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**Epping & District
Probus Club**

social activities throughout the year

General Meetings here, 10:00-12:00,
usually 2nd Monday of February-December

WebSite
<http://www.rnbt.id.au/edpci>



WELCOME
 欢迎 selamat datang 환영하다
 स्वागत සාදරයෙන් පිළිගනිමු

Email
eppingdistprobus@gmail.com

Fellowship, Friendship and Fun

Proposed Club Banner

Epping and District Probus Club Inc.



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FEBRUARY



NEWSLETTER

MEETINGS

February

An interesting start to the New Year with a special woman giving us awareness on an important health issue. Michelle Sharkey OAM is our guest speaker today, when her topic will be “Stroke—Awareness, Treatment and Recovery”. Michelle will give a comprehensive overview of Stroke, including:

- What is a Stroke?
- What to do if you think you are having a Stroke
- New treatments for Stroke in NSW
- Risk factors for Stroke
- What to do to prevent a Stroke.

Michelle has worked as a Social Worker in NSW for over 40 years, her main area of experience is in Community Development and Health. She has worked in Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies as well as in the Non-Government sector.

In 1997, she became the Executive Officer for the Stroke Recovery Association. The Stroke Recovery Association is a community-based organisation which offers support and services in the community for people affected by Stroke and their families. It has very strong links with other the Health services with whom it works closely and co-operatively to ensure the delivery of quality services to people affected by Stroke and their carers in the community. It auspices and supports the work of over 35 Stroke Support groups throughout NSW.

In 2011, Michelle was honoured for her work in Stroke with the Order of Australia Medal. She is very passionate about people’s ability to recover and live a good quality of life after Stroke. She is a strong advocate for

people's ability to live in the community and in their own home for as long as possible and she has an extensive knowledge of the services available to assist the individual and their families to achieve this.

Michelle will have an envelope available for any donation that you may like to give to support the Stroke Recovery Association.

March

The March meeting is also an important event as we will be conducting the AGM with extra time to get to know your fellow members (important part of Probus is friendship and fellowship). Did you know that there is a Defibrillator in the hall and where it is located? One member has already done the required training on its use. However, we need another volunteer to step forward urgently and do the training. Hopefully we will never need to use it but it is vital we have members who know how it works in an emergency before professional help arrives. A demonstration will be organised when one of our trained members is in attendance. There will be no guest speaker.

DAY OUTINGS

February

This month's outing will be on Monday, 20 February 2023, and will be a visit to the Art Gallery of New South Wales for a guided tour of the new Sydney Modern galleries. In this tour we will explore the art and architecture of the Art Gallery's new building. We will meet the one-of-a-kind artworks created for this space and see how an abandoned oil tank has been turned into a gallery. The cost of the tour will be \$32 per person. Members must register and pay on or before Monday, 13 February 2023.

We will assemble at the Epping station Concourse at 9.30 a.m. to catch the 9.47 a.m. train to Town Hall station. We will then catch the Route 441 bus (due at 10.37 a.m.) to the Art Gallery. The guided tour will commence at 11 o'clock. We will have lunch at one of the cafés in the Art Gallery.

March

Next month's outing will be on Monday, 20 March 2023, and will be a guided tour of the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct. Dating back to 1821, this national heritage precinct covers an area of 7.3 hectares where the adjacent historic institutions of the Roman Catholic Orphan School and later Parramatta Girls Home and the convict built Parramatta Female Factory and later Parramatta Invalid & Lunatic Asylum are situated. The cost of the tour will be \$10 per person. Members must register and pay on or before Monday, 13 February 2023.

arms fire as they came in and unloaded, 40 aircraft made 66 trips the next day. Their cargo included two dismantled 25 pounder guns of the 2/1st Field Regiment with 688 rounds of ammunition, under the command of Captain R. J. Wise. These were landed in the morning and in action before noon.

