



R 766 arriving back at Maitland from Port Waratah on 29 April 2023



R 766 hauling its train around the balloon loop at Port Waratah

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Epping and District Probus Club Inc.



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MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S PATTERN

Last month's guest speaker, Arthur Pearce, from the Australian National Maritime Museum set me thinking when he presented our club with a free family pass to the Museum. His very interesting talk will be reported upon elsewhere in the Newsletter BUT how do we thank him & the Museum? Well I promised I'd try some changes to enliven our meetings, so at our May meeting we will introduce a "lucky door prize" I'll leave you to guess what the inaugural door prize might be??

Be sure to collect your lucky door ticket when you personally tick off your attendance at the door and hold it till the meeting closes but NO LITTERING. There will be spies everywhere watching out for members & guests who remember the old days when many inventive ways to increase their chances were tried and failed. Double Dipping or Proxy voting is not allowed. There were and still are penalties for those that get caught.

Our Volunteers and Committee are working hard at increasing members' Fellowship Friendship and Fun in Retirement. You can expect more excitement. If you have a particular interest you would like to share with others please let your Committee know.

MEETINGS

April

Arthur Pearce was our guest speaker last month, when his topic was "RAAF Catalinas in WW2". The Catalinas had many names—such as The Mighty Flying Cats and Flying Kites. Early in the 1940s, after Japan entered the War, Australia was in great danger, resulting in "The Battle for Australia".

Amongst the RAAF squadrons was the Catalina Squadron. Its aeroplanes were able to land on both earth and water. The Catalina was developed in the USA from proven WWI flying boats. In the early 1930s, the US Navy called for expressions of interest to build a patrol flying boat. In 1933, it contracted Consolidated and Martin and Douglas to build a prototype. Previously it deployed Consolidated's P2Y and Martin's P3M but both were underpowered and hampered by inadequate range and payloads. Consolidated

delivered the XP3Y-1, while Douglas delivered the XP3YD-1. The USN chose the XP3Y-1 on the basis of being cheaper. Over the intervening years Consolidated improved the design of the XP3Y-1, resulting in the XPBY-1 being delivered to the USN in October 1936. A second squadron also received one in early 1937. Both aircraft were called “Catalina” after Saint Catalina Island, California, the name being coined in November 1941 by the RAF after Great Britain ordered its first 30 aircraft. The USN adopted the name in 1942.

The designation PBY was determined in accordance with USN Designation System of 1922. PB represents Patrol Bomber and Y being the code assigned to Consolidated. The PBY was the most numerous aircraft of its kind with some 3,300 built.

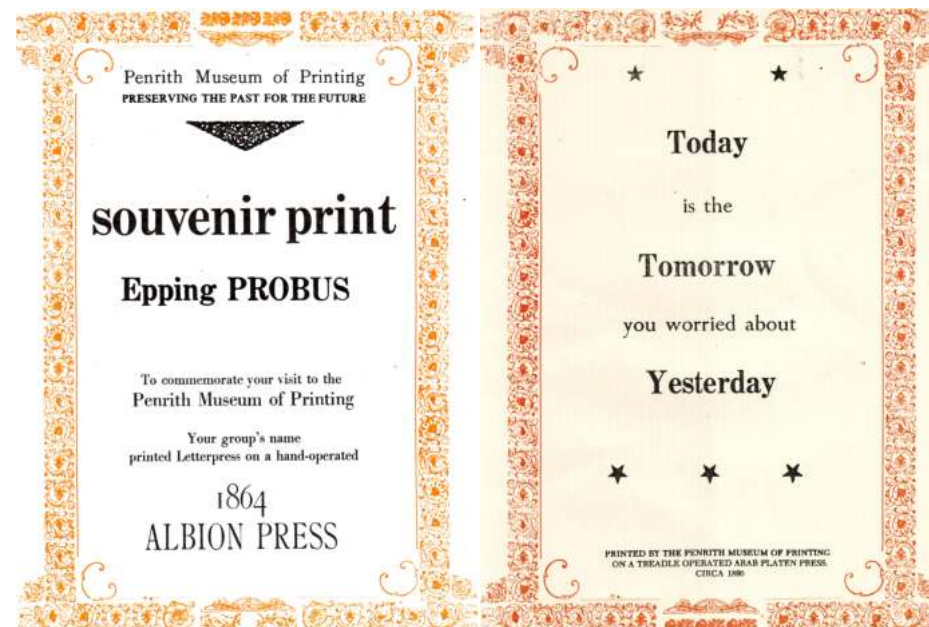
The PBY-1 had two 900 hp Pratt & Whitney R-1830-64 engines, while the PBY-3 had two 1000 hp R-1830-66 engines, the PBY-4 had two 1050 hp R-1830-72 engines and the PBY-5 had two 1200 hp either R-1830-82 or -92 engines. They 63 ft. 10.875 in. long, 21 ft. 1 in. high, a wingspan of 104 ft., a wing area of 1,400 sq. ft. and an empty weight of 20,910 lb. Their maximum speed was 196 mph, cruising speed 125 mph and range 2,520 miles.

