspe region, particularly concerned with apprenticeship training.

Early ill-health prevented him from becoming a dedicated sportsman but later he was able to participate in football, cricket, La Crosse, boxing, rowing and golf. Retirement hobbies include fishing, art and furniture restoration.

Wife Marjorie, originally a Bendigonian, was widely known as Marjorie Mollard before her marriage to Tom. They have two daughters, both living in Bendigo.

Tom Roberts, OAM, has been a Rotarian for a number of years but - most importantly - he is a member of the Probus Club of Bendigo!

SPEAKERS NOTE: "I do not object to people looking at their watches when I am speaking - but I strongly object when they start shaking them to make certain they are still going".

A GROWTH INDUSTRY: In 1980 there were 180 Probus Clubs in Australia and New Zealand. In 1983 the number increased to 220 and in 1984, 306 clubs were registered. With clubs proliferating all over, 1985 will see a significant increase.

WHY IS IT that nothing seems to keep a train on time so much as your arriving at the station a little late?

Representatives of the Probus Club of Maryborough will be visiting us at this meeting to discuss arrangements for our proposed visit to them.