

# Networker

Rotary Opens Opportunities.

## Message from the Editor

Thanks so much for all your welcoming messages and thanks to all those people who sent in such interesting responses to the competition question; *If you had the freedom to do anything in Rotary, what would it be?* The winning entry is from Bob Batrouney, RC Balwyn;

*"My wish is to make Rotary greater than it has ever been by devising a way to motivate every member to find another person to join Rotary, and to care for and mentor the new people in Rotary ways. Automatically we'll have a much greater and ever growing Rotary movement."*

Congratulations Bob! You'll receive socially-distant Gold Class movie tickets for two, and some yummy chocolates.

Remember to send your good news stories in a word doc with high-resolution photos attached to, [networker@rotarydistrict9800.org.au](mailto:networker@rotarydistrict9800.org.au). Let's network!

Jeanette Leigh

***"Rotarians are very much more favourably disposed toward action than they are toward words".*** Paul Harris, The National Rotarian, 1911

## Around the traps with the DG

July is a busy month with many Rotary Club changeovers to attend, and COVID-19 has certainly changed the way these are being conducted.

It's been great to see clubs embracing new technology so that they can continue to connect with their members and open opportunities. I've seen this exemplified at Camberwell, Werribee and Melbourne Passport clubs.

This week, I was particularly excited to attend a business breakfast event for local business and community partners run by Rochester RC. Being one of the smallest D9800 clubs, their breakfast was a wonderful example of how to reinvigorate the flow of ideas and support by opening our doors to other organisations and businesses in our communities. It was evident that the Rotary Club of Rochester is held in high regard within the community, and that there will be considerable support coming to the club for its various projects from a variety of external community partners, as well as potential of new members. Congratulations to Rochester!

The 2021 year will be very special as we begin ***Celebrating our Past...Building our Future***. Rotary began in Australia with the chartering of the Rotary Club of Melbourne on April 21, 1921, so this year is important for all of us, regardless of whether you are the biggest club in D9800, or the smallest. Every club is different, but it is my hope that each will have its own unique signature project to celebrate our anniversary year.

The District Leadership Team (DLT) is here to serve you. We are here to help club leaders and members to develop as Rotarians and enjoy the benefits that Rotary offers while serving our communities. If I, or any one of the DLT members can support you, please feel certain your contact with us will be welcomed.

DG Philip Archer



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## Jungle Stories

### Filling a gap in community services

*Australian Rotary is entering its centenary, and it's a time to reflect on where we've been and where we're going. What better place to contemplate and connect with what's important than in a garden; someone else's garden in fact.*

An elderly gentleman, we'll call him Bill for the story, could only access his house through a wonky side door. A tangled mass of vines covered the rear of the building practically inveigling themselves into the very fabric of the walls. Forests of blackberry bushes veiled trees they had strangled to death. Shrubs were worn thin from neglect, and a self-sown scrub had usurped the once manicured lawns of his suburban front and back yards; a reflection of Bill having giving up on domestic life since his wife had passed some years before. The local RSL club and cafés were his refuges from the decay and wreckage.



Neighbours had complained about the mess to Boroondara council. A social worker came to inspect. She knew of Rotary Club of North Balwyn's (RCNB) gardening program, and asked them to assess the situation. One look told them that this was going to take a lot of people-power.

When a property is referred to RCNB, an assessor meets the resident, inspects the property, and completes an information sheet to guide the day's work supervisor. Residents discuss their ideas about what they want for their garden, which is reflected in the service provided.

"None of us are horticulturalists and our aim is not to manicure the gardens, but to restore them to reasonable liveability and appearance," said Rotary Garden's Project Coordinator, Neil Marshall.

Generally, the gardening team only work periodically at the homes of elderly or disabled clients to do a clear up or maintenance, but Bill's house was going to need several visits to make it habitable.

"The gardening program began 10 years ago when our club was looking for community service opportunities. After approaching the municipal council, specifically the aged care unit, as well as churches and welfare agencies, we found that gardening would really make a difference to the quality of life of elderly and disabled residents.

"We asked them to refer clients who met three criteria; they had to be residents of Boroondara, either they or their families were physically unable to maintain their gardens, and there were inadequate resources to pay a commercial gardener. We found that some of the properties we care for are rather valuable, but the residents are short of cash," said Neil.



