

PROBUS RENDEZVOUS 2010

By Ellen Stokes

This year in Darwin the welcome was warm from the Darwin single club organiser as well as the Larakia traditional owners and - the weather matched perfectly - clear blue skies and gentle breezes.

The Rendezvous kicked off with a concert opened by 15 year old Susan with her beautiful rendering of Advance Australia Fair and then entertainment by an African Gospel Choir who managed to get us all up swinging our hips and dancing (at least those of us who could get to our feet). Various Greek, Asian, Indonesian and indigenous Australians – in full regalia – danced and sang in the multicultural theme of the 2010 Rendezvous as part of the tapestry of the Top End.

Opened by the Northern Territory Administrator Tom Pauling (Ian Thomas Pauling AO QC) he described the Rendezvous as “one of the New Tricks provided by Probus to keep our minds and bodies healthy”. He invited us to retire to NT and its beautiful climate to help balance those people living there who come because “they are either wanted by the law or are unwanted by wives and friends and so come to live in the Territory “ – only joking!

The evening saw the members dine in the open – as only you can in Darwin - at Crocodylus Park, who sponsored the event, (see brave Ellen holding an inhabitant but you'll note she declined the Adelaide River offer). Here old friendships were renewed and new ones made. The guest speaker Dr Graham Webb introduced the –ve and +ve value in conservation, how a society protects its stories, its art and its architecture and so – to sustainability in the modern world.

**G'day ol'mate, how ya going,
Bloody beaut, oh what a night,
Glad you joined us in the To-o-p End,
For a dinkum NT Welcome night.**

The next 3 days were occupied with ½ or full day outings for the 400 delegates. To Kakadu, Katherine Gorge, Deck Chair Cinema, Sunset Dinner Cruise on a Catamaran, Wildlife park, the jumping crocodiles on the Adelaide River, swimming at Litchfield Park (for those so inclined), Barra Fishing, Arafura Waters Charters, City Sights Tours AND..... I'm going to stop now!

The Official Dinner on Thursday saw us watch the sun drop over the horizon on an azure blue sea and a rich velvet sky as we were served a sumptuous meal with lashings of fine wines – yes, from Victoria would you believe?

The final day opened with an ecumenical service at the Darwin Roman Catholic Cathedral, followed by a Probus Sth Pacific Forum for those interested. At a magnificent lunch we farewelled both old and new friends as we prepared to make our way around Australia and New Zealand to our far flung homes or ventured off on a post conference tour “The Heart of Australia on the Ghan”. Many had enjoyed a 7 day Pre Tour from Broome to Darwin before starting their Rendezvous festivities.

Next year – The Barossa Valley. Great for the wine buffs (you even get to blend your own wine) and the German/ European heritage of Sth Australia. Even further, in 2012, old friends will be meeting at Nth Palmerston in New Zealand and for many the pre and post tours that go with these events. You can even come with your own friends!!!!!!



Probus Rendezvous Opening Ceremony.



Welcoming Dinner at Crocodylus Park.



Ellen and Baby Reptile Friend.



Northern Territory Sunset from the Hotel.



Ellen on a Dinner Cruise.