

Welcome to PROBUS Port Phillip 2026



PROBUS CLUB OF PORT PHILLIP Inc.

Associations Incorporation Act 1981 - Registered No A0029363K

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

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PROBUS CLUB OF PORT PHILLIP Inc.

Chartered on 25 March, 1986, Incorporated on 9 May, 1994

This Probus Club meets at:

Kew Golf Club, 120 Belford Road, East Kew 3102

At 10:00 am, 2nd Tuesday in the Month (excepting January)

The Club can be contacted by email at : portphillipprobus@gmail.com

The Club's web site details are: <https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/>

Issue 442

February 2026

PRESIDENT

Prof. F. Larkins (Frank)

Mob: 0400 109 785

E: f.larkins@unimelb.edu.au

SECRETARY

Dr. V. Beck (Vaughan)

Mob: 0418 362 792

E: vbeck@bigpond.com

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, 10th February, 2026

At Kew Golf Club, 120 Belford Rd, Kew East, 3102

IMPORTANT DATES in February, 2026

Deadline for Lunch Bookings

5.00 pm

5th February page 6

Coffee and Fellowship

9.00 am

24th February page 9

Meeting

10:00 am

10th February page 5

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

This Christmas and festive season has been one of mixed emotions for many, including for Probus members. It is a time for celebration to share with family and friends and for those of the Christian faith to renew their Christian values. However, the horrific events in Bondi will have touched us all and most of all our Jewish friends, including those who are Probus members. On behalf of us all, I extend our heartfelt sorrow and support to the



victims of the senseless act of antisemitic violence that occurred at Bondi and the follow up acts. In addressing the Jewish community the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese said '*You have the right to worship, study, live and work in peace and safety and you enrich us as a nation*'. I am sure we all endorse this statement. Probus exists to foster fellowship and friendship, irrespective of race, colour or creed. Our thoughts are with all those who have been impacted by this terrible tragedy. Please reach out to others as appropriate.

The year ahead will be one with many challenges given that we live in such an unstable world, but we have much to look forward to as Probus members. Discussions about succession planning are in progress. We have identified suitable persons to replace me as President for 2026-27 and to serve as Vice President. We still need to find members who are willing to serve in some other capacities. We are yet to identify a secretary, a speaker organiser and a Canberra Getaway organiser. If you can assist in any of these roles and possibly some others please contact me or Vaughan Beck. I am most grateful to the current Management Committee members who have agreed to serve for another year.

It is with much sadness that I report the death of Sandra Ferguson, wife of Ian Ferguson, President 2013-14. Ian was a very distinguished forester and Professor at the University of Melbourne. Ian and Sandra were loyal supporters of the club.

Please note that the March regular meeting and AGM will be on the Wednesday March 11 and not March 10, because Kew Golf Club has another internal golf club function.

Over the summer I have been reading the book by Geoffrey Robinson released in December 2025 entitled *World of War Crimes*. It is a most interesting read, with Robinson lamenting that the hard won international world order established over many decades is now being violated in many regions of the world. His insight into war rules and non-compliance is most informative. A good contemporary read for anyone interested in world affairs.

We have an excellent response to the Mini Getaway at RACV Cobram from Sunday 15th March to Wednesday 18th March 2026. Don McAllister and Miles Pierce are doing an excellent job in coordinating an informal gathering. It may be possible for more to join if you wish. See details later in this newsletter.

Neil Pearce is close to completing the 40-year history of the Port Phillip Probus Club. The history is a most interesting read. We are very appreciative of the dedicated excellent work Neil has undertaken. The history will be available online. If you want to have a hard copy, please sign a sheet at the desk. More details later in this newsletter.

I wish you all a most successful 2026.

Frank Larkins, President, Probus Club of Port Phillip. 2025-2026

New members inducted into the Port Phillip Probus Club – Helene and Michael Slee



Helene and Michael are pictured here being presented with their memberships by the President Frank Larkins

Helene and Michael were inducted into the Probus Club of Port Phillip at the December 2025 meeting of the Club.

Michael has spent his career in the Telecommunications industry, mostly as a communications engineer in the former SECV (State Electricity Commission of Vic). After the SEC was privatised he moved to United Energy in a senior role. Since retirement he has spent his time extending his main and holiday houses as well as pursuing his other interests; music, film, Geelong in the AFL and car racing.

