



PROBUS Global Newsletter March 2021

From the President



Shirley Roberts
President PROBUS Global

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2021 which we hope you will find informative and enjoyable to read.

As you will see by the contents, we are now able to include a few articles contributed by our PROBUS Global members and also how PROBUS is conducted in some countries. Thank you to all contributors.

We continue to participate with PROBUS club meetings by way of Zoom in many countries but let us hope by the end of the year we can enjoy meeting up in person with our friends in our local PROBUS club.

Regards and stay safe,
Shirley

BELGIUM ZOOM MEETING - APRIL 1

Belgium may be known as a small country in Europe, hosting a large number of the European institutions. It may be known as “Flanders fields where poppies grow” where far too many soldiers from all over the world, most from the British Commonwealth, lost their lives in World War I and II. The country may be known as a Kingdom. It may be known for its delicious chocolates, or great variety of beers, or ... But do you have any idea how Probus came to be and expanded in an environment of different languages? Gauthier De Brabandere, President of Probus Belgium, will be happy to introduce Probus Belgium to you during the next PROBUS Global zoom session.

Thursday April 1st, 2021
- 3 pm Belgian time
- 9 am Toronto time
- 1 am (April 2nd) in Melbourne.
The event will be recorded.

A WORD FROM OUR MEMBERS



Stan Thomson - Ternan Men's Probus Club

I'm Stan Thomson and am a member of Banchory-Ternan Men's Probus Club, Banchory, Scotland. We meet twice a month and have been fortunate that about 50% of our members are **Zoom** user friendly. This has allowed us to meet virtually over the last year or so during this Covid-19 Pandemic.

Although I was quite happy with the on-line company of my fellow Probians I wondered how other Probus

Clubs were coping with COVID-19.

When I looked 'out there' I found PROBUS Global, and it was an exceptionally good move as I connected with an organization that gave me a way in to Probus clubs throughout the world, and certainly made the Probus world much smaller.

Through PROBUS Global, and its Webmasters, Shirley Roberts, Richard Furlong and Peter Jennings, I feel I have been welcomed by, and included in, an extended family, worldwide.

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Apology by PROBUS Global to the Belgian Probus clubs and their members.

PROBUS Global regrets that Probus Belgium was not properly presented in the December 2020 Newsletter where a strong focus was given to "Probus Vlaanderen" which is not a Probus club, and has no connection with Probus Belgium.

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Through PROBUS Global I have been introduced to many other Probus clubs on the planet, from Banchory to Barbados, Africa to Australia, clubs all over the world. I have met fellow Probians who have, like PROBUS Global, welcomed me into their homes and introduced me to some very genuine people, club members, speakers, officials, etc.

To say that PROBUS Global have made the Probus world a smaller place is an understatement. For example, I was speaking to a Canadian Probus Club a month or so ago and I learned that one of the club members was a cousin of a good friend of mine who I had worked beside many years ago. On another occasion recently, through PROBUS Global, I was having a telephone conversation with the President of a club in the south of England and it turned out that his sister resided next door to my daughter! A small world or what?

I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting with the people of PROBUS Global, and the members of the various clubs throughout the world, and I have introduced my fellow Probians to this fantastic organization and hope that many of them will join the 'family'.

Stan told the St Catharines PROBUS Club about Banchory - see our [YouTube Channel](#).



Patrick Whittick

Our club secretary had received some information about PROBUS Global, so being nosy, I had a look at their website and added my name to join an online meeting, hosted by Newmarket Probus Club in Ontario. It was interesting meeting people from so far away. Despite the distance, we all had something in common - Probus.

Apart from their regular talk, they had a short "Who am I" talk from an "international" speaker, and it was great to hear Stan talk about himself, his club and the area in which he lives. I was then asked to do the same in January, and since then, Stan and I have been in regular contact. Those who heard my talk will know that Stan and I have quite a lot in common, so it's great to have got to know him via PROBUS Global - something which just wouldn't have been possible otherwise.

