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THE PROBUS CLUB MANUAL

**All you need to know about
PROBUS
and a
PROBUS CLUB**

Club Member Edition

A WESTERN CAPE PUBLICATION

*This Manual was edited
and developed from publications
on the Internet during January 2005
by The Probus Association of the Western Cape*

INTRODUCTION

As a new Probian you will find membership of a Probus Club an interesting and satisfying experience; but, what's more important, you will meet, and enjoy the fellowship of a group of retired people like yourself, who are expanding their interests and extending their friendships. This manual will provide a comprehensive insight into the Probus philosophy.

As an existing member, reading through the manual could provide some new ideas on how you can make a contribution to enhancing the enjoyment of your fellow members and promoting the Probus mission.

WHAT IS PROBUS

A Probus Club is a local association of retired or semi-retired professional or business people, (or others who have had a measure of responsibility in any field of worthy endeavor), who are of good character and are respected in their communities.

The Club meets regularly for fellowship and an extension of its member's interests.

The name is an amalgam of the abbreviation of the words PROfessional and BUSiness. Probus is also a Latin word meaning honest and virtuous, from which the English word "probity" is derived. In South Africa we have Men's, Ladies and Mixed Probus Clubs.

THE NEED?

Research in recent years has discovered abundant evidence of the need for retired business and professional people to associate with others of similar vocational or educational backgrounds.

Their social and sporting clubs, their voluntary work, their hobbies do not always provide this association. Generally, these people miss the intellectual stimulation, in the broader sense, provided by their former business, professional or executive activities. Within a short time after retirement, the desire to meet others in similar circumstances manifests itself quite strongly.

The need may be met, for some and in part, by groups organized for former staff by public companies, or other large organizations, but most of these meet infrequently and the great majority of retired people do not enjoy these limited opportunities.

The sense of isolation experienced by many people, who formerly held positions of responsibility and challenge, often leads to emotional stress that can result in actual physical illness. One researcher asserts that "one quarter of all senior managers are dead within six months of retirement", so great is their need for peer-group companionship and intellectual stimulation.

The need, moreover, is growing with increased longevity and the encouragement of early retirement. The rapid growth of the Probus movement in recent years provides further evidence of the need for this kind of association.

WHAT DOES A PROBUS CLUB DO?

The short answer: it does what it likes, within constitutional limits. Probus Clubs meet as frequently as desired, (viz. monthly, fortnightly or weekly), for fellowship, (morning tea or lunch, a pint and pie, or in the early evening for a drink and a snack), a short business session and to hear an interesting guest speaker.

But that is only the beginning. Many arrange visits to factories, defense establishments, industrial complexes, police stations, plant nurseries; the places a Rotary Club might be expected to include in its list of vocational visits.

Many enjoy short outings, picnics, visits to gardens and places of scenic or historical interest, braai's and theater performances.

In Australia many organize extended tours of anything from one day to a few weeks, sometimes as a single club, sometimes in association with other Probus Clubs. These are usually fellowship occasions with spouses and invited friends.

Some Probus Clubs have a number of special interest groups within the club such as music, art, history, sport, drama, hiking, cycling, philately, numismatics, sailing, and many more.

A Probus Club can in fact provide all the enjoyment of a Rotary or Lions club without the obligations of service, the attendance requirements and the classification system.

The Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs in Southern Africa provides, by implication, that it shall be non-political, non-racial and that it shall not be a fund raising group.

The Probus Club is not a service club. Many Probus members give generously of their time in voluntary work, either individually or in other service clubs or charitable bodies.

HOW DOES A PROBUS CLUB OPERATE?

A Probus Club is run by its members. It elects its officers annually. The club operates within a constitution and bylaws, the constitution is standard to all clubs, the suggested bye-laws are adapted to suit the circumstances and needs of the specific club.

No club may call itself a Probus Club or use the Probus name or emblem unless:

- (a) It has been sponsored by a Rotary club, in consultation with a Regional Probus Association.
- (b) It adopts the Standard Constitution and drafts a set of bye-laws incorporating certain operational and administrative clauses.
- (c) Is accredited as a Probus Club by the "Probus Council of Southern Africa" or by delegation, a Regional Probus Association.

