

C O N T A C T

Evening meeting October 4, 2022

Sam Tartaglia opened the meeting and welcomed President Vera Maljevic to the podium.

President Vera offered welcomes firstly to our guest speaker, Don Farrand KC. Sandra Sui and Timothy Anderson and Neil and Mary Henderson were also welcomed: as were Cris Wood, Kerry Roe, Gaye Cariss, Janice and Kevin Memery, Don Ross, Struan Robertson, Past President Jenny Foster, Joseph Maljevac and Elena de Fazio.

President Vera next noted that October is Rotary's mental health awareness month and she shared some tested techniques on how to keep mental health in a good state. She noted that our club has established the Norm Mollica Mental Health Scholarship. A committee is working on how best to support mental health via a scholarship/bursary.

Incidentally October 10 is World Mental Health Day. World Mental Health Day is an international day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy against social stigma. For more information see the World Health Organisation web site: [World Mental Health Day \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/world-mental-health-day)

President Vera offered thanks to our club members for completing recent survey on moving to two nightly meetings. This is to be put to a motion at the AGM next month and for the pilot Regionalisation project – I have submitted the club's vote and am confident that this is progress for Rotary. The overarching aim is to provide better and more direct support to clubs through a less layered, but more effective and contemporary structure

President Vera then presented some vignettes on heroic people who gave of their all in war times. The first was Reginald Walter 'Reg' Saunders who was the first known indigenous Australian to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian army. 'Reg' was born in Purnim, Victoria in 1920. He enlisted in 1940 and as stated in the Australian War Memorial Records, Reg 'experienced his first close combat and was forced to remain hidden on the island of Crete for twelve months after the German victory.'

Reg escaped in 1942 and spent the rest of his active military service fighting in New Guinea. After being recommended by his commanding officer and undertaking sixteen weeks of training he was commissioned in November 1944.

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Reg returned to battle during the Korean war. He fathered 10 children out of two marriages and was awarded an MBE in 1971. Reginald Saunders was elected for the period 1985-1987 to the Council of the Australian War Memorial. Reginald passed away in March 1990.

Then second vignette that President Vera shared was that of Sister Claire Trestrail. Her bravery in extreme war time conditions is recorded by the Australian War Memorial in these words: 'Caring for wounded Belgian troops in October 1914, Australian nurse Claire Trestrail was one of the first

Australians to face the horrors of the First World War. After surviving the harrowing shelling of Antwerp by hiding in a basement with her colleagues and patients, Trestrail narrowly avoided capture by escaping over the last bridge out of Antwerp before it was destroyed to stop the advancing German Army. Sister Trestrail was one of very few Australians to receive the 1914 Star with clasp, recognising her service in Belgium under enemy fire during the early months of the war.'

President Vera then noted that there have recently been several resignations for RCE , including Roger Priestley, Bev Smythe, Kelly Abfalder and Irene Stokes.

Past President Sunil Perera has agreed to act as Treasurer, with Regina as Assistant Treasurer, and Michael Portelli has volunteered to chair the Vocational Committee.

More positive club news includes Nola Spicer agreeing to Act as our chair on the joint Essendon Keilor East Art Show Committee. **Productive meetings have taken place and planning is currently in progress. The Memorandum of Understanding has been endorsed by the Board. Profit from last year is \$36,000 - \$6,000 for the St Bernard's Bursary and \$15,000 for Rotary Clubs of Essendon and East Keilor.**

Cathie Nicou was invited by President Vera to give an update on the Soiree to be held on October 14 at the MVCC Mayoral Chambers. Cathie spoke enthusiastically about the fun and fellowship that this evening offers and asked for any volunteers to identify themselves. Assistance is needed for such activities as the auction, blind auction donations, the serving of alcohol on the night and so on. Please contact Cathie if you can help in any way to make this evening a real success.

President Vera then asked Christine Hilbert to brief the meeting on the outcome of the Ukrainian displaced persons day out of Puffing Billy. Christine reported that the day was a great and joyous one, with the children all singing on the train and the adults actually showing some pleasure and joy. Our Rotary Club did contribute some money into the day, and it was a very positive investment.

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Sunil Perera then made a belated Royce Abbey award to Timothy Anderson. Sunil noted that Timothy is a long-standing and very active member of our club. As a lawyer Sunil noted that Timothy is consistently suggesting to his clients that they give to needy people, often by leaving a bequest in their wills. The results of Timothy's encouragements have been substantial, with the latest exceeding \$200,000 for Myanmar projects. Timothy on receiving the Royce Abbey award remarked that he was honoured to receive it.