I'm very grateful to the committee of PROBUS Global for all their work pulling this together - it's great!

Patrick told the Newmarket PROBUS Club about Dunmow, Essex, UK. [Watch the video](#).



Impressions on Probus Global

Being myself fascinated by connecting to other clubs, and learning from clubs in other Belgian regions, or from clubs in neighbouring countries, it seemed an interesting idea to join PROBUS Global to 'test' whether or not this could bring me the advantage of learning from others again.

I am happy to say it did. I joined just in time to participate in two zoom meetings highlighting Probus in Canada and in Australia/New Zealand. The group of people who have set up PROBUS Global manage to create a friendly atmosphere and to open up to communication with each other. The concept appeals to me.

Gauthier De Brabandere
President of Probus Belgium



Katrina van den Brenk - Cooloola Coast Probus Club

A few months ago, I was invited to join PROBUS Global and at the first zoom meeting I participated in, noted there was a Chilean, Gustavo Jeanneret, from Vina del Mar.

I lived in Chile from 1980 to 2000 and so was immediately interested in making contact. Gustavo lives on the coast some 400 km south of the fishing village of Guanaqueros where I lived. The two locations are residential but have a lot of visiting tourists and holiday makers, although his area is much more urban and affluent than mine was. Now I live in Tin Can Bay, Queensland, whose main industry is fishing, but the majority of residents are retirees - and tourists are attracted by the opportunities for recreational fishing and boating pleasures.

For months the Vina del Mar Club has been having only virtual meetings due to COVID-19, whilst we have been meeting, more or less normally, since last September, and our Club Committee met in person from June onwards, each month reviewing the

Probus Belgium

A member of Rotary Antwerpen Ring, George Dick, brought the Probus idea from England to Belgium and founded in 1984 the first two Probus clubs in Belgium: Probus Antwerpen Ring and Probus Huy. Belgium being a trilingual country (Dutch and French as main languages, and German for a minority population) it was felt important from the very beginning to create Probus clubs in all regions of the country.

During George Dick's presidency, from 1984 to 2000 a total of seventy six Probus clubs were accredited or chartered, most of them (if not all) by Rotarians and sponsored by Rotary clubs. We also take pride in the fact that George Dick took the initiative to found the first Probus club in France. His successor for six years (2000-2005), Stany Verougstraete, created a 'steering committee' referred to as C.I.C. or Coordination and Information Centre in 2001. Six members volunteered as regional coordinators, representing the six regions in which Belgium was divided at the time. Probus Belgium is still organised this way today. Together with the president they coordinate regional or national activities or take care of joint responsibilities such as insurance, communication by national newsletter or bulletin, finance, statistics, website, shop, etc.

Meetings are held in French and Dutch, each of the participants using his or her own language.

Gradually Probus clubs were no longer founded by Rotary clubs but sponsorship was being taken up by existing Probus clubs. From 'men only' membership Probus Belgium shifted to a mixture of clubs with only men members and clubs with both men and lady members. There are no 'ladies only' clubs yet in Belgium.

Due to the corona lockdown(s) the chartering of the 119th Probus club has been postponed from 2020 to 2021.

As of January 2020 the 119 Belgian Probus clubs totalled 4150 members.

Since 2005 the presidency term has been



two or three years. As ninth president, my 2019-2020 mandate has been extended to December 31st, 2021. The two year mandates of all C.I.C. members have been extended unanimously by a third year because of the exceptional conditions due to the two Covid 19 lockdowns in 2020 which made it impossible to meet or to visit club meetings.

Most older clubs meet twice a month; the younger clubs once a month. Each club organises independently its management and activities, as long as these are in line with the general rules and practises of Probus Belgium. Like most clubs worldwide many luncheons are enhanced by member or guest speaker conferences. Excursions, visits, cultural outings, sport activities or joint trips are organised.