HOW MUCH DOES MEMBERSHIP COST?

Membership subscriptions in existing clubs, (in 2004), are approximately R50-00 per annum. This provides for the supplying of gifts (sometimes) for guest speakers, production of a club newsletter and postage and other administrative costs.

An entrance fee of approximately R40-00, (in 2004), to cover the cost of the lapel badge etc. The only other additional cost to members is a meeting fee to cover the cost of the meeting venue and the personal cost of tea, lunch or drinks

WHERE DO CLUBS MEET?

Probus Club members choose the venue for meetings. It is usually in a licensed club, hotel, restaurant, hall or community center.

ARE SPOUSES INVOLVED?

Involvement of spouses or friends varies from club to club, in most clubs, only members (or visiting Probians) attend the regular meetings, but spouses and friends are invited to meetings and outings of special interest.

All clubs welcome visiting Probians and guests who are potential members. (As previously mentioned there are men's, ladies and mixed Probus clubs).

THE PROBUS – ROTARY RELATIONSHIP

Unlike Rotary's other sponsored clubs, (Rotoract, Interact and Inner Wheel) to which the sponsoring club has a continuing responsibility, Probus Clubs requires no assistance or supervision.

The sponsor Rotary Club's direct responsibility ends when it invests the foundation president with his or her collar of office.

Having ensured that the foundation members are properly qualified for membership of a Probus Club, and having satisfied itself that the first officers and members of the new club are fully aware of their duties and the Probus concept, the Probus Club is left to "paddle its own canoe".

PROBUS INTERNATIONALLY?

Probus Clubs are autonomous. There are therefore no international associations or boards governing Probus.

The Probus Club of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire however, decided in 1979 to undertake the task of operating a Probus Information Center to serve Probus Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland.

In the South West Pacific area, (Australia and New Zealand), in 1981, by authority of the Rotary District governors of the time, the Probus Center – South Pacific was established. This has proved to be a most efficient source of worldwide Probus information and a visit to their website <http://www.probus.com.au> is recommended.

Probus Clubs can be found in many corners of the English speaking world and the USA and Canada are no exception and visits from South Africans are always welcomed.

IN SOUTH AFRICA

The first Probus Club in Southern Africa was accredited on the 8th March 1977. This was originally named the “Probus Club of Central Durban”, later changed to Probus Durban. The first President was Archdeacon Jimmy Draper.

The names Charles Spindler, Jack Woods and Walter Eastman figure largely in the history of Probus and it is from documents obtained from these three eminent Probians that this short history has been compiled.

During the late 70’s and early 80’s Probus continued to grow in KwaZulu Natal but Charles Spindler had his sights on moving to the Western Cape. In 1984 the first Western Cape club was formed in Somerset West.

By 1986 the number of clubs in KZN had grown to the extent that a Regional Association was deemed necessary. The first chairman was the Rev. Bill Bell.

The Probus philosophy moved into Johannesburg in 1987 with the founding of the “Probus Club of the North” in Sandton followed in 1988 by the Bedfordview Club. The names of Stan Smith and Vernon Schultz now appear in the history book.

At a Rotary District Governors meeting in 1988, Rotary D.G. Mike Coleman of Johannesburg was asked to oversee the establishment of a co-ordinating and advisory body for Probus in Southern Africa.

The Probus Council for Southern Africa was thus born with its own constitution that primarily outlined the functions and duties required of it. Jack Wood was the first chair. It was then, (as it is still today) a nominated body as opposed to an elected one. The first nominated members being the Executive of the Kwa Zulu Natal Association. The intention being to rotate the responsibility for the nomination of Council members between Regional Associations every three years.

One of the first functions the Council undertook was to draft a Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs in Southern Africa. Constitutions were solicited from England and Australia and these formed the basis of the Standard Constitution circulated to and accepted by all Probus Clubs in Southern Africa to be operational on the 1st July 1989.

