

Tin Tin Clinch, Wednesday 17 December 2025 to Rotary Mount Martha

Hi everyone,

Some of you may know me, and some of you might not. My name is Tin Tin — or, if you prefer, Cristina — Clinch.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the tragic events that occurred in Bondi. I want to take a moment to recognise the lives lost, those who were injured, and the families and communities affected. Our thoughts are with them.

For the past two years, I have been the President of Balcombe Grammar School's Rotary Interact Club. I have truly loved being part of the Rotary community and working closely with so many of you. Rotary has helped shape me into who I am today.

When I first joined, I didn't realise how much impact one person could have on the lives of others. Through Rotary, I've made new friends, built meaningful connections, learnt new skills, and gained experiences I will carry with me for life — all thanks to this community.

I've learnt how to speak up for what I believe in, to act selflessly, to serve others, and to lead with compassion. Just as importantly, I've learnt when to step back and give others the space to grow.

I now plan to continue this work in partnership with the Mornington Community Support Centre. Over the past few years, I've had the opportunity to work closely with Ben Smith, Yvonne, and Louise. Through these relationships, I approached them with a proposal: to create and coordinate a youth collective.

Much like Rotary Interact, this group would be a space for teenagers and young adults to build connections, develop leadership skills, and give back to their community. I've found that within high school, there are so many young people who want to help — but often don't have the outlet to do so, especially outside of a school environment.

That's why I've decided to take the initiative to form this group with the support of MCSC.

Through fundraising, preparing care packages, cooking meals, and engaging directly with the community, these young people will gain real-world life experience. I hope to mentor them into the leaders of tomorrow — just as I was mentored.

I want to give them a space not only to be themselves, but to challenge ideas, to grow as people, and to create meaningful change. Working alongside MCSC will allow them to see that change firsthand — to understand the real impact of their actions.

That's what I value most about community service: seeing the difference we make in people's lives. The gratitude. The connection. The smiles.

I want to educate others in the same way you have educated me — because education is the key to the future.

One of my favourite quotes is, “The most dangerous beasts are blind.”

I’ve spent a lot of time thinking about what that means — both in the world around us and within ourselves. To me, blindness isn’t ignorance born from malice; it’s what happens when we stop listening, stop learning, or assume we already understand.

So much of inequality, prejudice, and division comes not from hatred, but from a lack of understanding. And understanding begins with education — not just formal education, but the willingness to question what we think we know and to truly hear the experiences of others.

Education sheds light where there is blindness. It creates empathy where there is distance. And it gives us the power to break cycles that have existed for far too long.

So I want to leave you with a question.

In your own life, where are you choosing to keep learning — and where might you be choosing comfort instead?

How are you educating yourself, and how are you helping educate others?

Because real change doesn’t begin with grand gestures. It begins with curiosity, with conversations, and with the choice to care enough to learn.

Finally, I want to thank every one of you — for the work you do, the time you give, and the impact you continue to have on this community. Your commitment to service is inspiring, and I am incredibly grateful for the role you have played in my journey.

As we move into the new year, I am excited for what lies ahead — for new ideas, new opportunities, and continued collaboration. I cannot wait to see what we achieve together.

Thank you.