In early days annual National reunions were held, and each time organised by one or more clubs. Since 2011 national days are alternated with the organisation of regional days (one per region).

In order to honour Probus members for exceptional service to the Probus organization (club, region or nationally) a 'George Dick' award was created in 2007.

Probus Belgium's national website <https://www.probus-belgium.be> is made up in a Dutch version and a French version. You can easily switch from the one to the other. Probus clubs can create their own section for their club on the national website, or maintain a link to their club's individual website. Privacy rules apply. Should anyone wish to contact Probus Belgium, please do so by using the national secretary's e-mail secretary@probus-belgium.be.

He will forward it to the right contact. Historically the international ties have been best established with Probus France and Probus Nederland. Probus Belgium and Probus Nederland jointly protect the name Probus® and the logo in the Benelux.

Gauthier De Brabandere
President of Probus Belgium

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situation as we socially distanced. Vina del Mar will celebrate its 25th Birthday on 11th April 2021.

Our communities may be very different, or may be similar, but Probus Global can unite us wherever we live as we share our experiences and ideas, making friends with members from other countries - few of which we are likely to be able to visit in person in the near future."

Katrina van den Brenk - Cooloola Coast Probus Club, Queensland, Australia

Help us keep the club information current. Take a look at what we say about your club and let us know if it needs updating.

If your club newsletter is public and available for viewing on the web, send us the URL so we can link it on the Newsletters page.

Feel free to share this newsletter with everyone at your club. Send a copy to your own club newsletter editor and suggest they sign up for regular delivery.

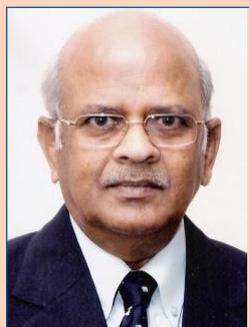
Newsletters are distributed from time to time by PROBUS Global. They are available for viewing online and downloading as PDFs at <https://probusglobal.org/Newsletters>



Probus Club of Hyderabad



Ram Mukherjee
Founding President
PCH



Dr. RHG Rau
President
PCH

It's with great pleasure we are introducing Probus Club of Hyderabad to Probus Global.

Hyderabad was a princely state of South Central India, founded in 1591 by Nizam Qamar-ud-din Khan. After independence, it became an integrated part of India. With a population of about 10 million the city has grown enormously last two decades. Known for its monuments and heritage structures, Hyderabad is a hub of Information Technology, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals and Genetic Research. The city has 34 Rotary Clubs, but only one Probus Club.

During 1985-86, Parliamentarian Minoos Masani was speaking on 'Right to die with dignity' and told a story of elderly Gopal Mandlik of over 80 who felt his life mission had come to an end. Since under the law, attempt to suicide was a crime, he wrote to successive Prime Ministers Morarji Desai and Indira Gandhi requesting them to change the law so that he could legally put an end to his life. With no reply for over two years he got impatient and did what he wanted with a dying declaration. 'I have waited long enough. I have now decided to act in accordance with my conscience.'

This led to a few distinguished elders, under Ram Mukherjee's initiative, coming together and making remaining part of their lives worth-living, active through fun, with fellowship and social interaction having an impact on their quality of life and mortality.



At that time The Probus Centre South Pacific, formed in 1981, was active to make Probus popular, and thus Probus Club of Hyderabad, formed with the help of several senior Rotarians was accredited by Probus Center-South Pacific on 27th Oct .1998. Our Club is a Combined Club with a total membership of 42. We follow the Constitution of Probus Center South Pacific and our bylaws are written without violating any clause of the Constitution. When necessary, we modify the bylaws for efficient running of the Club.

The procedure of admission of new members into the Club is rather elaborate. The admission is by invitation. The proposed candidate is required to attend two meetings of the Club as a guest of the proposer to familiarize himself with the club members and also support a home visit before induction. Later, he/she goes through usual induction procedure.