Maria Kouppas was invited by President Vera to present the wellness report. Firstly, Maria advised that we have sent a card to Denis Kosnar who is recovering from a recent hernia operation and is to have another this week. On a more positive note Maria announced that Roger Leask is proud new grand father to Nina Gael Leask the daughter of Aaron and Jo Leask. Finally Stephen Chandler has a hamstring injury that will hopefully not linger much longer.

Sam Tartaglia introduced the evening's guest speaker, Don Farrands. Now a KC as opposed to a QC, Don is a highly qualified professional as well as a cyclist, an accomplished musician, and an author. The topic of Don's talk this evening is his book about his grandfather Nelson Ferguson, entitled *Courage and Compassion: A Stretcher-bearer's Journey from No-man's Land and Beyond*.

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Don stated by noting that it was a fabulous privilege to talk to us tonight. He next asked all in the audience to spend a minute privately and quietly reflecting about an individual and his or her personal war experience.

Don's personal story that he shared at this meeting was about his grandfather, a stretcher bear in the great war.

Don then asked the audience to pause for a minute and reflect upon the Ukrainian war effort, and all the horrors and pain and courage that is entailing. For instance, Don recounted that around 900,000 Ukrainians are currently surviving in bombed out buildings. This is about twenty per cent of Melbourne's population.



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As part of his presentation Don showed a number of WWI photographs, including several like the one on the left hand side above that clearly show the enormous number of the bombs that were released during the Great War.

Don's grandfather, Nelson Ferguson was a talented concert musician and a keen and talented young art teacher when he volunteered for military service as a twenty one year old. Nelson was a British citizen. Nelson took up duty as a stretcher bearer.

Don showed two incredible photographs taken in Swanston Street Melbourne, near the Town Hall in December 1914. One showed a very large number of soldiers, most of whom were teenagers, parading in rows. The second showed what seemed like hundreds of sisters and nurses, all dressed in white uniforms, marching along side male soldiers.

Don noted the insidious and extremely harmful impact that nerve gases, including mustard gas, had on soldiers during the Great War. Tragically it was Winston Churchill who blocked the proposal for cessation of the use of gases during this war. Consequently thousands, more accurately probable tens of thousands of soldiers, support staff, medical staff and others were severely injured and or killed through the continuing use of these fatal war weapons.

Don recounted that Nelson Ferguson was one of these victims. He lost most of his eyesight, And his lungs were damaged as a result of mustard gas poisoning. His parents had to wait to be advised by the military of his injuries.

Nelson on his return home was put back into art teaching as a disabled teacher. He met and fell in love with Madeline, who became his wife and the mother of two children.

Unfortunately Nelson completely lost his sight in the early nineteen fifties. His son and son in law decided to start a stained glass window business and Don tells how Nelson provided advice and support.

In the late nineteen sixty eight, Nelson was able to have a successful corneal replacement, meaning that he was able to see again for the first time since 1918. Nelson's life is restored but tragically his wife Madeline died two weeks before the operation.

Don's grandfather passed away in 1976. A tree was planted to commemorate Nelson Ferguson's service and courage in the Avenue of Honour in Ballarat Victoria. Don recounts how Nelson spent six decades of his life, along with fellow war veterans, urging for peace and mutual understanding.

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Nola Spicer gave a brief overview of the components that make up a Days for Girls kit, and the very practical and necessary use to which these kits are put by young girls and teenagers in the least and less developed parts of our world.

Nola also explained how Days for Girls clubs / chapters work in a voluntary and community based way to enable the construction of these kits to happen.

Nola said later in the meeting that she would go around the tables to see if attendees would like to make a small financial contribution to our DFG chapter.

At the end of the meeting President Vera thanked Don for sharing a fantastic and inspirational speech. Vera also thanked Sam Tartaglia for chairing the meeting.

President Vera also reminded us about the Soiree on 14 October and all the fabulous auction items on offer (PP).

She also mentioned our next lunch time meeting - presentation on 18 October from President John Damrow, Kyneton Rotary who will be talking about Resilience and Art and Grant Sheldon will also be conducting a sweep at this meeting.

At the close of the meeting President Vera asked us to stay safe and look out for each other

Upcoming events

- [Rotary Soiree night](#)
MVCC Mayoral Chambers
Oct 14, 2022, 6:45 PM – 11:00 PM
- [Lunch Meeting: President John Damrow, RC Kyneton](#)
Anglers Tavern
Oct 18, 2022, 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM
- [Zone 8 Conference](#)
Oct 28, 2022 – Oct 30, 2022

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Thank you to !!!

Strathmore **Community Bank**[®] Branch



Help yourself and help our Club by banking with Strathmore Community Bank. Take out a loan, term deposit or open a bank account and the club will receive up to \$500. Drop into the branch at 337 Napier Street, Strathmore or call

Manager David Porter on 9374-2607 for details

30TH Paul Harris Breakfast

Dear Vera MALJEVAC,

On behalf of Rotary Central Melbourne's Foundation Committee I would like to invite you to the 30th Annual Paul Harris Breakfast.

this year we are joined by guest speaker Jeroen Weimar who will be speaking on the career transitions he has navigated and the influencing factors behind his changing path.