Japanese attacks that day succeeded in reaching the corner of the airstrip but were forced to fall back under enormous pressure.

On the 31st of January and the 1st of February 75 aircraft brought reinforcements including the 2/3rd Independent Company that brought the strength of Kanga Force to over 3,000 men. This included a company of machine guns from the 7th Machine Gun Battalion that had flown in to defend the airfield.

On the 3rd of February, Australian forces counter-attacked at Wau, forcing the Japanese to retreat. By the next day, Okabe was threatened with encirclement and was forced to order a withdrawal. With all hope of capturing Wau gone, Okabe was ordered to abandon the attempt.

An air battle ensued on the 6th of February with American pilots downing 24 enemy aircraft. The Japanese then began to retreat towards Mubo. Kanga Force suffered 349 casualties at Wau but Australian troops counted 753 Japanese dead.

For his "high order of leadership and control" at Wau, Brigadier Moten was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Order.

At the end of the fighting around 1,200 Japanese had been killed, as had some 300 Australians. The Allies continued to capture positions held by the Japanese throughout much of 1943, including Salamaua and Lae.

In next month's Newsletter we will look at the Battle of the Bismarck Sea, which took place from the end of February 1943.

Christmas Party Photos



Skindewai. However, instead of pursuing them, Okabe chose to advance on Wau down an old and seldom used track running through difficult country parallel to the Black Cat Track, and the two sides lost contact.

The Black Cat Track or Trail is a rough overland track in Morobe Province. It runs from the village of Salamaua on the coast of the Huon Gulf, south into the mountains to the township of Wau. The name is taken from the Black Cat Gold Mine in Wau. It is also known as the Skindewai Track.

Okabe thereby disguised the strength and objective of his force, and took the Australians by surprise. It was necessary to cross Komiatum Hill, advance to Mubo, and then take Australian patrol moves out along the Mubo the track westward. This route was chosen so as to avoid observation from Allied aircraft in the daytime as they cut their way into the jungle. The mountain range east of Wau was about 1,500 ft (460 metres) high and not particularly difficult to cross, but in parts there were no tracks. These had to be prepared without being spotted by the Allied aircraft. As the troops had to carry their food, ammunition and equipment on their backs, the advance was difficult and took longer than anticipated. Eventually they reached a peak from which they were able to look down on the Wau–Bulolo Valley. By this time, food was running short. The commander of the Okabe Detachment, pointing at the Wau village, gave the order to attack. However, the movement through such dense jungle caused his units to lose touch with each other. The resulting attack was delivered piecemeal, without sufficient preparation.

Meanwhile, the first group of the 17th Infantry Brigade, the 2/6th Infantry Battalion, had embarked for Port Moresby on 9 January 1943. The rest of the battalion followed over the next two nights. The 2/7th Infantry Battalion departed Milne Bay on the Army transport *Taroona* on 13 January and the 2/5th on *Duntroon* the next day. The prospects of beating the Japanese to Wau did not look good.

Standing in the way of Okabe's advance was A Company of the 2/6th Infantry Battalion under Captain W. H. Sherlock. Okabe ordered an all-out attack on Sherlock's position on 28 January. Sherlock was forced from his position and retreated on to a nearby spur. For much of the afternoon, frontal Japanese attacks were repelled by Australian mortar and machine gun fire, and efforts to infiltrate Sherlock's positions were defeated by a bayonet attack led by Sherlock in person. By 1800 hours, Sherlock's mortar ammunition had run out and his small arms ammunition was running short, while his position was being plastered with mortar rounds and swept by machine gun fire. Sherlock held on through the night and was killed the next day trying to break through the Japanese lines. For his actions, Sherlock was posthumously mentioned in despatches.

On 29 January, 57 planeloads arrived, bringing most of the 2/7th Infantry Battalion and the remainder of the 2/5th. Although subjected to small

Please note that there is no parking on site—we are requested to park in Fleet Street. Closed-in walking shoes must be worn. There are no toilet facilities open on the site and there is no shelter if it rains. We will meet at the low white Female Factory wall at 10.00 a.m.