The primary objective of our club is fellowship and intellectual stimulation. We meet on last Sunday of every month over lunch and invite well-known speakers on various topics of interest. Sharing of experiences by our own members is also encouraged. The Club brings out Newsletter every month detailing functioning of the club during the month.

Around the middle of every month we organize fellowship meetings (lunch-meetings) generally arranged in a resort or hotels where the members display their entertainment skills, play games, tell jokes and have festive time.

Several of our past members are of advanced age. We keep contact with them and invite them on special occasions like Club Foundation Day. The oldest member of our club is 104 years old, and we have two members of 95 + years old and ten members between 80 to 90.

The club celebrated 20th. anniversary in 2018 and on that occasion we brought out a coffee table book compiling the history of the club. The club elections are held in Feb. each year to elect President, Vice president, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and two committee members. The immediate past president is an ex-officio member of the committee. The managing committee is assisted by five sub-committees, namely Publication Committee, Membership Committee, Program Committee, Fellowship Committee and Facilitation Committee.

We have a plan to bring in all the Probus Clubs in India together, and create PROBUS INDIA. We hope we will soon achieve this goal.

Probus in Southern Africa

Hello from a sunny Cape Town, home of the Probus Association of Southern Africa. As Chairman of the Provincial Association of the Western Cape, I was asked to submit an article on behalf of the Probus Council of Southern Africa to your newsletter. So here goes!

According to records, the first Probus club started in Durban in 1977, to be followed by a second club in the same city in 1978. By 1990 the network of clubs had spread to the south in the Western Cape and also north beyond our borders to Zimbabwe, a total of 62 clubs in all.

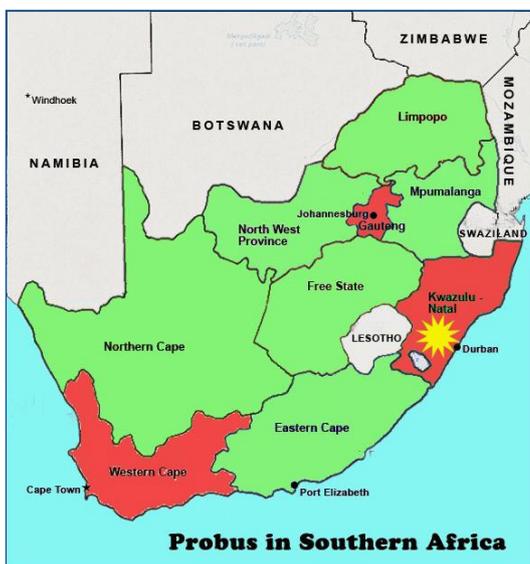
Further expansion to over 100 clubs occurred during the following decade, together with the establishment of four provincial associations in Natal (now Kwazulu Natal (PKZN)), Western Cape (PAWC) Gauteng South (PAGS), and The Garden Route (PGR). The latter sadly closed a few years ago.

The current structure of Probus in the region is depicted in the diagrams below. Although our region also embraces Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique, we are not aware of any clubs ever existing in these countries.

Three of the nine provinces in South Africa (highlighted in red) comprise associations that support clubs in their respective provinces. Clubs in all other provinces are supported directly by the Probus Council of Southern Africa as shown in the organogram. The Council rotates every three years from Association to Association. It is currently held by PAKZN and transfers next to PAWC in March 2022.

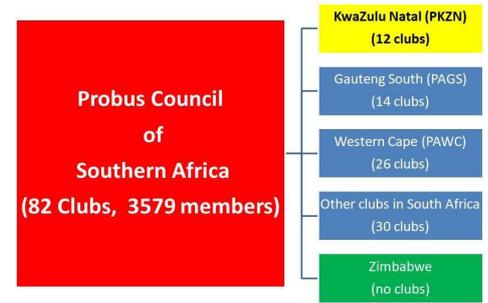
In the past there were quite a few clubs existing in Zimbabwe but over the last two decades the tragic sequence of political events in this country have all but decimated them. We are not aware of any clubs in existence there at the moment.

