

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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JANUARY IS VOCATIONAL SERVICE MONTH

Happy Birthday		Happy Anniversary	
Jan. 27	Sharon Kyle	Jan. 28	Mike Davies
Jan. 30	Clint & Cheryl Callison	Feb. 02	Eric & Urma Mollema

Upcoming Speakers:

Jan. 27	Aida Tajbakhsh & Anna Sanzhak Fraser Valley Addictions & Recovery Hub	Feb. 3	Rachel Tan Big Brothers and Sisters of the Fraser Valley	Feb. 10	
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

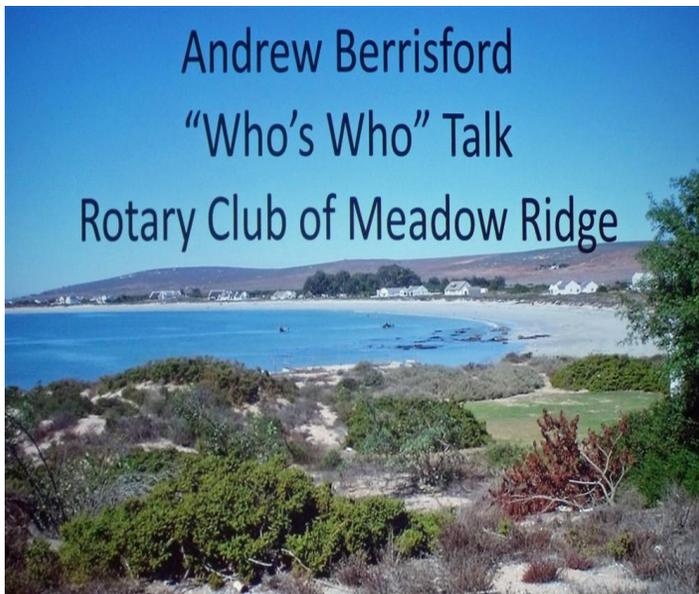
President **Alex Pope** presided.

Libby Nelson gave the invocation/inspirational thought - that reflected on the values of Rotary: giving back to communities we may never personally see or benefit from, vaccinating children we will never meet, restoring eyesight for those we may never know, feeding the hungry, and educating children around the world. Members were reminded that, as Albert Schweitzer once said, true happiness can only be found by helping others.

Guests

Kris Harrison lives in Pitt Meadows, and visited our Club for the first time on her own. (President Alex reminded members, jokingly, to be on their best behaviour .)

Program: **Andy Berrisford's "Who's Who"**



Andy began by saying that his life was shaped by constant movement. He was born in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1956, and his family relocated frequently during his childhood. Within his first several years, they moved to Kimberley, Johannesburg, and later to Florida (South Africa), and eventually settled in St. Helena Bay when Andy was about eight years old. St.

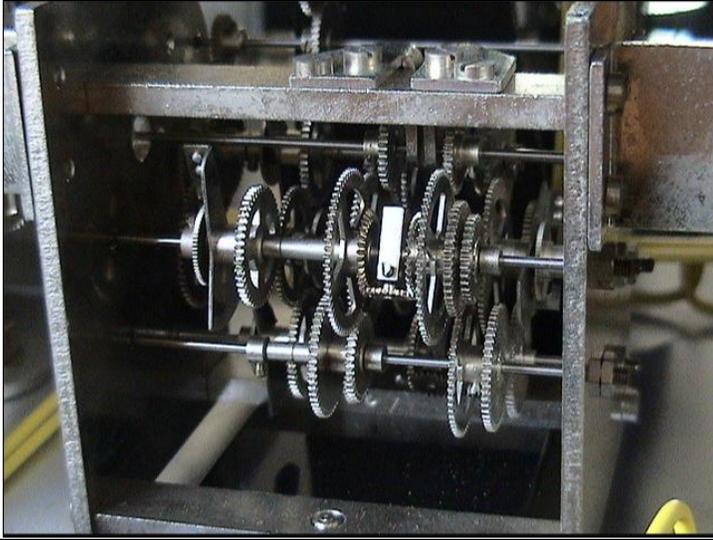


Helena Bay became the place where Andy spent his longest continuous stretch growing up, from roughly 1964 to 1970. He described it as the happiest period of his childhood. The town had everything close by - the sea, shops, factories and nearby mountainous areas where the family would vacation once or twice a year. They camped, explored caves, slept overnight in the mountains, and had experiences Andy still remembers fondly. Later, the family moved again - and Andy ultimately spent five years of high school across three different boarding schools, an experience that taught him adaptability and independence.

Early Career - Eskom (formerly 'Escom')

After high school, Andy joined Eskom, South Africa's national electricity utility, as a student technician in 1974, later qualifying fully as a technician in 1977. Eskom was a massive organization, several times larger than BC Hydro, and provided Andy with extensive technical training and opportunities. He worked in Eskom's Measurements and Standards Laboratory, where the team handled unusual or non-standard electrical measurements that conventional staff could not manage. Because South Africa was under international embargo during the apartheid era, advanced equipment was often unavailable. Andy's role frequently involved reverse-engineering equipment that had been obtained indirectly, then designing and building additional units locally.

He described older electromechanical metering devices (a "mechanical computer") - some capable of complex mathematical calculations using only gears, wheels, and clutches –marvels of engineering that achieved impressive accuracy long before digital systems existed.