After studying at RMIT Helene had an extensive career including Melbourne University, Macquarie Broadcasting (3AW), Myer Melb, CRA- RioTinto, and the Breast Unit at the Mercy Private Hospital. Since her retirement she has travelled, gardened, read books and entertained. Helene and Michael have three sons with families with whom they are strongly involved.

ACTING ALMONER

Members who wish to inform the Club of the illness of themselves or of others, please contact;

Ian Webb telephone 03 98986297, or e-mail: iwebb9898b@gmail.com
Mob 0427 318 348

Access our club website from anywhere in the world, at any time.

<https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/> Adrian Farrell - Webmaster

Change of MARCH 2026 Meeting Date

Now Wednesday March 11

(NOT Tuesday March 10)

As advised by email on the 13th January 2026, our scheduled monthly General Meeting, AGM and luncheon date of 10th March was not available because of a function clash with the Kew Golf Club Ladies' Captain annual luncheon. The Management Committee decided that the March monthly General Meeting, AGM and luncheon will be held at the Kew Golf Club commencing at:

10:00 am on WEDNESDAY 11th March (NOT Tuesday 10th March).

I trust that with early notice of this change of date it does not cause too much inconvenience to you.

Vaughan Beck Ph 0418 362 792

Emergency Contacts

Members have responded positively to the December 2025 email inviting members to voluntarily provide details of their Emergency Contacts. The following information is relevant for those members who wish to provide their emergency contact details.

The Emergency Contact policy can be accessed on the home page of the Club's web page (at the base of the page) or by using the following link to directly access the policy: <https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/privacypolicy>

To enter emergency contact details (developed by Adrian Farrell), please use the following link : <https://www.probusportphillip.org.au/contact-8>. Please include contact details for either one or two emergency contact persons.

Members who intend to provide their emergency contact details are encouraged to do so before the first meeting of the year on the 10th February 2026.

For queries and further information contact Secretary Vaughan Beck Ph 0418 362 792

E: ybeck@bigpond.com or Webmaster Adrian Farrell E: adrianfarrell33@gmail.com

Speaker for the February Meeting – Dr Moh Dadafarin

Clinical Doctor of Audiology
Director, Principal Audiologist



**Dr Moh Dadafarin will speak on
*Hearing Loss: Cognitive Decline
and Dementia: The link***

For more information see P 14 - 15

With a career enriched by 38 years of profound experience and innovation, Dr. Moh Dadafarin stands as a leader in the global audiology community, especially notable in Melbourne. The founder and director of *Ear and Hearing Australia*, he has steadfastly enhanced the life quality of those navigating through hearing loss, implementing advanced audiological services and specialising in adult hearing rehabilitation, hearing aid fittings, and comprehensive diagnostic audiology. An academician and a diligent researcher, Dr. Dadafarin has not only shared his wisdom as a lecturer but has also significantly contributed to cochlear implant studies, notably at the University of Melbourne's Bionic Ear Institute, under Professor Graeme Clark's esteemed team. His educational journey boasts a Bachelor's and Master's in Audiology, and a Doctorate from the Arizona School of Health Sciences, USA. As a Member and Fellow of numerous prestigious audiology organisations, including the American Academy of Audiology and the Academy of Doctors of Audiology, Dr. Dadafarin is accredited by recognised health and hearing service authorities. He is a proud mentor to audiology students at universities like Latrobe and Melbourne, continuing to illuminate the path in hearing care with his blend of expertise, innovation, and heartfelt care. Join us for a session where expertise meets genuine care in the realm of audiology with Dr. Moh Dadafarin.

Dr Dadafarin has volunteered to run hearing tests after his presentation. Members wishing to take this opportunity to have their hearing tested are asked to contact Colin Adam and let him know before the meeting on February 10

**Colin Adam Speakers' Co-ordinator Ph Tel: 9889 4774 Mob: 0418 483 13
Email: cmadam@bigpond.com**

Catering: February 10 Meeting



Meeting, Lunch & Tea/Coffee \$50 pp. Meeting & Tea/Coffee \$10
Tea/Coffee available pre and mid meeting.

Lunch Menu

Main Course

Mustard and herb crusted lamb rack, parsnip puree, podded peas, Dutch carrot, red wine and rosemary jus.