They carried three 30 calibre machine guns (two in the nose turret and the other in the ventral hatch in the tail) and two 50 calibre machine guns (one in each waist booster). They also carried 4,000 lb. of bombs or depth chargers and torpedo racks were available. The crew of 10 comprised a pilot, co-pilot, bow turret gunner, flight engineer, radio operator, navigator, radar operator, two waist gunners and a ventral gunner.

The RAAF ordered 18 PBY-5s in 1940 and maintained the name Catalina. They were intended for naval patrols but with Japan entering the War, they were pressed into other duties such as Anti Submarine, milk runs to Papua New Guinea, civilian evacuations, secret mine laying operations in the South Pacific as part of General Douglas MacArthur’s plan, air-sea rescue and bringing home the POWs after the end of the War in 1945.

The RAAF finally had 168 Catalinas. Thirty was lost during the War and 320 of the crew were killed. The PBY-5 had an all metal ship-like hull. Catalinas used on night patrols were painted black and known as the Black Cats. The motto of the Catalina Squadrons was “The First and Furthest”.

The RAAF used Catalinas as passenger and mail carriers during the War. With the fall of Singapore in 1942 air connection the UK was cut off. Former Qantas crews flew modified Catalinas a 3,500 mile non-stop flight between Perth and Ceylon to re-establish communications. At that time it was the longest flight path in history without refuelling. Dubbed *The Double Sunrise*, these top secret flights remain the longest-duration non-stop commercial flights at 32 hours 9 minutes. The RAAF had 5 Squadrons, 2 Communication Units, 3 Air-Sea Rescue Units, a seaplane training unit, an operational training unit and a Search and Rescue Wing.



PHOTOS FROM HUNTER VALLEY STEAMFEST



3801 at Broadmeadow on 28 April 2023

MUSEUM OF PRINTING

A very enjoyable and enlightening day outing to the Museum of Printing was held last month. Letterpress Printing is the oldest form of printing and was invented by Johannes Gutenberg in 1450. His invention brought about the First Information Revolution. The Museum was founded by Alan Connell, a local Printing Tradesman and was opened in Penrith on 2 June 2001.

The Museum's Mission is to source, restore and showcase printing machinery from the early 1800s to the 1960s to keep alive the history, knowledge and skills of Letterpress Printing for present and future generations.

Currently, the Museum is faced with an uncertain future due to a political decision to re-develop Penrith Paceway. Consequently, it is looking for a suitable alternative location.

The illustrations below show the many developments in Letterpress Printing from the hand setting of a line of type letter by letter to Automatic Vertical Cylinder Press of around the 1940s.

On the next page are two pamphlets printed especially for our group and the Printing method used is indicated on the pamphlet.



Hand setting a line of type letter by letter



Albion Printing Press, 1864



Automatic Platen Press circa 1960's



Linotype, circa 1940's, casts a line of type



A Columbian Press, 1841



Wharfedale Cylinder Press 1880



Ludlow, 1945, casts a line of display type



A Clamshell Platen Press 1911 Automatic Vertical Cylinder Press, circa 1940's

We very sincerely thank Arthur for coming and enlightening us on the very successful war-time flying boat, the Catalina. There are memorials to the Catalina and the crew who flew them at Rathnines (on Lake Macquarie) where they were bases and in Cairns.

May

Mike Monro OAM is our guest speaker today when he will talk about his early life, his bushranger history and his career as a journalist on 60 Minutes, A Current Affair, This Is Your Life and Sunday Night. He will also present some aspects of his book *The Last Bushrangers*.

Mike's father had abandoned the family when he was only a child, at times his mother when in an angry mood would tell him that he was from "a family of thieves and murders." It was not until many years later when at his father's side on his death bed that this family secret was divulged. We will let him, as a family member, reveal this secret.