By 1997 so many clubs had taken root in the Western Cape that an Association was deemed necessary. Derek Erickson took the Chair.

The original Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs in Southern Africa was an amalgam of mandatory clauses (in italics) and clauses that could be adapted by individual clubs to suit the unique circumstances pertaining to those clubs. This led to confusion and a Standard Constitution (containing in essence the Italicised clauses) and a set of recommended bylaws was drawn up. The bylaws being the clauses from the original Constitution that could be adapted by individual clubs. This amended “Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs registered with the Probus Council of Southern Africa” took effect from the 1st September 1999 with the recommended bylaws following on the 1st November.

At the beginning of the “New Millennium” the responsibility for nominating the Probus Council for Southern Africa was passed on to the Western Cape Regional Association. Dr Cecil Craig was elected President of the newly constituted Council.

The Council Constitution of 1988 and the Standard Club Constitution were revised in March 2000, to meet current legal standards and the requirements of our South African Constitution. With minor amendments made from time to time, the Council and Club Constitutions, together with those of the Regional Associations, form the legal basis for the conduct of Probus in our Country. They are accepted by our members, meet the requirements of all Banking Institutions and form the basis for the Tax Exemption granted by the Receiver of Revenue.

CLUB AUTONOMY

It must always be remembered that Probus Clubs are autonomous. This autonomy is in no way negated by the fact that clubs, within a geographic area, elect a Regional Association.

These associations provide support when needed, act as information centers, research ways in which clubs can improve the standard of fellowship they provide for their members and help in the growth of the Probus movement.

The functions of the Probus Council of Southern Africa are to maintain a Directory of clubs and office bearers, accredit new clubs, uphold constitutional standards, advise clubs on their legal and Income Tax requirements and safeguard the Probus Trademark and Emblem.

THE CLUB MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

No organization can perform its intended function without leadership, planning, organizing and control. This means then that a Probus Club needs a management committee to be chosen from its members. It is important that a new member application and interview procedure must stress that every member should be prepared to serve on management.

How to go about electing the management committee and the titles of the principal officers is detailed in the Standard Constitution. The number of committee members and the tasks that they perform is up to the committee to decide.

How to fulfill the task of providing fellowship, entertainment and intellectual stimulation is their primary responsibility. When, where and how frequently the club meets must be stipulated in the club bylaws.

FUNCTIONS OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(This list of functions is provided as a guide only. They are usually grouped together, as best suits the needs of the club, taking the size and location of the club into consideration and the personality of the person chosen to perform that function).

THE PRESIDENT

The President is usually, (although not necessarily), elected to serve a one year term. He will usually chair all club meetings including those of the Management Committee and act as the spokesperson of the club in any formal communication. His function and that of all other MC members should be clearly outlined in the club bylaws.

CLUB SECRETARY

All secretarial, minute and record keeping duties rest here.

CLUB TREASURER

The keeper of the funds. Attends to the requirements of the Receiver of Revenue.

GUEST SPEAKER CONVENOR

Arranges for guest speakers and secure details of backgrounds. Hosts guest speakers at meetings. Arranges for formal introduction and vote of thanks.

OUTINGS AND ENTERTAINMENT ORGANIZER

Arranges visits to interesting places and organizations. Arrange special luncheons, dinners, theater bookings and other functions.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Maintains membership records and compiles a membership list from time to time. Supplies membership application forms to prospective new members, co-ordinates interviews with applicants and reports to the M C for final acceptance decision.

CLUB NEWSLETTER AND PUBLICITY SECRETARY

Prepares, produces and mails the Club Newsletter to all members prior to meetings, as may be the policy of the Club. Arranges for press releases and press attendance, as may be appropriate, to report special addresses, functions and events.

LIASON OFFICER

Seeks opportunities to co-operate with other Probus Clubs, and encourages inter club visits and joint activities. Assists Rotary, when requested, in the establishment of further Probus Clubs. Endeavors to facilitate liaison with Probus Clubs in other countries.