Mechanical computer in Trivector Meter 1977

A Career-Defining Problem

In 1977, Andy encountered a problem that would shape the rest of his professional life: "harmonic distortion", a form of electrical pollution caused by equipment such as locomotives. This distortion affected the accuracy of electricity meters. Two legally certified meters could measure the same electrical load and produce different results, even though both tested perfectly in the laboratory. This inconsistency deeply troubled Andy. He spent much of his career working to improve metering standards and specifications to ensure that legally valid measurements were also accurate in real-world conditions. He later described this as one of his most important professional contributions.

Education, Marriage, and Family

While working at Eskom, Andy continued his education through company-sponsored courses, university studies, and international training programs. He completed a master's degree in electrical engineering and undertook additional studies in computer science.

In 1981, Andy married Yvonne, after an amusing and memorable process that involved obtaining parental consent under South African law at the time.

Together, they raised three children, though their household often included additional children thanks largely to Yvonne - relatives or children from difficult home situations who stayed with them for extended periods. Andy and Yvonne provided stability and care to many young people who needed a safe place.



Load Research and Leadership

Over time, Andy grew restless in the measurements laboratory and identified a gap within Eskom: there was no formal load research team, despite increasing demand for such work. Andy initiated and built a load research group that eventually grew to twelve members, including engineers with master's and doctoral degrees. Though he described himself as not naturally a "people manager," Andy served as the technical leader of the group and oversaw complex projects, equipment design, and national research efforts. Eskom valued international exposure, which allowed Andy to present papers at conferences around the world.

Political Change in South Africa

Andy then spoke candidly about the political transformation of South Africa. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, apartheid ended, leading to democratic elections in 1994 and the presidency of Nelson Mandela. However, Andy described how subsequent policies, particularly aggressive affirmative action measures, negatively affected his family. His job security declined, and his children experienced bullying and discrimination at school because they were white. Faced with limited educational and employment prospects for his children, Andy and Yvonne made the difficult decision to leave South Africa.

Namibia Project

Before emigrating, Andy participated in an 18-month international electricity planning project in Namibia, working with consultants from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Andy served as a cultural and technical bridge between Japanese consultants and African stakeholders. One striking lesson from the project involved rural electrification. Well-intentioned infrastructure had been installed for semi-nomadic communities who later moved with the seasons, leaving unused electrical systems behind. Andy contrasted this with Rotary's hands-on approach to service projects, emphasizing the importance of local understanding and follow-through.

Immigration to Canada

In 2000, the Berrisford family immigrated to Canada, initially settling in Ontario. Andy accepted a position in Guelph, working during the deregulation of Ontario's electricity market. He helped implement complex billing and metering systems that the local utility was initially afraid to touch. Later, Andy accepted a position with BC Hydro and relocated to British Columbia.



Kayaking on Buntzen Lake 2010

The transition was not easy - particularly for the children - but over time the family settled in Burnaby and eventually in Maple Ridge.

At BC Hydro, Andy rebuilt the load research function, tackling questions such as:

- . Whether daylight saving time actually saves electricity
- . Why residential electricity use wasn't declining despite efficient appliances
- . How smart meter data could detect electricity theft

His work provided practical insights into changing energy use patterns.

Later Years and Semi-Retirement

Andy became a Canadian citizen in 2014-2015. The following years were difficult: the death of a long-time manager and friend, the loss of his son Byron to cancer, his wife's cancer diagnosis, and the passing of his father. These cumulative challenges led Andy to retire earlier than expected at the end of 2019, just before the COVID-19 pandemic. Since retiring, Andy has continued limited consulting work and relocated to Maple Ridge in 2024.

Happy & Sad dollars:

Libby Nelson – happy that she finally found an "easy chair" and suitable bed for her new home. Continuation of her not so happy "dishwasher saga", when the repair people finally arrived, they brought all kinds of ladders and stuff....they thought they were installing a new washer & dryer....?

Gordon Robson

happy for Gord & Mary's 50th Anniversary....Gordy stated:
"the best 50 years of my life".



Club Announcements



Pub Hub – January 29 at 5:30 pm – at Me-n-Ed's Pizza.
Because Alex's son works there, all food will be sold to Rotarians at 50% off that evening .

Valentine's dinner –Mark & Pauline Forster will once again host a Valentines dinner at their home (Feb. 14th)....cost to be confirmed at later date (likely \$40-\$50).



President's Quote for the Day

I once stayed a night in the YMCA.
It was OK, but I wouldn't make a song and dance about it.



10 Punny Dad Jokes

- What does a baby computer call his father? Data.
- I only seem to get sick on weekdays. I must have a weekend immune system.
- My friend was showing me his tool shed and pointed to a ladder. "That's my stepladder," he said. "I never knew my real ladder."
- Why is it so cheap to throw a party at a haunted house? Because the ghosts bring all the boos.
- Which days are the strongest? Saturday and Sunday. The rest are weekdays.
- I just found out I'm colorblind. The news came out of the purple!
- Did you know your pupils are the last part to stop working when you die? They dilate.
- What's the difference between a well-dressed man on a unicycle and a poorly-dressed man on a bicycle? Attire.
- Of all the inventions of the last 100 years, the dry erase board has to be the most remarkable.
- My hotel tried to charge me ten dollars extra for air conditioning. That wasn't cool.

Submitted by Laurie Anderson



WANTED

We are looking for students aged 15-17 years old, to attend the YAIL (Youth Adventures In Leadership) program, fully sponsored by our club for the weekend of February 6-8th at the Timberline Range in Maple Ridge.

This weekend gives participants insight into some of the basics of what it means and what it takes to be a leader. It works to help participants become well rounded individuals with perspective and enthusiasm for growth who can make informed decisions through their leadership journey.

Please contact Sharon Kyle, who is the Young Generations Chair, for further information.