

# C O N T A C T

## **Club meeting on April 18 2023**

Past President Lisa Lowcock was adorned on the Essendon scarf. She opened the meeting with a most enthusiastic welcome to all present to the heart of Bomber land and its beautiful ground. She then introduced President Vera.

President Vera read the Acknowledgement statement, then asked all to toast to Rotary International and to Australia.

Vera then welcomed the meeting's guest speaker, Ross Butterworth from the Western Emergency Relief Network (WERN). She then welcomed guests, including Andrew Lowcock and Kerry Roe as well as two RCE inductees — Debra Kingston and Resina Bayer.

President Vera firstly inducted Debra Kingston. Nola Spicer is Debra's mentor, and Debra has been assigned to the Community Committee. Debra's professional designation is dress making. Debra is really looking forward to being part of an amazing body of people, and will do anything she can.



# C O N T A C T

President Vera then inducted Resina Bayer.



Resina is a VET teacher.

Andrew Panjkov is Resina's mentor.

She has been assigned to the International Committee.

Resina is delighted to be part of good group of people with a passion for service and contribution.

She will do all she can to help in these pursuits.

Ross Butterworth of WERN was then welcomed by President Vera.

Ross has been involved with the Western Emergency Relief Network since its inception.

Ross showed a brief video that outlines WERN's status as a Not For Profit Organisation that acts on behalf of Rotary to provide support for people in crisis. Included among such people are refugees, families suffering from domestic violence, and families in crisis.

WERN is a Rotary Community Service project of Bacchus Marsh, Caroline Springs, East Keilor, Essendon North, Flemington-Kensington, Hoppers Crossing, Melton Valley, Pt. Gellibrand, Werribee, West Footscray, Williamstown, Wyndham and Yarraville Rotary Clubs.

Ross explained that WERN's creation commenced around casual conversations in 2012 and formal discussions 2014. In 2015 WERN became an Incorporated Association, a registered Charity and a Foundation with DGR Registration.

# C O N T A C T

Ross observed that in its first year: WERN partnered with 40 Welfare Agencies & 162 Case workers on the ground assisting 160 families & individuals. WERN provided \$80,000 of goods or 1,800 items. It performed 160 collections and contributed 2200 volunteer hours to the WERN program.

WERN has had several different 'homes' over its life. It relocated in March 2019 due to tunnel works to Derrimut. A Building Fund to finance the purchase of suitable premises was established.

A conversation with the City of Melton commenced in 2019 to explore the viability of partnering with a joint development for purpose-built \$2.5 Million warehouse in Ravenhall – 1,000 sq. metres for a 20 year term at a peppercorn rent.



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Ross outlined the two main services that WERN offers.

- WERN provides emergency relief assistance through partner agencies to those in crisis.
- Collects donated 2<sup>nd</sup> hand goods and acts as a distribution point for our member agencies.
- These goods are furniture, bedding, white goods and household items

Ross explained that WERN does not in the main deal directly with the public, but only takes clients referred by our partner welfare agencies or member rotary clubs

WERN is like Rotary and many other community service organisations staffed by volunteers.

WERN today is vibrant and well connected service organisation. Ross outlined some Headline facts.

- WERN works with over 60 Support / welfare agency partners & the number is growing;
- Around 390 accredited Case Managers – WERN Troops on the ground;
- 13 Member Rotary Clubs and there is room for more;
- To Date: Around 8,000 people assisted; Provided almost \$1,750,000.00 of goods or 80,000 items; 2,700 collections and
- 22,000 volunteer hours have been contributed to the WERN program.