CLUB SERVICE OFFICER

Be responsible for meeting room arrangements, seating, microphone, name badges, refreshments and so on. Welcomes and introduces visitors. Keeps birthday diary and mails birthday cards. Contacts members who may be ill or hospitalized for whatever reason.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

THE PROBUS CLUB OF.....

Application for Membership

I hereby apply for membership of the Club.

Name and initials:

First nameSpouse's first name

Birthday anniversary: Self

.....Spouse.....

Wedding anniversary:

Residential address:

Postal address:code:.....

E-mail address:

Telephone numbers: Home:Cell:

ID Number:

Former vocation:

Present interests:

I am prepared to:

1, serve on the Management Committee if asked to do so Yes / No

2, use my car to transport other members on day time outings Yes / No

3, use my car to transport other members to evening functions Yes / No

I understand that an Entrance fee of: Rand an annual subscription of : R..... is payable on the acceptance of my application for membership.

Date:..... Signature:

Proposed by:..... Tel no:.....

Seconded by:.....Tel no:.....

FOR COMMITTEE USE

Interview comments:

Date form received:.....Date accepted:

Fees received R.....Applicant informed:.....

Secretary.....Treasurer.....

STANDARD CONSTITUTION FOR PROBUS CLUBS REGISTERED WITH THE PROBUS COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. (As amended March 2003)

1, The word 'PROBUS', "Probus" and the "P" logo may only be used by The Probud Council of Southern Africa, Probud Associations and accredited Probud Clubs; and may not be used for any commercial purpose.

2, The formation of a Probud Club requires:

2,1 Sponsorship by a Rotary Club in consultation with the local District Governor of Rotary International.

2,2 Accreditation by a regional Probud Association, or where no such Association exists, the Probud Council.

2,3 Adherence by the Probud Club to this Constitution in order to continue to retain accreditation and registration.

3, The Aims and Objectives of a Probud Club are:

3,1 To provide a facility for fellowship among retired and semi-retired persons.

3,2 To promote activities which may include meetings, addresses, outings and sports events and any other means providing fellowship and the enjoyment of retirement.

4, Membership

4,1 Membership of a Probud Club shall be open to retired and semi-retired Professional and Business persons, and other persons who have had a measure of responsibility in any field of endeavour.

4,2 Application for membership (with the exception of foundation members) must be sponsored by two members of the Club, and approved by the Management Committee.

4,3 A Club may elect Honorary Members as well as Life Members on the recommendation of the management committee.

5, Management

5,1 A Club shall be run by a management committee.

5,2 Officers shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and 2 or more committee members. One of the committee members shall be the immediate Past President.

5,3 The management committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

5,4 A register of all members shall be maintained.

5,5 The names and addresses of the President and Secretary, and whatever other information may, from time to time, be required for the compilation of the Probus Directory for the Southern African Region, shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Probus Council of Southern Africa, via the relevant Probus Regional Association or Rotary District Probus Co-ordinating Officer, within 14 days of the AGM of the Club.

5,6 The management committee shall be responsible for the organization of all the activities of the Club.

5,7 50% of the management committee members present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum.

5,8 The management committee may establish such bylaws as may be considered necessary. Such bylaws shall not replace nor revoke any part of this Constitution for Probus Clubs in Southern Africa.

6, Meetings

6,1 An AGM shall be held during March /April each year.

6,2 A Special General Meeting (SGM) shall be called by the Secretary if not less than 20% of all the members request, in writing, for such a SGM.

6,3 A quorum at an AGM or SGM shall be 25% of all members.

6,4 Voting at an AGM or SGM shall be by show of hands unless a ballot has been specifically requested by a minimum of 20% of the members present.

6,5 The Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote if needed.

6,6 Any notice of motion for an AGM or SGM must be in writing and submitted to the Secretary. The Secretary shall read this notice of motion at the Club Meeting one month prior to the meeting at which the motion is to be formally proposed.

7, Finance

7,1 The Treasurer shall keep an income and expenditure account for the 12 months to the end of February each year. The Financial Statements shall be presented at the AGM.

7,2 The annual subscription shall be agreed at the AGM, and for new Clubs, at the Foundation Meeting.

