

The answer will be in next month's Newsletter. The answer to last month's Brain Teaser is: There is no missing dollar. The Manager ended up with \$25.00. The three men had paid \$27.00 and the difference was in the Bellboy's pocket.

Those were the days—A Bit of Nostalgia (continued)

We had at least 40 kids in our class and somehow we all learned to read and write, do maths and spell almost all the words needed to write a grammatically correct letter....., FUNNY THAT!!

We all said prayers in school irrespective of our religion, sang the national anthem and saluted the Flag and no one got upset. Staying in detention after school netted us all sorts of negative attention we wish we hadn't got. And we all knew we had to accomplish something before we were allowed to be proud of ourselves.

I just can't recall how bored we were without computers, Play Station, Nintendo, X-box or 270 digital TV cable stations. We weren't!! Don't even mention about the rope swing into the river or climbing trees Oh yeah ... And where were the antibiotics and sterilisation kit when I got that bee sting? I could have been killed!

We played "King of the Castle" on piles of dirt or gravel left on vacant building sites and when we got hurt, mum pulled out the 2/6 pence bottle of iodine and then we got our backside spanked. Now it's a trip to the emergency room, followed by a 10- day dose of antibiotics and then mum calls the lawyer to sue the contractor for leaving a horribly vicious pile of gravel where it was such a threat.

To top it off, not a single person I knew had ever been told that they were from a dysfunctional family. How could we possibly have known that?



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Epping and District Probus Club Inc.



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Kokoda Day
3 November 1942



LEST WE FORGET



NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENTS MISSIVE

With summer sunshine now generating some warmth in these November days the outlook for our social activities and meetings is somewhat brighter than it has been for the past 10 months. Even so we still cannot resume our normal monthly meetings in the Rawson Street Church hall or hold some normal activities. Much to my disappointment we have had to cancel our Christmas Party at the Ryde RSL Club on the 10 December 2020, due to the indoor restrictions on group gatherings, which limit the numbers to no more than thirty.

Ken Fletcher has asked me to be relieved of his duties as Speakers Organiser and to resign from the Committee for personal reasons. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Ken for his strong contribution to the Committee and as Speakers Organiser over this past difficult period. I am pleased to announce that Frank Hanlon has agreed to return to the Committee and he will resume as Speakers Organiser with immediate effect.

Where we can we have been able to arrange some activities including walks, bicycling, the coffee club and old codger's music group amongst others. This month we are having another virtual General meeting of our members via Zoom on Monday, 9 November 2020 at 10.00 a.m. This meeting will be an abbreviated one and will include the part 2 presentation by Ken Fletcher on his journey across the Nullarbor. We will also bring members up to date on future activities planning. If you have access to Zoom please join us at the meeting—you will be very welcome. Ross will Email the joining code to all members.

In place of the cancelled Christmas party two informal lunches have been arranged—detail are in Ray Finch's other activities in this Newsletter. This November edition of our Newsletter has been prepared by Col Short and will be distributed to members by Email. Leo and Ray will print some copies and mail these to those members who do not have access to Email.

Once again I encourage any suggestions you may have as members. To submit these Email me at landor@optushome.com.au or contact me or any other Committee member by phone.

We have been in lockdown for nine months now and from here our freedom of movement in Australia and social gatherings can only get better. I certainly am looking forward to relaxation of the current restrictions and to a pick up in the economy. We will get through this. Keep well and be optimistic. My best wishes.

MEETINGS

October

Ken Fletcher was our guest speaker last month (by Zoom); his topic was "Nullarbor Surprises". Ken was assisted by our President adding his story of an especially fast trip he made in a "Charger" he had rebuilt. The Nullarbor Plain is about the same size as Victoria but does not have any rivers flowing off it, the rain seeps into the lime and soil forming many caves. The seabed formed 45–50 million years ago, when the flat plain tilted and was covered by the sea; this allowed marine organisms to deposit their skeletons forming a deep layer of limestone. 25 million years ago an ice age caused the sea levels to fall making the plain dry again until a long warm spell 20 million years ago caused the sea to rise and cover the plain again. The Nullarbor Plain, as it is today, emerged from the sea 10 million years ago.