April

The April outing will be on Monday, 24 April 2023, and will be a guided tour of the Penrith Museum of Printing. The museum houses a collection of fully operational letterpress printing presses and equipment from the 1840s to the 1970s. The museum also has a substantial collection of hand-set type and Ludlow fonts as well as an extensive collection of antique wooden display type. The cost of the tour will be \$10 per person. More details in next month's Newsletter.

May

The Naval Historical Society will be holding a cruise on Thursday, 1 June 2023, the 81st Anniversary of the attack on Sydney harbour by Japanese midget submarines. The cost will be \$70 per person for a group. The club has booked a limited number of places on this cruise. It is expected that the cruise will be very popular so, if you are interested in this outing, please advise the Outings Co-Ordinator early so more places can be booked if necessary.

We will pay early to avoid disappointment, so those members who have booked a place and have not already paid are asked to please pay on or before Monday, 13 March 2023.

Note: If you are not paying cash for an outing, please make a direct deposit to Probus Account BSB 633 000 A/C 182681668 stating YOUR NAME and reason for payment and also advise the Outings Co-Ordinator, Russell Gough, by email to: Russell.Gough51@gmail.com

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The following 'other activities' are planned for this month. It goes without saying that all activities are conditional on compliance with any relevant Covid-19 restrictions.

Old Codgers Music Group—will meet on Monday, 13 February 2023 at 2.30 p.m. at Brian and Deidre Haywood's home, 35 Cheltenham Road, Cheltenham. Members interested in classical music are welcome and asked to leave their name on the Secretary's List at the General Meeting so that seating can be arranged.

Coffee Club—10 members and two ladies attended on 9 December 2022 at the Coffee Club, Carlingford Court with three apologies. On 13

January 2023, 12 members and three ladies attended. The next meeting will be on Friday, 17 February 2023 at 10.00 a.m. at the Coffee Club, Carlingford Court. Come along and see how we can actually enjoy forming solutions for the world's many problems

Dining—26 met and enjoyed each others company over lunch on Thursday, 29 December 2022 in the bistro at North Ryde RSL Sports Club (formerly Eastwood Rugby Club) organised by Greg Stone.

Twenty-one folk gathered to enjoy lunch on Wednesday, 11 January 2023 at Wild Pear Café, Dural organised by Ross Beattie.

Ross Beattie has organised a lunch on Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at the Carlo D'agon Bistro, Carlingford Bowling Club, corner Pennant Hills Road and Evans Road (enter off Evans Road) also close to the Pennant Hills Road bus stop near Evans Road (serviced by bus routes 513, 546, 550 and 625).

Ray Palmer has organised a lunch on Wednesday, 22 March 2023, probably at West Pennant Hills Sports Club (more details in next Month's Newsletter.

Cycle Group aka Wobblies—five Wobblies and one guest set off from Mill Park Street Rhodes towards Parramatta Park on Friday, 16 December 2022. Two riders and the guest split off at Silverwater Bridge and meandered back via Newington Wetlands (17½ km), while the rest went on to Parramatta Park then returned to Rhodes (23½ km). For a Christmas lunch get together with partners and some Wobblies who were not able to ride that day. Twelve diners in all plus Ross's grandson (an apprentice Wobbly?).

Six Wobblies affected by heat and humidity met at Majors Bay Reserve on Wednesday 18 January 2023 and cycled around the Parramatta River foreshore environs to Abbotsford in Hen and Chicken Bay. One hundred and fifty metres of cobblestone near France Bay provided an interesting experience to the intrepid band; nevertheless the 23½ km ride was enjoyable, as was the noon coffee and munch stop in Prince Edward Park, Cabarita.

