

Spring  
2023

# Newsletter

Community Bank · Epping



## From the Manager's desk



Greetings and welcome to our latest newsletter. I hope this message finds you well and in good cheer, as we navigate through the challenges and opportunities that the year has brought us. 2023 has been an exceptional year, marked by its fair share of trials and

triumphs. In times of adversity, we have witnessed the resilience and strength of our community, which fills us with hope and optimism.

I warmly invite you to step into our branch and get to know the dedicated professionals that make up my team. They are eager to discuss how we can support you in achieving your financial goals. Moreover, we are excited to collaborate with local community groups, charities, and clubs to discover ways in which we can unite for the betterment of our community.

Your presence and input are invaluable to us, and we are genuinely excited about the prospect of seeing you soon. Together, we can make a positive impact on Epping, and I am eager to play my part in that journey.

Looking forward to meeting with you and learning more about your aspirations.

**Stephen Hu**  
Branch Manager, Community Bank Epping

## Community Banking Milestones

### Community Bank Epping celebrates 20 years!

In the late 1990s, when the big four banks were closing branches in many areas, the Bendigo Bank established its unique Community Banking model whereby local communities financed, owned and operated bank branches to serve their own banking needs.

The internationally-acclaimed model has now grown into a network of more than 300 branches nationally, with \$20 billion in loans and \$31.3 billion in deposits. Its point of difference is that the Community Banks return profits to their own districts by funding community agencies, organisations and projects which benefit their local areas. To date more than \$350 million has invested in improving the lives of residents around the country.

In 2003, our own Community Bank Epping was founded at North Epping as part of the Bendigo Bank network. Established by passionate volunteers who wanted to bring a different type of banking to the area, the branch eventually moved to the Epping CBD. Our community ethos is still our guiding principle, and a strong and loyal customer base generates annual profits that have enabled significant investment to the community through grants and sponsorships.

This year, we are proud to celebrate twenty years of local community banking. In 2023, the Community Bank Epping is now the only bank still with a retail presence in the whole district.

In this newsletter, join us in celebrating this important milestone.



## From the Chair

The Annual Financial Report of our Community Bank Epping confirmed a substantial profit for the branch in the 2022-23 financial year. This result has been possible because of the hard work and outstanding personal service of the branch staff. I congratulate and thank Branch Manager Stephen Hu and his excellent team – Junie Kanlapan, Karen Lee and Julie Galic.

The real beneficiary of our increased profits is our local community because we now have more funds to support not-for-profit agencies in the district. In the last few months, we have distributed almost \$250,000 to local community projects, and our total funding to the community, since the establishment of the branch 20 years ago, is now nearing \$2 million.

Our recent grants cover a very diverse range of community agencies and organisations, including Riding for the Disabled at North Ryde, the North Epping Men's Shed, the North Epping Rangers Sports Club, Epping Rotary Club, Cheltenham Girls High School, Epping-Eastwood Football Club, the Macquarie Singers, North Rocks Pre-School, Epping Baptist Church, and a Halloween art project for local young people, to name just a few.

A particular highlight was the Staff Charity Event, held on 18 October. Each member of our staff was given \$2,000 which they could donate to one or two charities of their own choice. Again, a wide range of organisations was supported, and included the ADHD Foundation, Epping Senior Citizens Club, Horizons Family Law Centre, the Lions Club of Epping-

Eastwood, the Epping Boys Brigade, and the Buddhist Compassion Relief Foundation. The presentation evening was held at Il Posto Restaurant in North Epping. The event was very successful and, at times, quite emotional.

Much of the current success of our community grants program is due to Director Ms Janet McGarry, who has been appointed as our Marketing Services Provider. Janet has modernised and revitalised our funding procedures, established efficient online processes, and expanded the reach of our financial support to a wider cross-section of our community. These developments reinforce the central focus of our branch – to provide high-quality banking services which ultimately lead to the majority of our profits being used to directly benefit the community that has generated them.

I am also pleased to announce that we have recently appointed two new Directors to our Company Board. Ms Meera Iyer and Ms Joanne Lynch came to us through a comprehensive recruitment process, and they bring additional expertise and extensive financial experience to the Board. They are committed to the social principles of our community enterprise and will be invaluable in the future direction of the branch.