Dessert:

Passionfruit curd tart, petite macron, praline wafer and passionfruit gel

Booking Arrangements: Please contact me (**Jim Studebaker**) on **0413 304 864** or wistudebaker48@gmail.com if you wish to attend lunch or just the meeting on February 10th. Booking (and payment) must be made no later than 5 pm Thursday February 5th.

Payment arrangements: Payments by direct credit to the club's bank preferred. For the NEXT meeting, payment must be cleared into the Club's account no later than 5 pm February 5th and make sure your name is included on the transfer. Please DO NOT pay before the 1st of the Month

A/C name: "Probus Club of Port Phillip", BSB: 033 058, A/C NO 750921

If paying by cash or cheque, please place in an envelope clearly marked ***Lunch*** or ***Tea/Coffee*** and show your name and those of your attendees. The correct amount must be tendered as no change is given. Envelopes need to be prepared before arrival. Everyone who has paid will be given a table number and can request one for a guest.

Jim Studebaker - Catering Officer Ph 0413 304 864
wistudebaker48@gmail.com

40 Years of Fellowship

A 40 Year History of the Probus Club of Port Phillip

by Neil Pearce

After a considerable effort Neil Pearce is gearing up (i.e he is in the final stages of preparation) to distribute his much anticipated up-dated history of the of the Probus Club of Port Phillip which, as we all know, is now 40 years old. All members will have free access to an electronic copy but there is an intention to also make a hard copy version (i.e. book version) available to those who would like a copy. The cost of this book version will \$40 a copy.

To assist in determining the number of these hard copies to be ordered please place your name on the Expressions of Interest clipboard on the desk at our meeting on February 10.

Alternatively, you can contact Neil on Mob: 0476 797 366 Ph: 03 9818 2439

Email: neilrosemary.pearce@bigpond.com

2026 Mini Getaway – Cobram RACV Resort – March 15 – 18,



The Mini-Getaway scheduled for March 15th through 18th at RACV Cobram has resulted in 17 bookings, for at least 33 persons. They have been provided with some further details of the planning and options for the three days. We have contacted RACV Cobram and as of 4.00 pm on Wednesday 28th of January, cabins are still available for any Probus members who have been considering participating. If this applies to you"please call Don McAllister or Miles Pierce .

. **Don McAllister** Ph; **0409 967 208** ; Email; domca@bigpond.com

Miles Piece Ph; **0429 359 832**; Email milwen@ozemail.com.au

February 2026 Visit – Rippon Lea Gardens



The last visit for the Probus year is a garden tour of Rippon Lea on 17th February. Darren, who is the head gardener, will be taking us around. The cost is \$5 for National Trust members or \$20 if not. We will meet at the entrance at 10.30am. We can have a coffee there and then start the tour at 11am. It will take about an hour. If you bring a picnic lunch we can have it in the grounds or on the verandah of the house overlooking the tennis court that recently

featured in the Yvonne Goolagong story. If you want a house tour it would cost \$10 and needs to be booked separately for the afternoon. There will be a signup sheet at the next meeting and I will need to know numbers going at that stage. Payment can be made by Bank Deposit or by cash at reception on the day of the visit.

Parking can be difficult but the Ripponlea railway station is about 5 minutes walk again and the 67 tram is close by

This will be my last visit as Visit Coordinator. Thank you all for coming on these visits. A particular thanks to Gail and Rod Smith, Dedrie and Jim Green this year and Carol and Jim Studebaker and Ross Worboys who helped last year. Along with Anne St George they came up with a variety of places to learn about and to enjoy. I am sure the new Visit Coordinator and her team will find yet more new places to visit. Please come along and find out.

Susan Harraway Visits Coordinator – Ph 0447 941 963 susanrlharraway@gmail.com

2026 Visit Program – Dedrie Green Visits coordinator

During 2026/7 I (Dedrie Green) will take over the role of Visits Co-ordinator from Susan Harraway, who has done a marvellous job over the previous years. Instigated by Neil Pearce and followed by Susan, we have had a Visits Committee, where individual committee members organised one or two visits each, thus spreading the load for the year. This has worked very well. Thus, I am asking for a few volunteers to help with organising a visit or two this year.