The next ride will be Friday, 24 February 2023, from Rouse Hill to Windsor. Meeting place is the car park in Rouse Hill Regional Park. Entrance to the Park is on Worcester Road, Rouse Hill. On entering the Park follow the road to the right and into the car park. The route will be from the Rouse Hill Regional Park to Windsor via the Windsor Road cycle path. Coffee will be in Windsor, returning to the Park via the same route (a total distance of 22 km).

Please contact Steve Drury if you wish to participate or need more information: email sandbdrury@gmail.com or phone 9872-7447 or mobile 0487-785-444.

The Ramblers—five members and one guest met at Epping Station on Thursday, 1 December 2022 for the Metro to Chatswood, thence the Route 144 bus to Manly and the 10.42 a.m. Route 161 bus to North Head for a

more difficult: longer, steeper, higher elevation and rougher than the more famous Kokoda Trail, roughly 100 km to the east.

Lieutenant General Hitoshi Imamura,, the Commander of the Japanese Eighth Area Army at Rabaul, correctly deduced his opponent's intentions and the strength of Kanga Force and resolved to head off the danger to Lae.

Kanga Force was the name given to a composite ad hoc formation of the Australian Army that served in New Guinea. It was formed on 23 April 1942 under the command of Major Norman Fleay. Made up of elements from the 1st and 2/5th Independent Companies and the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles. Kanga Force conducted a number of small scale raids and reconnaissance operations around Lae and Salamaua before it was disbanded and the individual units became part of the Australian 3rd Division in 1943.

Imamura ordered Lieutenant General Hatazō Adachi's Eighteenth Army to secure "important areas to the west of Lae and Salamaua". On 29 December 1942, Adachi ordered the 102nd Infantry Regiment and other units under the command of Major General Toru Okabe, the Commander of the infantry group of the 51st Division, to move from Rabaul to Lae and then immediately advance inland to capture Wau. Okabe's force was known as the Okabe Detachment.

Imamura was up against a resourceful, resolute and aggressive opponent, who also had access to good intelligence. Allied Ultra code breakers were reading the Japanese shipping codes, and, by 3 January 1943, Allied commanders knew in advance about the force that the enemy was planning to send from Rabaul to Lae, although they did not know the force's ultimate destination. Blamey chose not to wait for this to become clear, but immediately ordered the 17th Infantry Brigade to move from Milne Bay to Wau on 4 January 1943. Its Commander, Brigadier Murray Moten, was ordered to defend Wau.

On 6 January, the Japanese convoy carrying Okabe's force set out for Lae from Rabaul. Forewarned by Ultra, USAAF and RAAF aircraft spotted, shadowed and attacked the convoy, which was shielded by low clouds and Japanese fighters. An RAAF Squadron made a night bombing attack on the convoy which sank the transport *Nichiryu Maru*. The ship took with it all of Okabe's medical supplies. Another transport, *Myoko Maru*, was so badly damaged at Lae by USAAF B-25s that it had to be beached. Nonetheless, the convoy succeeded in reaching Lae on 7 January and landing about 4,000 troops. Between the 10th and the 16th of January, the Okabe Detachment moved down the coast in barges to Salamaua, where it assembled and completed its preparations for the attack on Wau.

On 16 January, the enemy encountered a platoon of the 2/7th Independent Company under Captain Geoffrey Bowen. A brief action followed in which Bowen was killed, and the Australians retreated back to



The Battle of Wau ran for a week beginning on 29 January 1943. Decoded communications had forewarned Australian commanders of the imminent Japanese attack. Wau's small garrison, Kanga Force, was reinforced by air. The Japanese were motivated. They had failed to capture Port Moresby during the Kokoda Campaign in 1942, and had lost their north Papuan beachhead garrisons at Buna, Gona and Sanananda.

The only way into Wau was by air, and the Japanese bombed the air strip in an attempt to stop the allied reinforcements, but it was the rainy season and they were confronted by the same weather conditions which hampered the Allies. Aircraft which did set off from Rabaul were not able to sight the Wau airstrip and returned without accomplishing anything.