He started in journalism as a 17-year-old copy boy after he matriculated. He spent the next 10 years in Sydney newspapers, including two years in New York as a foreign correspondent. After turning his back on television twice, he joined Mike Willesee's "Willesee" programme before becoming one of the earliest 60 Minutes reporters on the Nine Network. He later hosted programmes like A Current Affair, This Is Your Life, and then Sunday Night on the Seven Network.

In recent years he's been making documentaries for the History Channel and has just written his second book called *The Last Bushrangers*—Mike's great-uncles, who murdered a policeman and a station manager in Queensland's Carnarvon Ranges in 1902.

There are many transcripts and extracts from the Court records in the book that depict the mood at the time—the sympathisers, supporters and the Law. Australia had just become federated, there was such a stigma attached to the actions of the perpetrators that the family requested assistance from the High Court. Although constituted, no person had been appointed as Commissioner, hence their request was refused.

In 2014, he became a member of the Order of Australia for his charity work and contribution to journalism.

Epping Probus is fortunate to have a high profile person as guest speaker. The invitation has been extended to promote and possibly attract new members. If you know someone local that could be interested please invite them. Be aware of guests today and make them welcome at morning tea time.

Mike's Book *The Last Bushrangers* will be on sale at \$35. There will be no credit card facility on hand at the meeting so if you are intending to buy a copy please come prepared with the correct money.

Rod Best will be our guest speaker next month on Monday, 5 June 2023, his topic being “An Historic event in Pennant Hills in 1905”. It will whet your appetite for further information.

Rod is a retired a lawyer who specialised in the field of child protection. Rod was awarded the Australian honour of a Public Service Medal in 2004 and was made an honorary life member of The Law Society of NSW in 2017. He is also interested in Australian social history and is Chair, Beecroft Cheltenham History Group and Director Fellowship of First Fleeters. For the last 5 years of his working life Rod was with Life Without Barriers.

DAY OUTINGS

May

This month's outing will be held on Thursday, 1 June 2023, the 81st Anniversary of the attack on Sydney harbour by Japanese midget submarines. The cruise is organised by the Naval Historical Society. A table will be booked for lunch at the Cargo Bar (52–60 The Promenade, King Street Wharf).

We will assemble at the Epping Station Concourse at 8.10 a.m. to catch the 8.24 a.m. Metro to Chatswood. We will change trains at Chatswood, and expect to arrive at Wynyard station 8.59 a.m. We will then have ~30 minutes to walk to the King Street Wharf 3 to check in for the cruise at 9.30 a.m. We will board the boat at 9.45 a.m. for a 10.00 a.m. departure.



June

Next month's outing will be held on Monday, 19 June 2023, and will be a visit to the Bygone Beauties Tea Rooms for Devonshire tea and a visit to the Teapot Museum. The Museum is home to the world's largest private collection of tea wares including more than 5,500 teapots from all over the world spanning 5 centuries.

We will assemble at the Epping Station Concourse at 8.45 a.m. to catch the 8.56 a.m. train, arriving at Strathfield Station at 9.11 a.m. We will then catch the 9.31 a.m. train from platform 3, to arrive at Leura at 11.13 a.m. We will book in for Devonshire tea at 11.30 a.m. which will entitle us to free entry to the museum. The cost of the Devonshire tea is \$17 per person. Lunch in

TOUR NEWS

The Committee is very pleased to announce that Ravi Gnanadickam has volunteered to accept the vacant position of Tours Organiser. Consequently, at its last meeting the Committee elected Ravi as a member of the Committee. We very sincerely thank Ravi for coming forward to assist the Club and to maintain its tours.

Parkes—5–10 November 2023

A tour to the ‘Golden West’, based on Parkes, has been organised for November. Twenty seats have been secured on a coach we will be sharing with Oakhill Dural Probus Club. Accommodation will be at the North Parkes Motel and we are assured of exceptional friendly country hospitality. 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 North Parkes Motel for five nights.
- Day 2—a 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 \$1295 per person twin share with a single supplement of \$300, and includes all meals and accommodation.

Twenty-one persons have indicated that they wish to join the tour against a nominal allocation of 20 seats, so the tour is confirmed. There may be more seats made available after May when Oakhill Dural Probus confirms its requirements. In the meantime, Wal Gallagher is taking names on a waiting list basis until the final number can be clarified.