Tasks involve:

- Decide, in consultation with other committee members/club members, whether a visit would be suitable.
- Develop an ‘Expression of Interest’ sheet to be displayed at the preceding two Tuesday monthly meetings.
- Write an introduction to the visit for the Newsletter preceding the visit – including information regarding when the visit will take place; the location of the visit, the time the visit will occur, transport arrangements and the costs involved.
- Book the venue or visit— depending on the number of attendees.
- Make sure all the financial arrangements are in place and implemented.
- Meet everyone on the day of the visit and supervise the visit.
- Writing a short review of the visit. For the Newsletter
- Send photos of the visit to the Newsletter Editor and the Webmaster.

Visits will occur on the following dates:

- February (Tuesday 17th) Rippon Lea Gardens (see above),
- March (No visit owing to the Mini Getaway)
- April (Tuesday 21st)
- The third Tuesday of each month after that except November (Getaway) & December.

Please let me know if you are able and willing to assist. You can contact me in person at the February meeting, by phone or email.

Dedrie Green Ph: 0407 093 124 Email: dedriegreen@gmail.com.

Coffee and Conversation

The next Coffee and Conversation will be held at

10.30 am Tuesday 24th February 2026

at Rylands, 349 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn East not far from Camberwell Junction and on the route of the 70 and 75 trams.

Please let Allan know if you are coming. Numbers are limited and coffee has to be ordered. Note Coffee and pastry is now \$10.

Allan Brownrigg, C & C Coordinator: Ph 0420 401 310 or 03 9193 7785

ambrownrigg@optusnet.com.au

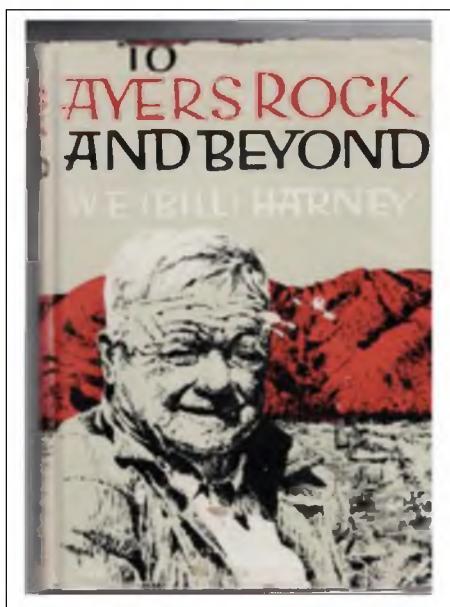
Contributions 1; Ross Fardon on the Wonder of Aboriginal people.



Aboriginal and other indigenous people are everywhere special, yet instantly marginalised by our powerful civilisation wherever we overran them.

My Gran and Mum believed the local Aboriginals occasionally had instant knowledge of happenings 20km away, in detail, with no obvious communication by word or smoke signal.

I have just read Bill Harney's *To Ayers Rock and Beyond*. Harney was a noted white writer on Aboriginal people, based on his dealings with Aboriginals around Uluru/Ayers Rock when he was the first ranger there, 1959-1962. Just scan for five minutes on Google Maps, the land from Uluru west to the Petermann Ranges and WA border, to see how you would go surviving in that land. Anyway, he was trusted and was graciously shown far more about Aboriginal men's and some women's sacred business than has been allowed since. He was introduced to myriad origin stories and ritual rules, even tjurunga boards. He also had evidence of their knowledge at a distance, and their ability to sleep naked in the freezing nights in central Australia. They had evolved something between sleep and hibernation.



In 1962 he and some white station friends wanted to go on an expedition with trucks to the Petermanns, but it was in a time of dreadful drought. Harney wanted to be *taken into the country* by two old Luritja elders and their families, who for some reason had not been there for 20 years, and wanted to go back – unknown to the whites – for some ceremonies. So a couple of trucks of white fellas, and ragged Aboriginal men, women and kids with three camels, set out. For context, in the early 60's one of our Bureau of Mineral Resources field teams in the Petermanns met an Aboriginal family that had never seen a white man.