According to latest records there are now



82 clubs operating in South Africa, with, as far as we know none remaining outside our borders. This is markedly down from five years ago when there were 94 clubs in the country. Regional membership has also fallen from 4030 to 3579. There are still, unfortunately a number of clubs hovering on the brink of closure and we anticipate further attrition.

Structure of Probus in Southern Africa (2020)



There are several reasons for the decline, the primary one being the socio political situation in the South Africa. The rampant crime and corruption in South Africa over the last twenty years has caused many South Africans to emigrate, including elderly parents of children who have established themselves overseas. Second, many people are delaying their retirement so that the pool of potential new members has been dwindling.

Of course, the latest Covid lockdown measures haven't helped, with most of our clubs unable to meet other than online. Owing to age related 'computer fright' many members are unwilling to learn how to connect online with the result that only a handful of clubs have been able to successfully continue normal lunch meetings across the screen.

The lockdown measures in South Africa have had some interesting outcomes. Because of excessive alcohol consumption, especially over the festive periods, drink-drive accidents are a serious problem here as are cases of domestic violence. These are fuelled by alcohol. Hospitals were starting to struggle in coping with Covid case admissions as well as routine cases mainly because of injuries from drunken beatings, fights and car accidents. Free availability of alcohol also promoted drunken 'rave parties' resulting in increased Covid transmission. Infections were increasing from around 3000 per day to 23000 a day! The government had no choice but to severely curtail alcohol sales as well as decree that restaurants must close by 9pm AND not be allowed to serve alcohol. Needless to say there were many disgruntled Probians who could not order their favourite tipple! Subsequently, to everyone's astonishment several hospitals were able to report zero to minimal emergency admissions for injuries! This significantly eased the pressure on attending to Covid patients. Our infection rate has since returned to under 3000 a day, still too many though.

As with any entity supplying a product or service, the biggest challenge is marketing - how to execute this in the most effective way. With most of our members in the 70 plus age group, we need to look at attracting the next cohort of retirees, presently in their fifties and sixties. From my past experience in other associations one's 'product' is the best way to showcase your entity. If done well, third party word of mouth from members and guests to outside potentials works wonders. This may mean having to put on a different type of show to cater for their needs and interests without affronting your current membership. We are still in our infancy when it comes to this, and for this reason I appreciate being part of PROBUS Global where we can acquire useful, innovative ideas from around the globe that haven't been tried before in this part of the world.

(With thanks to Mike Hough, secretary of The Probus Council of Southern Africa for data and information supplied.)

Nick French

Chairman

Probus Association of Western Cape.

A Message from PROBUS Ireland



Our officers have been forwarding your webinar about PROBUS Australia to their members and it was well received, it was a fantastic eye opener to us all!

What we must remember is we are in Covid 19 lockdown for the past 12 months which has had a devastating impact on us - all in our homes, all of a sudden, North and South.

While there are variations, we are basically confined - No meetings! Well a few Clubs managed garden meetings and others in drafty rooms during the summer months, but that all stopped!

Club Officers have done their best to open up communication lines to the members, from Zoom, Whatsapp, texting and phone Calls etc. With the age profile in a lot of Clubs, people are not all Tech savvy, so Clubs have adapted to suit their members.

So where is Probus Ireland at? Well we have no formal structure other than two Liaison Offices one covering the Northern Clubs and one covering the Southern Clubs, under the Rotary District 1160.

134 Clubs, over 4000 members all in our homes all of a sudden, North and South.

We have been publishing a Directory of the Club Officers, meeting locations, times and dates annually for many many years,

In 2019 we decided to upgrade the Probus Ireland website and incorporate a Login-in section for officers. This enabled us to update the Club Data online on the changes that occur after the AGM's.