**Rob Phillips**


**Chair, Epping and Districts Financial Services Ltd**

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# Staff Grants Night

Last year, the Board of Directors invited the branch staff to nominate local charitable organisations for a special one-off grant. This was a chance for the staff to acknowledge organisations important to them, or ones that they meet in the branch, or activities they feel are especially worthy.

For 2023, the project was expanded – the staff had \$2,000 each to donate to one or two organisations, and the Board of Directors also selected another cause to support. A function brought these varied bodies together to network and acknowledge all they give back to our community.



# 20 years supporting our community



In 2003, a new Community Bank opened at the shops in North Epping, as part of the Bendigo Bank community banking model.

It was the result of much planning and hard work by local residents who wanted a retail bank conveniently located in the residential area. Over several years, they raised awareness of community banking, and gathered the necessary support and capital to start the branch. Approximately 200 locals bought shares and many are still key stakeholders to this day.

These pioneers not only wanted to bank locally but were also driven by the aim to see profits given back to the community through a grants program. This is a key point of difference for the community banking model.

The branch quickly established strong roots in the local area. It grew relationships, with financial support, across a range of local sporting and cultural organisations, the local schools and churches.



## Branching into Epping

10 years after its founding, the branch made the move to larger premises on the corner of Oxford Street in Epping. This gave the branch a new identity as Community Bank Epping, and a much larger retail presence as the suburb began its transformation into a high-density area. It came as the branches of other banks started to close in Epping, leaving the area with reduced banking services.

In 2017, the branch moved across the road to its current home at 2 Pembroke Street. It is now the only retail bank left in Epping and with the pandemic and growth in digital banking, the branch is quieter than it used to be. But Bendigo customers value personal service, the chance to talk through loans and deposits face to face, and the convenience of 'just popping in'.



Top right: The official opening of the branch in North Epping, 2003. Middle: North Epping branch. Bottom: Oxford Street, Epping branch. Bottom left: Opening of the new premises in Epping.



## The personal touch

A hallmark of our Community Bank is the relationship with customers and a deep knowledge of Epping and its surrounds.

The branch has only had two Managers in its history, Sharyn Hubert (centre in photo left) and Stephen Hu (pictured right), and has long-serving staff members Karen Lee (19 years), Junie Kanlapan (11 years) and Julie Garlic (4 years).





## Giving back

From its earliest days, Community Bank Epping supported local charitable bodies through grants and sponsorship. Across Epping sports fields and schools, service clubs and churches, events and celebrations have been made possible through our grants program. Whilst the program slowed during the pandemic, it now has renewed energy and will support more organisations than ever.

So, in 2023 it is fitting that we achieve another milestone when we reach \$2 million returned to the community through these projects.



We opened a bank to grow a community

**Bendigo Bank**



# Recent Epping District community support

## Riding for the Disabled

Hidden away on Culloden Road, Marsfield is a very special place – the Riding for the Disabled Centre. Here magic happens and children and adults with disabilities enjoy riding lessons that are more than just fun. The faces of participants shows the story of skills and resilience, engagement and laughter, dedication and community.

Volunteer-run, the Centre relies on fund-raising and donations, so Community Bank Epping has been delighted to support this inspiring service with two major grants.

The first saw a large installation of solar panels across the Centre's roof – a great way to cut running costs. More recently, the Centre asked for our support to acquire a new horse to their stable. An older horse was ready for retirement after sterling service, and soon Merlin (or should we call him Ben?) will take over his duties. Our grant will cover the costs of training and maintaining the new 'staff member' in coming years.

**For more information:** <https://rdaryde.org.au/>



## The North Epping Men's Shed

Drive right down Norfolk Road to Boundary Road, and you can't miss a significant new building ahead. The NE Men's Shed has been five years in the planning and will soon be opening its (very large) doors.

The Shed will offer men and women a hub for a wide range of activities – repairing and creating, sharing and learning. But more than that it offers an opportunity for social interaction, making new friends and giving back to the area.

Community Bank Epping helped kick start this major project with the initial seed-funding. After pandemic delays and rising costs, we recently granted additional funds to help finish works off and get the Shed open.

Once the building fence is down – call in and find out how you can get involved.