Ken and his wife Barbara found some interesting places during three return trips to Western Australia along the Eyre Highway and the following details some of these places.

They made a detour to Point Sinclair, passing Lake MacDonald, a salt lake coloured pink by algae. Gypsum is mined in this area (Australia has the largest gypsum deposits in the Southern Hemisphere).

They looked at the world-famous surf-board riding beaches Cactus, Rocky Point, and Point Bell. They stayed at the camping area for these beaches only supplied by bore water with roofless showers and toilets. The toilets used a sand and lime mixture to cover deposits.

They passed the numerous windmills at Penong, the closed Yalata Roadhouse and the life-sized model of a Southern Right Whale at Nullarbor including a dingo wandering around the roadhouse there.

Day 3: Spend the day in the Flinders Ranges—see Brachina Gorge, Aroona Valley, lunch at Wilpena Pound Information Centre. After lunch, take the shuttle into Wilpena Pound (Overnight at Rawnsley Park Station).

Day 4: Hawker to Port Augusta via Quorn—ride 2½ hours on the Pichi Richi Explorer steam train through Pichi Richi Pass. After lunch, travel past Leigh Creek, Olympic Dam Mine and Moomba Gas Fields (Overnight in Port Augusta).

Day 5: Port Augusta to Woomera and Coober Pedy—visit the Woomera Heritage Museum and travel on to the moonscape of the opal mining capital of the world (Overnight in the Desert Cave Hotel with an option of underground or above ground accommodation).

Day 6: Coober Pedy—learn about opal mining and living underground at the Umoona Opal Mine and Faye's Historic Underground Home. Free afternoon to check out the town (Overnight Coober Pedy).

Day 7: Coober Pedy to Alice Springs with a comfort stop at Marla and lunch at the Erldunda Roadhouse (Overnight at Double Tree by Hilton, Alice Springs).

Day 8: Alice Springs and the Standley Chasm in the West MacDonnell Ranges—call into the John Flynn Memorial and the Royal Flying Doctor Service Visitor Facility. This evening there is a Bush BBQ at a location in the East MacDonnell Ranges (Overnight in Alice Springs).

Day 9: Alice Springs to Uluru via Erldunda Roadhouse and Curtain Springs—view Mount Conner; visit the Ayers Rock Visitors Centre and walk to the Minymaku Platform for a viewing of the Rock (Overnight Yulara Outback Pioneer Hotel).

Day 10: A day at leisure or participate in the following options: Kings Canyon Full Day Tour, Desert Awakening, Uluru Camel Tour, Astro Tour, Scenic Flights, Cultural Experiences (own cost including lunch and dinner) (Overnight Yulara).

Day 11: Uluru to The Olgas—visit the viewing platform at Kata Tjuta. After sunset, we have The Sounds of Silence dining experience and the Field of Lights spectacular (Overnight at Yulara).

Day 12: After breakfast transfer to the airport for return to Sydney. Pricing includes flights Sydney to Adelaide and Yulara to Sydney, luxury coach travel, 11 nights quality accommodation, 27 meals as per itinerary, all entry fees and guides. Enquiries to Wal Gallagher mobile 0429 484 639.

BRAIN TEASER

A frog is at the bottom of a well. If he climbs up half way the first day, then half of what he has left to do each day, how long does it take him to climb out?

And now to our Active members: Ron Leslie is weak, but getting stronger. His Doctor started him on new medication; Alf McDermott this week, had a cancer removed close to his eye; Keith Robinson is still finding everything hard with his health problems; Doug Carruthers is home from Hospital, and under Doctor's Orders; Doug Sneddon is undergoing a 5-hour operation on his skull, relating to cancer issues, at the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, Camperdown on 18 November 2020, and we all wish him a good recovery.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Thankfully your Secretary has nothing much to say, so a bit of advertising instead:

Take a look at our prototype new website (still under development) by visiting <http://rnbt.id.au/edP-QL> (temporary URL). Suggestions and Constructive Criticism are requested and these can be sent by email to rnbeattie@gmail.com.