Wau occupied an important place in the strategy of the Commander, Allied Land Forces, South West Pacific area, General Sir Thomas Blamey, who was currently commanding New Guinea Force from Port Moresby. At the time, the Japanese held air superiority over the Solomon Sea, precluding airborne or seaborne operations against the Japanese base at Lae. Blamey therefore decided that he would have to capture Lae with a land campaign. The Bulldog Track would be upgraded to a highway capable of carrying trucks and tanks that could support a division which would advance overland on Lae.

The Bulldog Track was a walking trail used by local people to cross the mountains. On the northern side of the Bulldog Track began at Kudjeru in the Bulolo Valley. On the southern side of the Bulldog Track was Bulldog. At the start of the Pacific War, the Bulldog Track was only suitable for walking or mules and roughly followed the Edie Creek. This track was deemed to be

mainly downhill 5 km ramble back to Manly along sealed or well made paths and boardwalks (including views from and wildflowers along the Sanctuary Loop boardwalk, the North Head Barracks Precinct, the "secret path" through the landscaped grounds of the old St Patrick's Seminary, and the Marine Parade walkway from Fairy Bower beach to Manly beach. Ray and Jill Palmer joined for lunch afterwards at Fins and Ribs Restaurant, 33 South Steyne, before a ramble along the Corso to the Manly Wharf for a ferry to Circular Quay and trains back to Epping.

The next ramble is along the beach from Umina Beach to Ettalong Beach on Thursday, 2 March 2023. We will meet at 8.55 a.m. at Epping Station Concourse to catch the 9.10 a.m. train to Woy Woy, and then by Route 50 bus to Umina Beach. From Umina Beach we will enjoy a lovely 4 km ramble along the foreshore and the beach to Ettalong Beach. The beach has stunning views across to Lion Island, Pittwater and Bouddi National Park. The ramble has been timed to coincide with low tide, so the beach will comprise firm, moist sand, perfect for a comfortable, leisurely ramble.

Lunch after the ramble will be on the Alfresco Terrace at the Ettalong Diggers Club. After lunch we will catch the bus back to Woy Woy, and then by train back to Epping.

Movie Group—details will be advised later in the month when cinemas have announced their screening sessions.

By Opal Card—use your Opal Card on Monday, 27 February 2023 to travel to Budgewoi for lunch. We will assemble on Epping Station's Platform 3 no later than 8.30 a.m. to catch the 8.40 a.m. train to Wyong Station, arriving there at 9.54 a.m. Here we will join the Route 78 bus to Lake Haven from Stand A departing at 10.11 a.m. Upon arrival at Lake Haven Shopping Centre at 10.50 a.m. at Stand 1, we will transfer to Route 92 bus to Budgewoi departing at 11 o'clock at Stand 5. We will alight at the Slade Park Budgewoi stop at 11.36 a.m. for lunch at the Budgewoi Hotel.

After lunch we will return to the Slade Park stop to board the Route 92 bus at 1.36 p.m. back to Lake Haven Shopping Centre, arriving there at 2.06 p.m. to transfer to Route 80 bus at 2.09 p.m. back to Wyong Station, reaching there at 2.33 p.m. The train back to Epping leaves at 2.40 p.m. for a 4.03 p.m. arrival at Epping.

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

Sadly we have had three of our Active Members pass away this year, all of whom have been President of our Club at some time—Laurie Fuller, Dr Doug Carruthers and Dr Neil McDonald. We also lost our beloved Beryl Ferguson, widow of Ron, a friend to so many and a regular attendee at many of our functions. A large number of members attended all four of their wonderful Celebration of Life.