8, Amendments

8,1 Amendments to this Constitution shall be by a majority vote at a General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Probus Council of Southern Africa.

9, Winding Up

9,1 On winding up the funds of the Club shall be distributed to a Registered Charitable Organisation as determined by the Management Committee.

(Each club has its own bylaws, fill, delete or change the text to reflect the unique manner in which your club operates.)

PROBUS CLUB BYLAWS

(To be read in conjunction with Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs)

NAME

The name of the club shall be PROBUS

MEMBERSHIP

1, Maximum number of members.

2, Dual membership of another Probus Club is / is not permitted.

3, Membership will be open to men / women / men & women.

4, Transfer of Probus membership is / is not accepted with / without waiver of entrance fee. In the event of maximum membership, the transferee to attend meetings as guest until membership vacancy occurs.

5, New members to fill in application form, to meet the membership Secretary and to attend consecutive meetings before formal acceptance.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

1, Entrance fee R....., 00 (one off payment).

2, Annual membership R....., 00, reviewed annually, (reduced, proportionally, for number of months of membership to Club year-end).

3, Monthly attendance fee R....., 00.

4, Annual fees not paid within months of due date can lead to membership termination, (at the discretion of Management).

MEETINGS

1, The Club meets on theday of each month ath.... forh.....

2, Monthly newsletter to be circulated prior to meeting.

3, Management meets on theday of each month ath....

4, Venue for Club Meetings

ATTENDANCE

1, Apologies must be given when unable to attend a meeting.

2, Missing meetings in succession without apologies can lead to suspension or forfeiture of membership, (at the discretion of Management).

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1, President.

5, Speaker/Outings Convener.

2, Deputy President.

6, Entertainment Convener.

3, Minute / News Letter Secretary.

7, Membership / Social Secretary.

4, Treasurer.

8, Past President.

9, One or more members may be co-opted to serve on the MC.

CHANGE OF BYE-LAWS

Proposals for change to bylaws to be submitted to Management for approval before adoption at the following Club Meeting by simple majority.



PROBUS

CLUBS FOR RETIRED PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS PERSONS, FORMER EXECUTIVES AND OTHERS

PROBUS is an Association of retired and semi-retired persons who join together in autonomous Clubs throughout the world to stimulate thought, interest and participation in activities at a time of life when horizons are narrowing and opportunities to make new friends limited.

The word PROBUS is an abbreviation of the words PROfessional and BUSiness, but membership is not restricted to these two groups. It embraces also former executives of Government and other organizations and, in fact, any person who has had some measure responsibility in any field of endeavor. The basic purpose of a Probus Club is to provide regular gatherings of persons who, in retirement, appreciate and value opportunities to meet others in similar circumstances and of a similar level of interest.

The emphases in the Clubs:

- * Being simple in structure and free from the constraints and obligations of service clubs
- * Involving members in minimal cost.
- * Being directed, primarily, to providing fellowship and the opportunity for development of acquaintance.
- * Seeking members who are compatible with one another

Their activities, normally, fall into two parts:

- * A meeting on set days either once or twice each month, either, from 10h00 to 12h00 with tea and coffee provided, 12h30 for 13h00 for a luncheon meeting usually lasting until about 14h30 or a late afternoon meeting followed by refreshments. At these meetings, a guest speaker is normally invited – with discussion afterwards.
- * Visits (between meetings) to places and organizations of particular interest to members and occasional social, theater or sports activities. are arranged

Arising out of their membership and activities there is self generating goodwill, a sense of belonging, and a diverse background of interests, fellowship and cordiality evident within the Clubs ensuring for Probus a highly successful future.

To preserve the integrity and reputation of these autonomous clubs, they adhere to a constitution and suggested bye-laws. This has proven a very successful basis for serving the needs of retired people in many countries in which the Probus movement is now flourishing.