For those who have already booked, a deposit of \$100 per person is payable into Probus account before the May meeting. Please advise Wal if paying by EFT.

Prepared by Doug Sneddon



Alf McDermott had a fall at home taken to Ryde Hospital but now in Greenwich for Rehab. Paul Woodward also had a fall requiring five stitches in forehead but now back at Nursing Home. Doug Sneddon had a further two biopsies and will see Specialist for results in early May.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

We are pleased to welcome into our membership David Whitby, who resides at 2 Pardalote Way West Pennant Hills, phone 0412-229-185.



MEETING DAY LADIES COFFEE

Some ladies who regularly like to join us to hear our guest speaker at 11.00 a.m. meet at 10 o'clock at the Darcy Street Project Coffee shop. They are more than happy for other ladies to join them. The shop is located on the edge of Boronia Park and access is from the northern end of Victoria Avenue (the short section between Bridge Street and the Park) or the bottom of Coles Car Park.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription for 2023–24 is \$40.00. Some members have not yet paid their subscription. The Treasurer would be pleased to receive your subscription as soon as possible. The Club's direct deposit details are Bendigo Bank BSB 633000 Account No. 182681668 Account Name Epping and District Probus Club Inc. If paying by cash he would appreciate if you could pay the exact amount.



MORNING TEA ROSTER

Wayne Steele is happy to do the pre-Meeting set up, so rostered members are only currently need be at the hall for serving and tidy-up. Rostered members are to assist putting tables and chairs away after the meeting if physically capable. If you are unable to be present as rostered, arrange a swap with another member and inform the Secretary pipetersoz@gmail.com

May

Bob Cruikshank Andrew Davidson Keith Dixon

June

John Donohoe Steve Drury Graeme Durie



Leura will be arranged. Please advise the Outings Co-ordinator on or before Monday, 5 June, if you wish to join this outing.

July

The outing in July will be on Monday, 17 July 2023, and will be a Christmas in July celebration at The Fiddler at Rouse Hill. The cost is \$55 per person. Please advise the Outings Co-ordinator on or before Monday, 5 June, if you wish to join this outing. Car-pooling is advised.

If not paying cash, 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 all activities are conditional on compliance with any relevant Covid-19 restrictions. If you plan to attend an outdoor activity and rain develops or heatwave is forecast on the day before the outing commences, please check by phone the activities organiser as early as possible on the day.

Old Codgers Music Group—this month's meeting will be at 2.30 p.m. on Monday, 8 May at the home of Bob and Margaret Cruikshank, 1 Mason Avenue, Cheltenham. If you wish to attend, please add your details to the Secretary's list at the May General meeting or phone Bob (9869-1070) so that seating can be arranged.

Coffee Club—Members, wives, partners, and guests are all invited to meet again 'face to face' to socialise over tea, coffee, etc., at the Coffee Club, Carlingford Court, at 10.00 a.m. on Friday, 12 May. This activity is hosted by Ray Palmer.

Dining—19 diners enjoyed lunch at the Silverwater Hotel, (previously Dooleys Waterview Club) on Tuesday, 18 April.

Greg Stone has made a booking for 20 diners on the outside deck at Drummoyne Sailing Club on Tuesday, 16 May at noon. He has been promised perfect weather on this occasion. Car pooling is encouraged as parking at this venue can be limited. If you wish to attend, please contact Greg preferably by email, www.waflil6666@gmail.com or SMS on 0437 030 337.

Members are encouraged to consider arranging a future lunch or dinner, at a venue of their choice. Please discuss with Ray Finch: email rayfinch42@gmail.com or mobile 0414-746-954.

Movie Group—details of the next movie will be advised to members via email.

The Ramblers—on 27 April eight happy Ramblers enjoyed an interesting ramble around Darling Harbour and Pyrmont in perfect autumn weather, followed by lunch at The Laneway Pyrmont restaurant.

The May Ramble will meet at 9.45 a.m. on Thursday, 18 May at Epping Station Concourse to catch the 10.02 a.m. train to Meadowbank. From Meadowbank Station we will enjoy an interesting 4.5 km ramble over the Parramatta River rail bridge pathway, along the Mill Park waterfront pathway, across Bennelong Bridge to Wentworth Point, and then in a loop along the Riverside Walk and the Louise Savage Walkway back to the Sydney Olympic Park ferry wharf. We will catch the ferry from Sydney Olympic Park to Meadowbank, where we will have lunch at the Fork and Spoon Restaurant. After lunch we will catch the train from Meadowbank back to Epping. Please give Rick Collins a call or text on 0411-611-338 if you would like to come or if you have any queries.