Prior to his appointment as Chief Executive Officer of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee, Jeroen was Commander of the COVID-19 Response in Victoria, working with a team of clinicians, public health experts and operations specialists to protect the Victorian community. He has also served as Chief Executive Officer for Public Transport Victoria and VicRoads following a career as a town planner.

Along with this we will discuss with Jeroen how Rotary, and its members can contribute to making the 2026 Commonwealth Games the most successful and inclusive games we have seen yet. This is an excellent opportunity to bring along partners and other guests who might either be considering joining Rotary or are interested in listening to our eminent guest speaker dive into the unfolding of his professional path

DATE: Wednesday, 23rd November 2022

TIME: 7.15am for 7:30-9:00am

VENUE: The RACV City Club

Level 17, 501 Bourke St

Melbourne VIC 3000

To secure your place please follow the instruction within the attached event flyer.

We look forward to hosting you at this hallmark Rotary event.

For further information feel free to contact me
eElias Lebbos - Chair, RCM Foundation Committee
elias.lebbos@travellersaid.org.au
0411 721 744

C O N T A C T

Jennifer Foster <jenfoster1517@gmail.com>

to Essendon, Mary, Carolyn, Jenny, Jane, John

I saw this morning that **Rotary International President Jennifer Jones** spoke yesterday (today for us) to urge all Rotarians/Rotary Clubs to take action on campaigns focused on the celebration of the **UN's International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October**, which you will see we had already decided to target as part of this marketing campaign.

So I thought I would send the Flyer to Sandi Fulcher for approval as a Rotary marketing guru, having been in the role of D9800 Public Image Director, & she soon saw that the RC of Albert Park's logo used, was not compliant with Rotary's Global Branding. Therefore we felt this needed to be corrected as sometimes these things take on a 'life of their own' as we know & we need to make sure that we do everything possible to adhere to central branding, particularly when it comes to International Service.

Do not worry Jane....this will not be a 'biggy' on the DfGs side of things. FYI: Anita has given her approval of the flyer from DfGs Kenya end.

So please use the corrected version, attached here, for any further circulation that this group are happy to do amongst your networks please.

Sandie has now given this new version her tick of approval! Phew!!!

FYI: The RAWCS Registered Project link will be launched at the event for anyone wanting to make further donations & require a tax receipt.

You may wish to take a look here at Anita's latest post – this is a video of her being sworn in as a member for her District. A women!!!! This I am told is huge for Kenya!

Hence you will see her name on the invitation as **Hon. Anita Byegon**.

<https://www.facebook.com/anita.c.mibey>

Women helping Women....that is us! Go Girls!

I did add 1 man you will note. ...John Odgers as RC of Essendon President, Vera, is happy to promote this to their members. Of course we need men helping us also!

Only then real will change happen!

Thanks John!

Yours In Service

Jenny

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Soiree evening fast approaching



Rotary  **Club of
Essendon Inc.**

PRESENTS

ROTARY SOIREE 2022

**FRIDAY 14TH OCT
7PM - 11PM**

**MOONEE VALLEY COUNCIL
MAYORAL CHAMBERS**

**9 KELLAWAY AVE, MOONEE PONDS
ENTRANCE VIA PASCOE VALE RD, MOONEE PONDS**

\$65 PER PERSON

**INCLUDES FINGER FOOD, DRINKS, LIVE
MUSIC, AUCTIONS, MANY SILENT AUCTION
ITEMS, A GREAT MC & A GREAT NIGHT**

**FUNDS RAISED WILL SUPPORT ROTARY PROJECTS
ESPECIALLY DISPLACED UKRAINIAN PEOPLE IN MELBOURNE**

**TICKETS ARE
NOW AVAILABLE.**

**OR SCAN CODE
NOW TO BOOK!**

WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/CBZGX



C O N T A C T

John Damrow, President Kyneton Rotary Club speaking on Resilience & Art on October 18

You are invited to
**LUNCH TO MEET
DAMROW**
on resilience and art

TUESDAY 18TH OCTOBER

12.30-2.00pm | \$25

1 course meal | Drinks at the bar

Anglers Tavern, 2 Raleigh Road, Maribyrnong



John Damrow suffered a stroke in 2004 which quickly changed his life. He could no longer do the things he loved and realised that he took for granted. From his experience, he was determined to encourage others to live a healthier life and avoid the threat of a stroke. By making John aware of the role he was determined to play in stroke prevention, he supported stroke survivors. John also suffered from depression and decided to take up his passion for

art, which greatly assisted his recovery.