WANTED: Probus photographs for inclusion on our new Epping & District Probus WebSite!! \$\$\$zero paid! Must include photographer's name (for accreditation by watermark) and some information about the activity and date (e.g., Fassifern Station, train trip to Toronto, NSW in August 2016) [for a short title]. NOTE: generally, people will not be named in any photographs on the proposed Website, but if anyone does not wish to appear in a photo, please advise the Secretary now!!—rnbeattie@gmail.com.

TOUR NEWS

Assuming the pandemic restrictions continue to ease, and as it is unlikely we will be able to travel overseas in the foreseeable future, we are looking at options for domestic tours in 2021. The tour with Vintage Rail to the Riverina in March 2021 has not been well supported and it is unlikely we can reach the trigger point to enable a price reduction from its standard pricing. A more expensive but much better value tour is offered to Adelaide and Alice Springs—*The Uluru and Outback Explorer*. Depending on the level of interest (20) we could plan a tour in winter 2021, or for smaller numbers we can join an existing tour departing Friday, 13 August 2021 returning Tuesday, 24 August 2021.

This tour is 12 days/11 nights, priced around \$5600 per person twin share, and involves:

Day 1: Flight from Sydney to Adelaide and a guided tour of Glenelg, North Adelaide, the city circuit, and a foodie's tour of their historic market (Overnight in Adelaide).

Day 2: Coach to the Flinders Ranges via Mintaro, Burra, Jamestown and Orroroo to Hawker (Overnight in self-contained holiday units on Rawnsley Park Station).

They took a flight over the Head of the Bight, spotting some whales including an albino calf; looked at the impressive 100-meter high, slowly decaying Cliffs of Bunda at the edge of the flat treeless Nullarbor Plain and spotted a group of camels wandering the plain.

At a lookout off the highway they saw a large pod of dolphins frolicking at the base of the Bunda Cliffs, which at sea level disappeared into the far distance. An early morning view showed the mists formed by the cold night air from the Plain dropping into the warmer moist ocean air resulting in water condensing out as a mist.

They took a muddy road to Cook, 90 km north of the highway, to venture on to the Nullarbor Plain. It was an old fettlers town on the TransAustralian Railway (opened in 1917), where the trains now only stop to change drivers so they can take a rest before heading back and for the diesel electric locos to be refuelled and the carriages re-watered. In its heyday, the town housed 120 people, a school, hospital, police station, gaol, post office and store. In the days of steam-hauled trains it had a locomotive depot and engines were both re-coaled and watered here or were changed. They stopped to see the Salt-bush and blue bush that grows across the Plain.

After Ken had spoken our President shared his experience when he was accompanied by an ex racing driver journalist on a trip from Perth to Sydney in Michael's specially souped up Charger, which he had rebuilt. He told of the 45 minutes it took to cover the longest piece of straight road in Australia, 90 miles, during which the front of the car lifted so much the front tyres were just off the tarmac and the impression it made on a motor bike rider they passed. Michael got the journalist to Sydney in time to catch his plane. The journalist wrote the story up in his magazine.

November

This month on Monday, 9 November 2020, Ken is going to show part two of the "Nullarbor Surprises" presentation (by Zoom) with a visit to the Koonalda Homestead and the Koonalda Cave. We see the remains of the sheep station equipment and many wrecked vehicles that could not finish their journey. This area is now looked after by the National Parks who have restored the roof of the homestead. Then we look at Border Village and its quarantine rules before visiting Eucla and the Old Telegraph Station built in 1877; then through to Madura with its horse breeding past; on to Cocklebiddy which has a famous cave nearby; we drive south to the Bight and the EYRE Bird Observatory. It's then over the 90-mile straight road to Balladonia Telegraph Station and Roadhouse. This is the area that an American Skylab crashed to earth and parts of it were displayed in the Roadhouse for a while. It's then on to the Fraser Range working sheep station and caravan park before driving to Norseman.

DAY OUTINGS

November

This month's outing is on Monday, 16 November 2020, and is a 2½ hour tour around Sydney Harbour. We will assemble at Epping Station Concourse at 10.30 a.m. to catch the 10.47 a.m. train on platform 1, arriving at Wynyard at 11.32 a.m. We will board the boat at 11.55 a.m. (just outside the Cargo Bar) for a 12.30 p.m. departure. The cruise will finish at 3.00 p.m. at Darling Harbour.