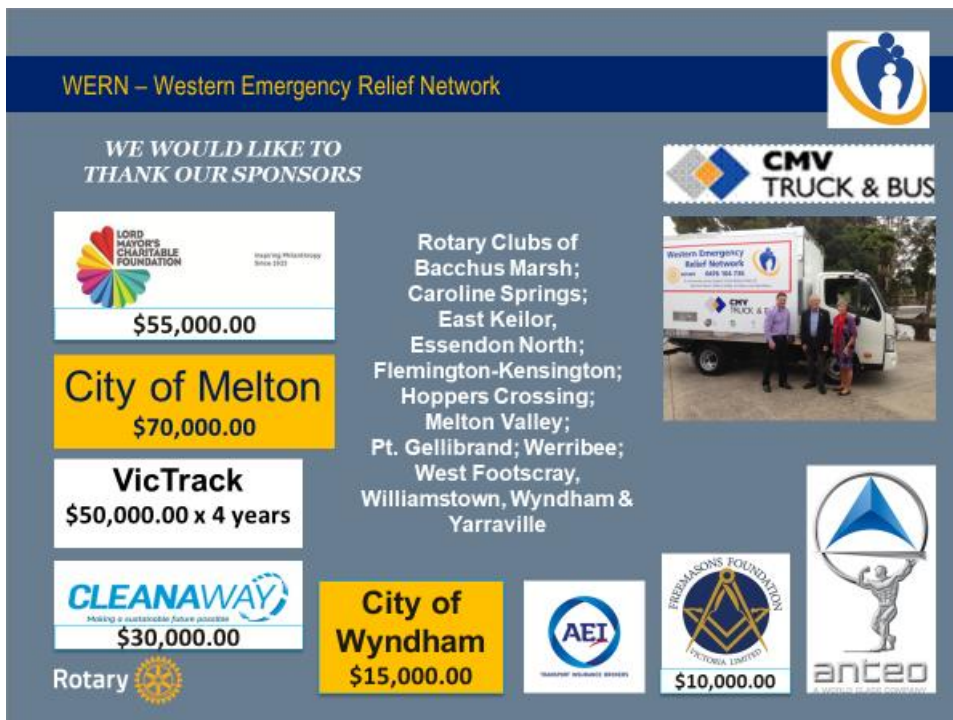
Towards the end of his presentation Ross Butterworth raised the issue of finance with several key fund providers being specified.

- Charitable and Philanthropic Trusts – e.g. Lord Mayors Charitable Trust; Freemasons ;
- Councils – e.g. Melton & Wyndham;
- Welfare Agencies – open to all;
- Businesses e.g. CMV have donated a van, Cleanaway, VicTrack
- Member Rotary Clubs have already committed: Keilor, Footscray, Melton & Gisborne have all made specific donations to WERN;
- Consider commencing or supporting an Emergency Relief Network providing both Rotarians and community members an opportunity for a hands-on experience helping others whilst increasing the Rotary profile in our own communities.



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The following slide shows that value of the monetary contributions of some of these organisations.



**WERN – Western Emergency Relief Network**

*WE WOULD LIKE TO  
THANK OUR SPONSORS*

**LORD PLAYERS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**  
\$55,000.00

**City of Melton**  
\$70,000.00

**VicTrack**  
\$50,000.00 x 4 years

**CLEANAWAY**  
\$30,000.00

**Rotary**

**Rotary Clubs of**  
Bacchus Marsh;  
Caroline Springs;  
East Keilor,  
Essendon North;  
Flemington-Kensington;  
Hoppers Crossing;  
Melton Valley;  
Pt. Gellibrand; Werribee;  
West Footscray,  
Williamstown, Wyndham &  
Yarraville

**CMV TRUCK & BUS**

**City of Wyndham**  
\$15,000.00

**AEI**

**FEDERATION FOUNDATION**  
\$10,000.00

**anteo**

Over the last couple of years WERN has also supported communities ND INDIVIDUALS as part of the Bushfire relief programs.

Ross Butterworth ended his presentation with some answers to the questions of 'What you do as a Club or individual to assist WERN? in its mission.

- Become a member Club of WERN;
- Donate goods, time or funds to WERN;
- Volunteer at the Warehouse or get involved with our working bees:
- Publicize our Material Aid Appeals for Goods or assist in the Collections; or
- Sponsor Agency Memberships from \$275.00 p.a.

