

Peace Pole presentation by Mark Davies (24/09/2023)

We are gathering today to re-affirm our commitment to Peace, locally & globally, and especially in our community. We appreciate this opportunity to meet under perfect blue skies in this idealistic location.

Let me share some Peace Pole information and history.

To mark the Centenary of Rotary in Australia, the rotary Club of Canberra Burley Griffin, ACT, set a goal to see 100 Peace Poles donated to 100 locations to recognise 100 years of rotary service in Australia in 2021. This goal has been achieved through collaboration with schools, organisations and Rotary Clubs around Australia and today there are over 250 Rotary Peace Poles covering every state and territory.

The Peace Pole program had its beginnings after the second world war in 1955 and was developed by the World Peace Prayer Society Founder, Masahisa Goi. Now more than 250,000 Peace Poles stand in approximately 200 countries, symbolising the common wish for a world at peace.

Peace Poles are marked with the message: "May Peace prevail on Earth" in 14 languages including braille, standing in silent vigil for peace and acting as a reminder for all to think and act in the spirit of peace.

This Peace Pole stands as a constant reminder of the need for peace. Each year we hope that this community will continue to hold this annual ceremony at our Peace Pole.

I would like to finish with a peace reflection:

"If there is to be peace in the world, there has to be peace between nations.

If there is to be peace between nations, there must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbours.

If there is to be peace between neighbours, there must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart."

These words were written by Chinese philosopher Laozi over 2,500 years ago. Laozi teaches that we should live a simple life that is filled with goodness and integrity. Even though he wrote these words thousands of years ago the message is very important and still valid for all of us today. These words

were also used by the Rotary International President herb Brown in 1995-96 as part of his theme of Peace for his presidential year.

I hope you will all take this message away today as we all hope "May Peace prevail on Earth".