**For more information:** [www.nems.org.au](http://www.nems.org.au)



Chair, Rob Phillips presenting an additional grant to the President of NE Men's Shed, Brian Bailey.

# North Epping Rangers Anniversary

Celebrating 60 years in 2023, NER is a special North Epping institution with more than a thousand members across soccer, netball and tennis.

We were delighted to support their Centenary year, including the famous Rangers Day on 16 September which saw the streets of North Epping, and Steamroller Park festooned in orange and black. Teams marched to the oval for presentation day and the evening fireworks.

**For more information:**  
[www.ner.org.au](http://www.ner.org.au)

**CELEBRATING 60 YEARS 2023**  
One Club One Community



## Find out more

We support a big range of organisations each year. Some times it is for key capital funding for new or revamped facilities, or it is sponsorship assistance for events and community activities, or it can be for regular annual sponsorship that helps with the running of sports clubs.

All applications start with an Expression of Interest, outlining the organisation and the support needed. To find out more – go to [www.edfs2121.com.au](http://www.edfs2121.com.au) and see the Community section.



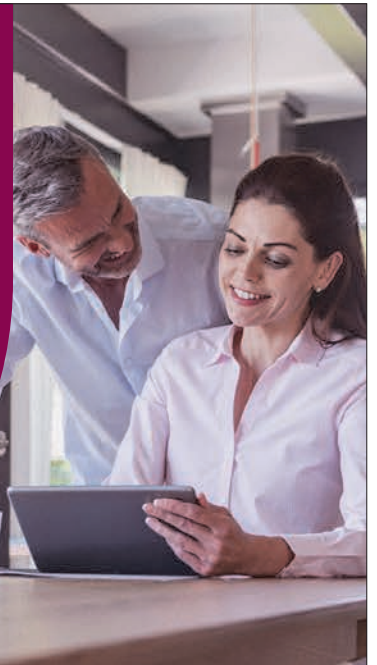
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 Community Bank · Epping



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## Cheques are on their way out

The Federal Government has announced that cheques will be phased out nationally as digital banking becomes the preferred means of payment for most transactions.

Bendigo Bank has started its phased transition and have more information on their website. [Click here.](#)

It is very important that all customers and shareholders make suitable financial arrangements for the post-cheque era.

## Branch opening hours

After a trial over winter, the decision has been made by the Board to continue the new branch opening hours: 9.30am – 4.00pm, Monday to Friday. The earlier closing time of 4.00pm has allowed staff to undertake follow up customer calls, progress lending enquiries, and undertake necessary training.

Customers with loans enquiries can still request a meeting with the Manager, Stephen Hu, between 4.00-5.00pm.

## Talk to us today



**Stephen Hu**  
Branch Manager  
**9869 0818**  
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bendigoadelaide.com.au

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 /communitybankepping

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### We're open:

9.30am - 4.00pm Monday to Friday

### Directors

Robert Phillips, Ian Bittner, Craig Gallagher, Robyn Clark, Janet McGarry, Jacquie McCann, Justin Kang, Meera Iyer, Joanne Lynch

Epping and Districts Financial Services Limited  
Suite 1, 2 Pembroke Street Epping NSW 2121  
ABN 57 104 573 499

## AGM and Annual Report

The Annual General Meeting of Epping and Districts Financial Services Limited will be held on Thursday 23 November 2023 at North Epping Bowling and Community Club, at 7.00pm.

The 2022-23 Annual Report has been distributed to shareholders, along with the notice of the AGM. It is also available on the EDFS website.

[Click here.](#)



## Community Impact

Our bank follows the principle of 'Shared Value' – full banking services are embedded in the community through sharing the benefits. The more our branch thrives, the more we can contribute to our local community.



Here are some of the organisations Community Bank Epping has supported in recent months.

North Epping Men's Shed	Riding for the Disabled
Epping Eastwood Football Club	Cheltenham Girls High School P&C
Epping Bulls Cricket Club	Epping Rotary
St Albans Epping	Epping Boys High School P&C
Epping Baptist Church	Tigers Baseball
Macquarie Singers	Kids Xpress
Epping Heights Public School P&C	Yabadoo Food Bank



## Shares availability



Shares in Epping & Districts Financial Services Limited (EDFS) trading as Community Bank Epping are available - enquiries to Ian Bittner on 0407 770 669.