We provide data on insurance, merchandise and any other information we feel might assist members. We have links to Probus Global, PROBUS Canada and Probus Australia websites.

Regarding PROBUS Global, we are at the very start, thanks to the Invitation from PROBUS Global, it opened the door for us in Ireland, we communicated this meeting event to all the Club Officers and about 10 Clubs logged onto the webinar. So going forward, we are definitely going to start a Newsletter, frequency to be decided!

We hope to continue the PROBUS Global contact, now that the door has been opened.

One positive result of Covid 19, is that we are doing a Newsletter and talking to Probus members around the world - upwards and onwards!



PROBUS CANADA'S ZOOM MENTORSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

by Marlene Pearce - Immediate Past President of PROBUS Canada

Once the Pandemic hit us in March, our Canadian PROBUS Clubs meetings were at a standstill. Enter Zoom! Many of us had never even heard the word before. Clubs across Canada have responded unanimously and over half of our 256 Clubs are now involved.

The Zoom Support Program (initiated by PROBUS CANADA Director, Martin Capper, and Cambridge Men's Club Member, Dan Clements) has been very successful. There are 21 Mentors, helping our Clubs across Canada, using Zoom to reach out to their Members for Virtual Meetings. Each of our thirteen Districts was assigned one or two mentors. These people attended the Clubs meetings, acting as Host for at least two or three meetings. Meetings were recorded and could be distributed to absent Members.

Some of the Virtual Activities that took place, in addition to regular meetings, were Book Clubs, Trivia Nights, Wine Tasting, Bingo, Knitting Groups. Even a Cooking Class (the member sends out their recipe and while making it, you can have the ingredients on hand, and join in doing your own meal. Some apparently just had a glass of wine and watched the procedure. One Club had their Christmas Party on Zoom dressing in Holiday Attire that consisted of funny hats and sweaters mostly red and green. The special speaker was a Stand-Up Comedian followed by Christmas Trivia and Winners of the Twelve Days of Christmas Wine Survivor Contest being revealed.

It has been wonderful to see how different Clubs serve their members during these particularly challenging and stressful times.

Along with the Zoom Support Program, Clubs have continued to have a monthly newsletter which provides everything from games, puzzles, recipes, and pictures. Also, several Clubs have been using a 'Phone Contact Program' where Management Committee members are assigned to contact, on a fairly regular basis, each Member of their Club just to touch base and have a friendly chat to see if any special concerns need to be addressed. This is especially important for members who live alone, and it truly shows that the foundation of PROBUS, namely Fellowship, is being addressed.

We are all looking forward to the day our Meetings get back to normal, but for now our Clubs are staying active and creative and enjoying the new Pandemic programs.

Words from the Webmaster

We now have over 415 members from 258 clubs in 12 countries.

125 people signed up for our January Zoom meeting and almost 100 were present. The video recording has already been viewed more than 400 times.

If you weren't at the meeting, you can watch the video on the PROBUS Global YouTube Channel. Most are amazed at the activities of PSPL in Australia promoting club activities and PROBUS.

You will also find other videos of club meetings and presentations by PROBUS Global members.

Scheduled meetings are announced on the Meetings and Presentations page of the PROBUS Global website and members can request an invitation to the meetings they are interested in attending. Why not invite some PG members as guests at your next meeting?

Join us on Sundays for a regular chat in the Video Chatroom. No special app is required. The video chat works in your browser.

Attention Club Management

Have you looked at our Club Management Page lately?

The Newmarket Club in Canada has contributed an excellent Operating Manual for any club to follow.

There are many tips for engaging your membership and making your meetings successful.