Theatre—30y theatregoers enjoyed *Blythe Spirit* at the Theatre on Chester on 26 April.

Advance Notice 1: Wal Gallagher will have tickets for the remaining plays, presented at the Theatre on Chester in 2023: on 16 August *The Peach Season* by Debra Oswald and on 15 November *Clue* by Sandy Rustin.

Advance Notice 2: Wal will also take bookings for Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *Iolanthe*. The performance will be held at the Smith Auditorium Lyric Theatre, Shore School, William Street, North Sydney and we will attend the matinee performance on Sunday, 9 October. Tickets are \$44 each.

Cycle Group aka Wobblies—there were six riders for the Parramatta River Parks run on Friday 21 April. Leaving Mill Park Street, Rhodes, the peloton took the Parramatta River Cycle Path to Parramatta Park. The coffee stop was at Parramatta Park before the return journey to Rhodes (a total distance of 30 km). Many thanks to Geoff for leading the ride in Steve's absence.

The next ride will be Friday, 19 May 2023 at Narrabeen Lagoon, meeting at 10.00 a.m. at Billarong Playground car park on Wakehurst Parkway. Following 2 laps of the lagoon, a distance of 18 km, lunch/coffee will be at the H2O café on the Lagoon foreshore.

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

By Opal Card—two members travelled to Maitland on 28 April hoping to view NSW Transport Heritage's steam locomotives 6029 and 3801 when they arrived. Meanwhile, the Opal Card Organiser/Newsletter Editor went to Concord West to join the 3801 train to Maitland (he had been invited by another member to join him due to a medical episode with his friend whom he

had invited). The train was due to depart at 10 o'clock but did not leave until nearly 11 o'clock. The Garratt 6029's train was scheduled to be about an hour ahead of the 3801 but it did not leave Thirlmere until 9.30 a.m. So for our two members things had gone pear shaped. The 3801 train was delayed at Hornsby, Hawkesbury River and Gosford. Consequently, it did not arrive at Broadmeadow until about 3 o'clock. In order not to be too late back at Epping, the member and Organiser decided to detrain at Broadmeadow. However, the Opal Card journey had been amended to go to Telarah instead of Maitland in order to view the Picnic Train steam locomotives 5917 and R 766 residing in Telarah Yard before returning to Maitland for lunch and the viewing of 6029 and 3801. The feedback from the two members was very positive in that not only did they see 5917 and R 766, but they saw the setting up of the Hunter Valley Steamfest in Maitland. As an aside, the Newsletter Editor travelled to Maitland the next day for a ride behind R 766 to Port Waratah and return. He went very early to get photographs and low and behold features in a video walking back along the platform at Maitland just after taking a photo of R 766 arriving back at Maitland from its 1st trip.

Use your Opal Card on Monday, 22 May 2023 to travel to Cronulla for lunch. We will assemble either at the bus stop in Rawson Street (opposite Coles car park) no later than 8.50 a.m. or at bus stop A2 at Parramatta Interchange no later than 9.35 a.m. In Epping we will board the Route 550 bus at 8.54 a.m. to Parramatta, arriving there at 9.29 a.m. Here we will board the Route M92 bus from Stand A2 at 9.45 a.m. for Sutherland, scheduled to arrive there at 11.12 a.m. We will then go to Platform 3 at Sutherland Station to catch the train to Cronulla. Lunch will be at the South Beach Seafood Company's shop 1/20 Gerrale Street with outside tables (its Menu can be found online).

After lunch we will catch the train from Cronulla at 1.33 p.m. to Central Station, arriving there at 2.29 p.m. We will alight and visit the new Central Walkway, which has been constructed in the middle of the Station, via the lift. There is the option of continuing through to the Grand Concourse and board the 2.45 p.m. fast train back to Epping or the 2.46 p.m. train from Platform 18.

In the event of rain developing on the day and you plan to attend, please contact Col Short no later than 7.30 a.m. by phone: 9876-1018 to check if the outing is going ahead.

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

I have made contact with the following Non-Active members and all say they are coping with their various issues: Milton Bartlett, Dennis Druce, Bruce Frost, John Goodman, Owen Harrison, Alan Herron, Frank Johnson, Tony Malin, Dick Nicholson, Ray Thorpe, Tony Chaine and Yew Cheah.