Some important features:

- * The Clubs are non-political and non-racial
- * There are Men's, Ladies and Mixed Clubs
- * They are non-profit making and non-fund raising
- * All clubs are sponsored by Rotary, but, on formation, are autonomous, independent of Rotary and independent of each other. There is a central Council and Regional Associations, but Rotary maintains contact and an understandable continuing interest.
- * Past membership of Rotary is not a requirement for potential members of Probus.
- * There is no restriction on the number of members from any one vocation.
- * Each club decides on the required number of meetings attended for continued membership.
- * Probus members may be active members of any other club or organization and most are.
- * Membership fees usually don't exceed R50-00 per year with a charge for coffee or luncheon meetings.
- * Spouses and guests are invited to participate in most visits and in special functions.

The clubs spring from two main roots: "Campus Club" founded by the Rotary Club of Welwyn Garden City and the "Probus" Club founded by the Rotary Club of Caterham in England in 1965 and 1966 respectively. Since then they have spread worldwide and continue to be established at a rapidly increasing rate as former professional and business persons and executives, invited to join recognize the value of participation and observe the enthusiasm of existing members and the way in which Probus is enriching their lives.

In the Southern African sub-region, the first Probus Club was established in 1977 in Durban and Probus has since spread to many other regions of the country. Rapid growth is expected in the short to medium term.

The Probus Council, Probus Regional Associations, (and Probus Centers maintained by Rotary in some Rotary Districts), encourage and advise on the formation of further Clubs, maintain up-to-date directories of Probus Clubs, and through the Probus Shop, distribute lapel badges and other regalia, as may be found necessary.

Probus development is an ongoing Rotary activity.

CONCLUSION

So there you have it. That is what a Probian is and how a Probian fits into the Probus Club.

Each Probus Club is independent of every other club and does with, and for, its members exactly what its Management Committee decides to do. The Standard Constitution is accepted to provide a legal framework and the Club Bylaws are formulated to ensure autonomy.

In Southern Africa Clubs have joined together in geographic areas to form associations. The members of an "Regional Association" are the clubs and not individuals. At an Annual General Meeting of an association the clubs elect an Executive Committee. The task of the Executive is to promote and protect the Probus Philosophy, offer guidance and assistance where it is deemed to be necessary, help with the formation and accreditation of new clubs and maintain contact with Rotary.

An association will in turn join with others to constitute the Probus Council for Southern Africa. The Council's job is to look after legalities such as Income Tax, the Trademark and Patents, register new clubs, compile a Directory of Clubs and their officers and assist where the associations can't reach.

In South Africa, Probus is a downward reporting and accounting organization. The "Council" reports to the "Associations" and they in turn report, (and have to justify their actions), to the clubs that mandated them. Those of us that have been Lions or Rotarians will remember that in those organizations the reporting goes the other way.

Have fun and enjoy your membership of a truly member centered organization.

Send your queries or suggestions to:

The Editor, PO Box 1268, Sea Point, 8060, or e-mail to:
bob.goebel@polka.co.za

Some Editorial suggestions for customizing the manual

1, Use this page to draft a short history of your club. Add the name of the Rotary Club that sponsored the formation, the inauguration and accreditation dates, a name list of founder members, past presidents and any other information considered to be important to the club.

2, Change the "Bylaws" page to reflect the bylaws that have been adopted by your club.

3, Add the name of your club to the top of the membership application form on page 11.

4, Change the cover page by adding your club's name.

5, The A4 two column horizontal format was chosen for the Manual for it to be made up as an A5 booklet. The suggested way of doing this is as follows:

a), Make up the customised edition of your club's manual, (as suggested above).

b), Print one copy on A4 paper. (It will obviously print in two column horizontal format).

c), Ask a friendly printer to print as many copies as you need and guillotine the stack through the middle. (Print shops have better guillotines than stationers).

d), Purchase half that number of sheets of A4 transparencies to use as a front cover and A4 thin white board for a backing. Ask the printer to cut them as above.

e), Purchase the required number of slide on binding strips, (most good stationers have them).

f), Inter-leave the bisected manual pages, (they should now be in A5 portrait format), put the cover on top and the backing sheet on the back, slide on the binding strip and cut it to size. You should now have as many handy A5 booklets as you need to give one to each member of your club.

The Editor