The Christmas party, planned for Thursday, 10 December 2020, will not proceed as originally planned. Due to the NSW State Government COVID-19 restrictions, the venue can accommodate a maximum group size of only 30 people. The Committee has decided that this is unacceptable. Instead, there will be two “Dining Group” lunches in early December—for details, please see Other Activities report.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

While recognising the restrictions resulting from the coronavirus, the Club has arranged several opportunities for fellowship with fellow members and partners, before the end of 2020, as follows:

Dining at Dooleys—Wal Gallagher has booked lunch for 30 on Tuesday, 10 November 2020 at 12.30 p.m. at Dooleys Waterfront, Silverwater. Contact Wal if you wish to attend. At the time of publication the event might be fully booked, but check with Wal.

Coffee Club at Carlo—The next Coffee Club will meet at the Coffee Club, Carlingford Court on Friday, 13 November 2020 at 10.00 a.m. No need to book, just turn up.

Old Codgers Music on Zoom—The Old Codgers Music group will meet on Monday, 23 November 2020 via Zoom to enjoy a session of music selected by Andrew Davidson. Anyone can join in; just contact Ross Beattie, phone 9871-1838, for the link.

Lunch at EDRC—Greg Stone has booked Eastwood Rugby Club for a casual lunch at 12.00 noon on Thursday, 26 November 2020 for 30 diners. Please book direct with Greg preferably by email on wafil6666@gmail.com. Alternatively by mobile 0437-030-337.

Lunch at West Penno—Ray Palmer has booked a casual lunch for 30 diners at West Pennant Hills Sports Club, 103 New Line Road, West Pennant

Hills, on Thursday, 10 December 2020. Please contact Ray on 9836-4516 to make a booking.

Cycle Group

There were 9 riders on Friday, 23 October 2020 which included Geoff Richardson's wife Margaret on her electric bike. Meeting at Prospect Parklands at 10 a.m. we rode along the Prospect Canal Reserve track, over the viaduct, then a short stint along the Cumberland Highway cycle path before turning into Prospect Creek for the return journey back to Prospect Reservoir, approximately 18 km. The Parklands are at their best at the moment, an oasis in the middle of suburbia.

Following the ride we had coffee and snacks at the Royal Cricketers Arms on Reservoir Road, Prospect.

The next ride will be on Friday, 20 November 2020, from Gosford to Woy Woy and return around Brisbane Water. The meeting time is 10.00 a.m. This is a new ride starting and finishing, at this stage, at the Gosford Sailing Club on Masons Parade Gosford (the route may be reversed if car parking at Woy Woy is suitable).

Depending on available seating (COVID restrictions, etc.) we could have fish & chips at Fishermen's Wharf, Woy Woy. The final details of the ride to follow by email.

If you wish to participate please contact Steve Drury, prior to the day, on 9872-7447 or mobile 0487-785-444 or Email: sandbdrury@gmail.com. Note, a loan cycle and helmet may be available if required.

WELFARE REPORT (prepared by our Welfare Officer, Ray Palmer)

I made contact with the following Non-Active members and all say they are coping with their various issues:

Ian Campbell, John Cox, Arthur Goswell, Owen Harrison, Tony Malin, Dick Nicholson, John Webb and Paul Woodward.

Brian Howard has a very painful foot and is under Doctor's Orders, Ron Macintosh is experiencing vision loss, which is a concern, and John Steele-Smith is experiencing more downs than ups!

Four of our Non-Active men have had, or are having, special birthdays: Wal Williams turned 96 on 31 October, John Steele-Smith was 91 on 2 November, John Cox was 92 on 4 November and Ray Williams will be 95 on 19 November.

Sadly Fay Salmon, wife of John, passed away last week—I will be attending a Celebration of Fay's life on Tuesday, 10 November 2020 at 2.00 p.m. in the South Chapel, Northern Suburbs Crematorium. Our Club's care and concern have been given to John.