RCNB also saw this as an opportunity to involve secondary school students in a community service activity, which is required by some schools that run programs such as the youth development program, Duke of Edinburgh's Award. They work under the supervision of Rotarians and they're not allowed to use power tools, or climb on roofs or up ladders. There has not been one serious accident in all the time the project has run. (Continued next page)



## Jungle Stories (Continued)

In the past 12 months the main participating schools were MLC, Camberwell Grammar School and Xavier College. The students really enjoyed discussions with the older residents, many of whom are lonely and appreciated their time with the students. They boys were especially fond of the afternoon teas, which they generally demolished.

A real sense of pride comes from restoring a garden, and you can almost feel the plants and soil breathe again as they emerge from tangled entrapment. One property was owned by a widowed pensioner who had been a state school principal. The backyard was enormous but completely overgrown. Hints of its former grandeur poked through; a gazebo, an old orchid garden, rows of rose bushes engulfed by weeds, and, much to the surprise of one Camberwell Grammar boy, a hidden fish pond that he slashed around in joyfully.

The gardening team encounters a diverse range of scenarios. Some residents are hoarders and so they're helped sensitively in the clean-up, and the hard rubbish collections are put to the test. Another key part of the program is the supply and management of green waste bins by the council depot. They're delivered, emptied and returned as required. The service is wonderfully efficient.

The purpose of the project is purely as a community service but it has served to raise the profile of the club significantly with Boroondara residents, schools, council and supplier-partners. The service receives many calls and letters from satisfied residents and although it is a totally free service, they occasionally receive small donations that help buy fuel, gloves and replacement hand-tools.

As we gradually emerge from COVID-9 restrictions, a database of almost 250 properties are waiting for assistance so a priority system has been established to help those in more urgent need.

Back to our friend Bill, once the front of the property was cleared up, much to the delight of the neighbours, his house became a home again and the gardening team drew a lot of satisfaction from knowing that he was enjoying sitting on a bench under a large oak tree to read his morning paper.

Any Rotary club can create a similar program in their patch. Neil Marshall is happy to talk you through the process. Don't let the grass grow under your feet on this one; contact Neil [neiltric@yahoo.com.au](mailto:neiltric@yahoo.com.au)



A garden in Balwyn rejuvenated by the RCNB garden gurus; before and after

## Celebrating new and long term members

### GREG ROSS—Acting on the best intentions

#### How does a busy professional actor become a Rotarian?

My local bank manager invited me to join the Rotary Club of Berwick in 1976. It was perfect for me because Rotary gave me the opportunity to become part of my community. This was something that wasn't possible previously due to busy performance schedules; four years in Bellbird (ABC), and seven years on Cop Shop (Ch7). Despite my workload, my enthusiasm and commitment to Rotary never wavered. In August 1986, after a year as club president, my family moved to North Balwyn where I joined the wonderful Rotary Club of North Balwyn.



Greg Ross

#### Paint your heart out

I've been involved in fantastic Rotary experiences including being a literacy volunteer in Thailand, helping build an eye clinic in Vanuatu through RAWCS, and serving as the RI president's rep five times.

In 1991/92 I became the first person from my club to serve as District 9800 Governor. As DG, I asked the 64 Clubs to do two things; one was to donate \$100 per member (a first in Australia back then) to Rotary Foundation to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and two was to paint 120 houses of elderly and needy people on one day.

Paint Your Heart Out Melbourne (PYHO), which became Paint Your Heart Out Australia, happened Sunday February 1, 1992 and featured on every major television news program. At the time, RI President Bob Barth was visiting Melbourne and joined in. A huge celebration followed that evening at Olympic Park. Bob named PYHO as one of his seven projects of the year.

The next three years saw Rotarians paint their hearts out in over 1,500 homes and community sites across Australia.

#### Healthy mind

I'm also most proud of my involvement in Australian Rotary Health (ARH). Since 2013 I've been a director and I'm currently chairman (since 2017). Our Lift the Lid on Mental Illness campaign has been embraced by Rotary Clubs across Australia; such support makes everything worthwhile and I believe that cures for mental illness will become a reality. I believe ARH is Australia's greatest homegrown Rotary project.