I rang the following Non-Active members, or their family, and all say they are OK: Frank Johnson, Bruce Frost, Alan Herron, Dick Nicholson, Dennis Druce, Wal Williams, John Steele-Smith, John Goodman and Paul Woodward. Owen Harrison is not so well, still under Doctor's care. Alf McDermott continues to have health issues. Tony Malin is OK; thankfully his wife is a little better following fall. Milton Bartlett, who turned 94 on the 6th February, and Ray Thorpe have both joined our Non-Active list. Both these men have continued to be regular attendees at our meetings and will be greatly missed.

With our Active Members: Col Jones had a very successful heart operation and is slowly getting back to good health, Doug Sneddon has ongoing problems with healing of wounds on legs and has a District Nurse coming every 2nd day to dress his wounds, while Yew Cheah has had periods back in hospital and is far from well.

SECRETARY'S GUFF

Hello everyone. This is YOUR Club, consider nominating for a position on the Club's Management Committee. If no one steps forward, there will be no Tours Officer after the A.G.M. Wal Gallagher steps down after many years in the role. We owe Wal huge thanks for what he has done.

We have all enjoyed the benefits of the Club. Why not bring a neighbour, a friend, a young bloke who has just retired or is about to retire to our General Meeting or one of our many social activities.

MORNING TEA ROSTER

Wayne Steele is happy to do the pre-Meeting set up, so rostered members are only currently needed should be at the hall for serving and tidy-up. If you are unable to be present as rostered, please arrange a swap with another member and inform the Secretary.

February

Geoff Richardson Lance Walker
James Bidgood



March

Vince Bignell Geoff Brothers
Brian Carlin Javerchand Christie

TOUR NEWS

Parkes—5–10 November 2023

A booking has been made for a shared coach for a Parkes tour in November. The tour is organised by Coach Holidays and Tours and at this stage, 20 seats have been reserved on the coach. Parkes is named after Sir Henry Parkes, the “Father of Federation” and the tour involves visits to the Parkes Centre, the Dish and the collection of Elvis memorabilia in Parkes; and visits to surrounding towns.

Day 1—Journey to Parkes with stops in the Blue Mountains, Lithgow, Bathurst and Orange to the Parkes Motel for five nights. Day 2—town tour of Forbes, Ben Hall, Aussie Biscuits and McFeeter's Motor Museum. Day 3—Parkes and the Dish (Parkes Radio Telescope & CSIRO Visitors Centre). Day 4—Canowindra, Eugowra, Cowra and Grenfell, including a stop at the Japanese Gardens and the WW2 Prison Camp site. Day 5—Dubbo, the Western Plains Zoo and the Dubbo Flying Doctors Visitors Centre. Day 6—Journey home with morning tea and lunch provided.

The tour price is \$1,295 per person twin share and a single supplement of \$300. Detailed itinerary is available from Wal. Enquiries and bookings with Wal please on wwg@bigpond.com or 0429-484-639.

WE PAUSE TO REMEMBER 80 YEARS ON

The final Japanese positions in Papua, at Sanananda, fell on 22 January 1943 and the Papua campaign was over. Never-the-less, the presence of the enemy in Papua New Guinea did not finish then. They had a commanding presence in nearby Rabaul from where they could come back to PNG. And this they did a few days later, because they still wanted Port Moresby and use it as a base from which to cut off shipping to Eastern Australia.

The Japanese made one more attempt to attack Port Moresby. This time they decided to advance directly from Lae and Salamaua in Western New Guinea. Their first objective was the mountain town of Wau, from where it was possible (if difficult) to reach the south coast of Papua. The town also had an airfield, which made it a valuable base for any future Allied campaign. The Australians had moved two companies of Commandoes to Wau when the Japanese first occupied Lae and Salamaua in early 1942, but they were badly outnumbered by the approaching Japanese.

Wau (pronounced “Wow”) is a town in New Guinea, in the province of Morobe, situated at one end of the Wau–Bulolo Valley. It was the site of a gold rush during the 1920s and 1930s.