Apart from the Aboriginal humour among them, some things made my hair stand on end: There was constant chatter and hand and finger-movement of ritual detail of land and plant and animal that the Aboriginals were in touch with every step of the way. "To these Aborigines there was ritual and the present" – everything that had

happened or could happen was part of local ritual. The Aborigines were constantly eating. In drought times in semi-desert, there was food everywhere, where so many white men including Lasseter had starved and others like Giles so nearly did. The white fellas had to go and boil a billy to let the black men weep in peace, overcome at being back in their own country and its memories and rituals that they were observing as they travelled. The sense of belonging: when the whites had to return, they left the black party to stay and perhaps meet up with long-lost family in the area, where they had seen the recent footprints and campfires of black people.

Back at Uluru, three weeks later, one of the old men, about 70, suddenly arrived at Harney's door on foot, tired but lively. He had wanted to come back the easy way with the trucks, but back in a gorge in the Petermanns he had recognised the footprints of his sister he had not seen in 20 years. With her there were some children's footprints, related to hers, that told him they were her children. Under their law, as uncle he was the spiritual guardian of those children. So he stayed, tracked that family down, and found, proudly, that her kids were lovely girls, brought up properly. Having done his tribal business as required of him, he then walked back to Uluru, 190km in a straight line but much more depending on his track (it was 160miles, 250km, in the trucks), in 3 days. He had run out of water most of the way so had to "come quick." It was not an achievement, just normal tribal business to him.

Contributions 2; Miles Pierce – Review of *A Most Damnable Invention: Dynamite, nitrates, and the making of the modern world*

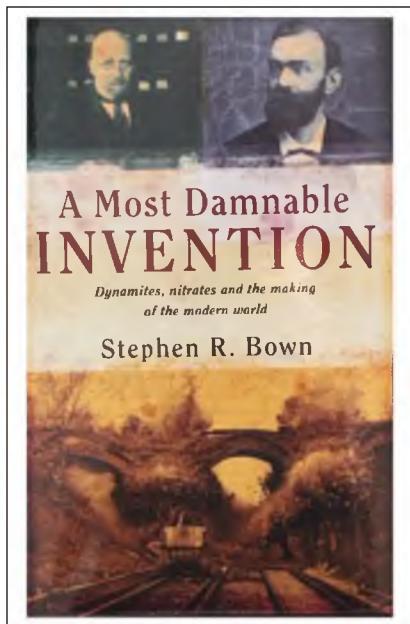


Book review: 'A Most Damnable Invention, Dynamite, nitrates and the making of the modern world' by Stephen R Brown, Viking (Penguin Group) 2006.

In the first part of this book Stephen Brown outlines the history of the discovery and use of explosive substances, from the crude 'Greek Fire' recorded as a weapon of warfare in the fifth century BC to the more powerful 'black powder' explosive developed in China around 1100. Knowledge of how to make this explosive from a particular blend of naturally occurring saltpetre (potassium nitrate) with sulphur and charcoal, spread through other parts of Asia and the Middle East and reached Europe and England by the middle of the following century. It soon

proved itself useful as a projectile propellant in artillery, first in cannons and then in handheld muskets. Black powder also served peacetime uses to break up rock and ore in mines and for the construction of early canals and tunnels, albeit that large quantities of it were then needed.

Brown then goes on to relate that the next major step in the development of much more powerful explosive substances was made by the untrained Swedish inventor, Alfred Nobel, who commenced his developmental experiments at the beginning of the 1860s. His focus was on finding a way to stabilise and harness the much more potent explosive, nitroglycerin (produced by combining nitric acid and glycerin). With dogged determination, studded with many industrial accidents that killed both employees and customers, including early on a younger brother, Nobel in 1867 succeeded in his mission by absorbing the notoriously unstable explosive nitroglycerin liquid into a naturally occurring porous silica clay (diatomaceous earth). The result was a pliable putty-like material that could be moulded into wrapped sticks that were safe to handle and transport. He called this invention 'Dynamite' after the Greek word *dynamos* for power/powerful.



Nobel, also an astute businessman, quickly took out patents for his latest product and oversaw the construction of factories in Europe to manufacture it at scale. This rapidly made him a very wealthy individual with dynamite being widely adopted for both mining and large civil engineering projects. Not content to stop his incessant danger-ridden experimentation, Nobel subsequently succeeded in blending nitroglycerin with the even more unstable nitrocellulose to form a more powerful blasting gelatine that he named 'gelignite'. He also developed slower burning, smokeless explosive products including 'cordite' and 'ballistite' for use as propellants in artillery, rapidly supplanting the much inferior black powder.