Links

Youtube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxj6Dww3G8aoKKg-W6m2bVVQ/videos>

Meetings

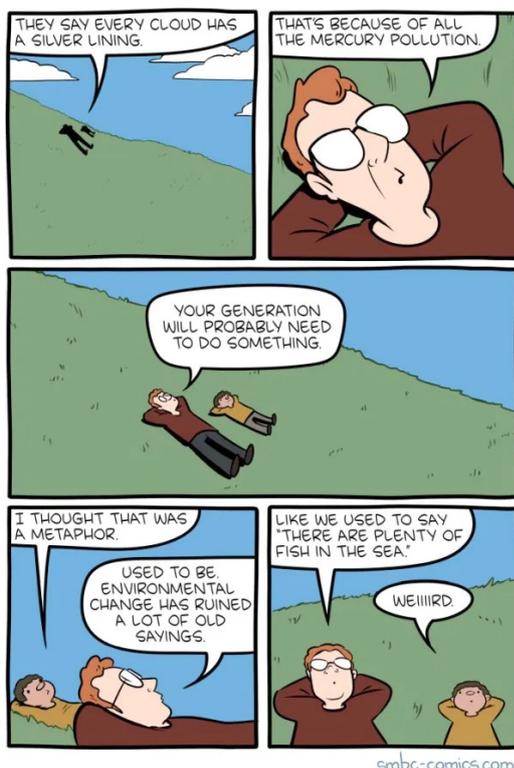
<https://probusglobal.org/Meetings/?invite-to=>

Video Chat Room

<https://probusglobal.org/VideoChat/>

Club Management

<https://probusglobal.org/ClubManagement.html>



Feel free to share this newsletter with everyone at your club. Send a copy to your own club newsletter editor and suggest they sign up for regular delivery.

If you edit your club newsletter, please consider inserting this notice produced by Ron Fawn, one of our members. Download PDF.

PROBUS Global

Join us and connect with PROBUS members from all over the world!

<https://probusglobal.org>

Membership is free!

We have Zoom Events and Meetings with Speakers, Newsletters, and a Chat Area.

Our aim is to provide Fellowship and Fun for everyone.

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.
You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.
They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So everything was told
We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth,
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!
There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.
Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?
We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!
So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!
It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no flaming flour!
Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.
At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whisky, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!
So, let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
doesn't decimate our wealth.
we'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

Pam Ayres

Did you know that PROBUS Global has a Photography Club?

The club has been active since 2008 on Flickr with a page on the PROBUS Global website as well. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Photography Club Challenge:

Shirley has issued a challenge to all PROBUS Global photographers:

Submit a photograph illustrating a drip. The drip can be from any source, kitchen tap, bathroom tap, garden hose, or something else.

If you are a flickr member, post your photo there. If not, just send us an image or a link to one on Instagram, Facebook, or your favourite social media feed. The only rule is that the image must be one you took yourself.

<https://probusglobal.org/Photography.php#challenge>



For your enjoyment here are some photographs from club members:



Shirley Roberts



Peter Jennings



Patrick Whittick



There are other photos on PROBUS Global website and on our Flickr albums.



A Little Bit of Humour to End

I was in the six item express lane at the store quietly fuming. Completely ignoring the sign, the woman ahead of me had slipped into the check-out line pushing a cart piled high with groceries. Imagine my delight when the cashier beckoned the woman to come forward looked into the cart and asked sweetly, "So which six items would you like to buy?"

Smith climbed to the top of Mt. Sinai to get close enough to talk to God. Looking up, he asked the Lord.. "God, what does a million years mean to you?" The Lord replied, "A minute." Smith asked, "And what does a million dollars mean to you?" The Lord replied, "A penny." Smith asked, "Can I have a penny?" The Lord replied, "In a minute."

John was on his deathbed and gasped pitifully, "Give me one last request, dear," he said. "Of course, John," his wife said softly. "Six months after I die," John said, "I want you to marry Bob." "But I thought you hated Bob," she said.. With his last breath John said, "I do!"

Because they had no reservations at a busy restaurant, my elderly neighbour and his wife were told there would be a 45 minute wait for a table. "Young man, we're both 90 years old," the husband said. "We may not have 45 minutes." They were seated immediately.