#### The value of giving

My mantra is 'Add value', just as in Rotary it's, 'Service above self'. Giving service alongside wonderful, like-minded, giving friends is good for the soul. After 44 years I can say unreservedly that Rotary has added immeasurably to the quality of my life.

### Bishan Dhillon— Orbiting a giving vocation

#### A Rotary family

I always wanted to join a volunteer organisation so that I could be a part of the community and take more responsibility for giving to those less fortunate. My sister, Jasmin Dhillon, is the President of Rotary Southbank, 2020/21. When she told me about their new millennial satellite club, Orbit, I was keen to be involved. I was inducted on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020.



Jasmin and Bishan Dhillon

The new club is an extension of Rotary Club of Southbank. There are 10 of us young adults who are keen to get started on our own projects whilst receiving sponsorship and support from the Southbank club.

#### Orbiting around the world

Many fantastic and big ideas are bouncing around the members of Orbit, which we are keen to turn into action. Basically, we want to change the world, but our goals need to be more practical at times. For instance, if I want to change our environmental policies, I would probably need to become a politician. We're a young group and still learning about barriers and red tape, but I'm passionate about driving environmental change. This weekend I'll be involved in the club's first project; selling chocolates at the Queen Vic market so we can raise money and awareness of mental hygiene.

#### Family business

Although I've always lived in Melbourne, my background is diverse. My parents are Malaysian born with a South-East Asian and Indian heritage. Family is important to me. I'm currently looking after Mum's dogs whilst she recovers from illness. My flatmates love all the doggie playtime.

#### Professionally speaking

Previously I worked in various industries including construction and hospitality but I wanted a long-term career that was less taxing on my body. So, at the mature age of 24, I enrolled at RMIT and recently completed a Bachelor of Accounting, which I studied for between hiking, dancing hip-hop and playing basketball. I'm continuing on to a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance.

#### Potted

Recently I started my own business; making themed terrariums, which are a lot of fun. I am currently building my website, which should be ready mid-July.

## Club Service tool kit

### Service to community, and each other

"My club does not have a Club Service Director, and it shows", is what a senior District 9800 Rotarian said to me recently.

Club service is the mortar that fortifies the many bricks that make up the complex Rotary wall. Without it, there'd be no Rotary because the fellowship side is just as important as the service we provide at home and abroad. In fact, the health and vitality of any club is contingent on the activities of the Club Services Director (CSD).



People leave Rotary when they don't feel welcome and are not engaged in meaningful service. A CSD plays a vital role in meeting membership expectations through providing welcoming, well-run meetings in a pleasant environment, with interesting and thought-provoking presentations. Those that do this well, attract and retain members.

The range of the CSD duty statement might surprise you. Clubs handle the various tasks differently, and specific jobs are often delegated to other club officers, but the CSD is ultimately responsible for:

- Arranging the venue for meetings (including internet conferencing during COVID-19) and meeting the requirements of the venue owner
- Ensuring that there's an efficient and attractive format for meetings, including arranging engaging guest speakers
- Having appropriate Rotary information available for the education of members, including the use of My Rotary, the Rotary International and district websites, the weekly Networker newsletter and the club's own social media
- Overseeing inductions, and the well-being of members
- Implementing sound governance procedures
- Ensuring that Rotary requirements are met, including meeting OH&S requirements, risk management, working with children and vulnerable adults compliance, disputes resolution and the payment of annual RI fees
- Assisting the president-elect with district conference arrangements
- Promoting Rotary International conventions to members
- Making sure the annual presidential changeover is well-managed
- Focusing on the immediate viability and ongoing health of the club.

Some clubs begin their meetings with the national anthem, others use the four-way test - is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build goodwill and better friendships, and will it be beneficial to all concerned – to remind Rotarians of the moral tenets we should live by as we take action, deal with others, or embark on a project.

### Going up

Please note, the club service elevator statement: Club service is a diverse portfolio that relates to the effective and efficient administration of club business, the health and vitality of clubs, and the wellbeing, education and engagement of Rotarians. In a nutshell, the club service team brings together best practice models, references, links and checklists, and collects them in a tool kit for district clubs to help them achieve high standards of performance.