Concurrently, Nobel was embroiled in many legal proceedings relating to his patents and those of competitors.

As a person, Brown relates that Alfred Nobel was an enigmatic and introspective individual who became obsessed with his work on explosives and led a lonely and somewhat aloof lifestyle. He never married. His unrelenting work netted him enormous wealth but took a toll on his health. He died at age 62 in 1896 and without any immediate family he willed most of his fortune to fund handsome annual international prizes for outstanding contributions to the fields of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine; literature; and to peace, (fraternity between nations). After four years of complex legal wrangling based on Nobel's brief four

page handwritten will the Nobel Foundation was established in his home country of Sweden to administer the fund with the annual Nobel Prizes traditionally conferred by the King of Sweden.

As Brown further relates, up until the beginning of the twentieth century the manufacture of explosives and nitrous fertilisers depended on exploiting commercially viable natural deposits of saltpetre and other nitrates from which nitric acid could then be procured. Typically, these deposits were formed from the decomposition of animal excreta in dry environments. This same resource was also an important source of agricultural fertilizer. Commercially exploitable deposits in the western world were largely confined to parts of northern India and most significantly to the guano (bird droppings) islands off Peru that were home to large seabird colonies, and to the Atacama Desert in Chile. As Brown asserts, the rapid expansion of explosives and nitrous fertiliser manufacture in the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth made Britain's hold on access these finite deposits of critical strategic importance as the First World War loomed.

Brown goes on to outline how the above impasse was overcome in 1907 when the German Chemist, Fritz Haber developed a way to synthesise ammonia (NH_3) from atmospheric nitrogen.

In all, Brown has written a non-technical, compelling and engaging story of the development of explosives and their conflicting ability to be used for peaceful purposes and for warfare. The book also elucidates the background to the prestigious Nobel Prizes. Although now out of print, copies of Brown's book can be sourced online from secondhand book dealers and from eBay.

Editorial Note: Both this article and the previous one are longer than would normally be published. However, both are serious and important contributions and worthy of publication in full or almost in full. If possible, however, material should be kept to approximately 500 words

Newsletter Editor – **Graham Marshall**

Mob: 0408 308 382 Email graham_marshall8@icloud.com

Please send copy for the next newsletter to Graham

Closing date for the **March 2026** Newsletter is: **am – Wednesday, February 25th**

**N.B. The next Probus Meeting and Lunch is on
Wednesday March 11, 2026**

More Information on Dr Moh Dadafarin and his presentation on *Hearing Loss: Cognitive Decline and Dementia: The Link*

Hearing Loss, Cognitive Decline & Dementia: The link



 **10th February
2026**

 **Kew Golf Club**

**Talk
&Interactive Q&A
Hearing Check**

**11 am
11.40 am
1 pm**



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Understand the Link Between Hearing Loss Memory & Cognitive Decline
- Explore Modern Solutions for Effective Hearing Loss Treatment
- Learn How Hearing Treatment Improves Cognitive Function
- Complimentary Ear & Hearing Checks by Accredited Audiologists

SPEAKER PROFILE



Dr. Moh Dadafarin

Founder & Clinical Director of Audiology
Ear and Hearing Australia

With a career enriched by 38 years of profound experience and innovation, Dr. Moh Dadafarin stands as a leader in the global audiology community, especially notable in Melbourne. The founder and director of Ear and Hearing Australia, he has steadfastly enhanced the life quality of those navigating through hearing loss, implementing advanced audiological services and specialising in adult hearing rehabilitation, hearing aid fittings, and comprehensive diagnostic audiology.

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Member and fellow of numerous prestigious audiology organisations, including the American Academy of Audiology and the Academy of Doctors of Audiology, Dr. Dadafarin is accredited by recognised health and hearing service authorities. He is a proud mentor to audiology students at universities like Latrobe and Melbourne, continuing to illuminate the path in hearing care with his blend of expertise, innovation, and heartfelt care.

Join us for a session where expertise meets genuine care in the realm of audiology with Dr. Moh Dadafarin.



More Info

www.earandhearing.com.au



Call Us

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