### Your District 9800 club service team for 20/21

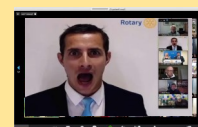
- Planning—Andrew Dalziel, RC Kew
- Administration—Sam Hardikar, RC North Balwyn
- Fellowship—Helena Wimpole, RC Glenferrie
- Communication—Rosemary Waghorne, RC Canterbury
- Program/Speakers Bank—Jill Weeks, RC Hawthorn
- Recognition—Rowan McClean, Chair, Club Service.

### Club Service Support team

The Australian Honours Committee in the Recognition Unit will be led by PDG Julie Mason, AO.

Networker has been placed in the District Club Service Communication Unit. The editor for 20/21 is journalist and author Jeanette Leigh (RC North Balwyn). Jeanette would like to hear from any Rotarians with interesting projects that can be shared throughout the district.

### Rotary tip



Struggling to do something this month for the 100 year anniversary of Rotary in Australia?

How about this for a simple idea?  
Invite your community sponsors/partners to a Zoom meeting to introduce the new club president, to give them an overview of your club's activities and achievements, and thank them for their support.



## Clubbing with Rotary

### International fellowship clubs

#### The root of the matter?

Our immediate and distant past shapes us. Knowing where we came from helps us understand ourselves more profoundly. Exploring ancestry has become a fascination for a group of Rotarians who formed the Rotary International Genealogy Club. They're digging deep to discover more about their pedigree, and to exhume the odd closeted skeleton or infamous ancestor.

Could there be a more opportune time to become an ardent genealogist than now with winter chills and COVID-19 keeping us indoors? The club provides a great way to learn the how-to tricks of tracing ancestors. Members blog about ways to gather useful information; for instance, the value of the census in creating a timeline that, "...builds the skeleton of family history." Other sources such as deeds, marriages, deaths and wills, put meat on the bones.

The club is online at [www.rotariangenealogists.org](http://www.rotariangenealogists.org).



#### BE A WINNER

#### The competition

Please send a 50 word response to the following question;

#### How could Rotary clubs be more inclusive?

Email responses to me at [networker@rotarydistrict9800.org.au](mailto:networker@rotarydistrict9800.org.au)



## Getting to know the clubs

### THE GOLD STANDARD



It's believed that in 1851, while Mses Kennedy and Farrell were washing their clothes in Bendigo Creek, they discovered alluvial gold nuggets. Soon after, 800 people hit the Bendigo fields. By June 1852, 20,000 people were fortune seeking. Gold supplies diminished but Bendigo evolved as Victoria's fourth largest city and the Rotary Club of Bendigo is an integral part of its evolution.

On Thursday July 30, 1925, in the midst of the boom town's tree-lined boulevards and ornate Victorian and baroque architecture, the Rotary Club of

Bendigo became the first chartered club outside a capital city, and the eighth for Australia. The Bendigo club went on to sponsor Castlemaine, Echuca, Bendigo-South, Eaglehawk, Bendigo-Strathdale and Bendigo-Sandhurst clubs, which are all part of Rotary District 9800. So far, it's provided three District Governors – Arthur Bolton (1936/37), Ernest Granger (1962/63) and Bill Sones (1967/68).

One of the club's most renowned projects is The Bendigo Easter Art Show, which attracts quality artists from across the region and Australia. For 52 years, this show, that exhibits up to 1,000 paintings, has been a major fundraiser and contributor to the club's domestic and international philanthropic endeavours.

Bendigo RC supports teaching programs in the Solomon Islands, Interplast, the Rotary Health Fund and ROMAC. Closer to home, it established a bowling green at the hospital for the aged, and together with RC of Bendigo South, it chartered the first Probus Club in Bendigo in 1983.

Encouraging youth has always been a club focal point with school bursaries, apprenticeship awards and ongoing support for MUNA (Model United Nations Assembly), RYPEN (Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment) and Youth Exchange. Netball courts have been constructed, student counselling and careers nights were instituted in schools, and in collaboration with other district clubs, state of the art play equipment was installed at picturesque Lake Weeroona, which was once a dusty old mining site.

Graeme Clarke, is the current president and the club meets every Tuesday at 1.00PM.