Finally Ross presented two ways to contact Western Emergency Relief Network (WERN)

Email: [administration@wern.org](mailto:administration@wern.org)

Phone: 0491 149 740

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On answering a question Ross remarked that WERN is thinking about duplicating itself by setting up a Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Service operating out of Brunswick East. It would service inner Melbourne and the South Eastern suburbs. A service operating out of Geelong and servicing the Bellarine Peninsula is also being investigated. A third possible new emergency service based in Ballarat is also being investigated.

Ross also noted that all clubs and club members are welcome to partake in the vocational experience at WERN. WERN is about to start operating on Saturday mornings.

Standing in for our welfare officer Maria Kouppas, Chair Lisa Lowcock happily announced that there were no new illnesses, apart from Maria who is not feeling very well. Norm Mollica is still in Rehabilitation at the Dorset Hospital and Lisa reports that it is a 'waiting game'.

President Vera noted that the 9th Annual Moonee Valley Art Show (East Keilor and Essendon) is running from 19-21 May 2023.

President Vera mentioned the Rotary International Convention in Melbourne (27-31 May) – first time in 30 years. She asked that members please consider attending if they have not yet registered.

To commemorate a successful Rotary International Convention Melbourne 2023 we can join RI President Jennifer Jones and Lord Mayor Sally Capp, City of Melbourne, at Rotary Gala Dinner on Thursday 1 June 2023 at the prestigious Plaza Ballroom, Melbourne. Attendees will be serenaded by the legendary Jack Jones.

Tickets strictly limited and on sale now. [www.rotarygala.com.au](http://www.rotarygala.com.au)

President Vera also offered a reminder to collect any spare coins and deliver to Maria Kouppas.

Thought of the day:

*The only way that we can live is if we grow. The only way we can grow is if we change. The only way we can change is if we learn. The only way we can learn is if we are exposed. And the only way that we are exposed is if we throw ourselves into the open.*” — C. Joybell

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President Vera closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending tonight and Ross for his interesting and informative talk.

Good night and try to reach out to one person in the next couple of weeks who may be struggling.

## **Upcoming Events**

- RCE Charter Night

Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club

May 04, 2023

6:00 PM – 11:00 PM

- Stuart Hayes Business Consultant

Windy Hill

May 16, 2023

7:30 PM – 8:30 PM

- ART SHOW GALA EVENING

St Bernard's College

May 19, 2023 6:30 PM

- Moonee Valley Art Show

St Bernard's College

May 20, 2023 11:00 AM –

May 21, 2023 4:00 PM

- ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION 2013

Melbourne Convention Centre and Rod Laver Arena

May 27, 2023 – May 31, 2023

Strathmore **Community Bank**<sup>®</sup> Branch



### ***Thank you to !!!***

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Drop into the branch at 337 Napier Street, Strathmore or call Manager David Porter on 9374-2607 for details.

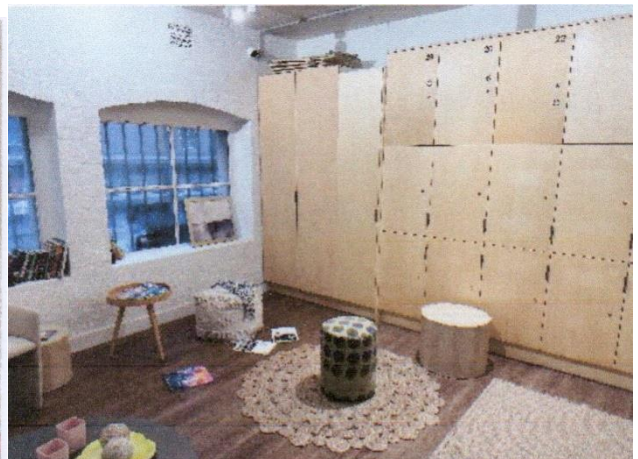
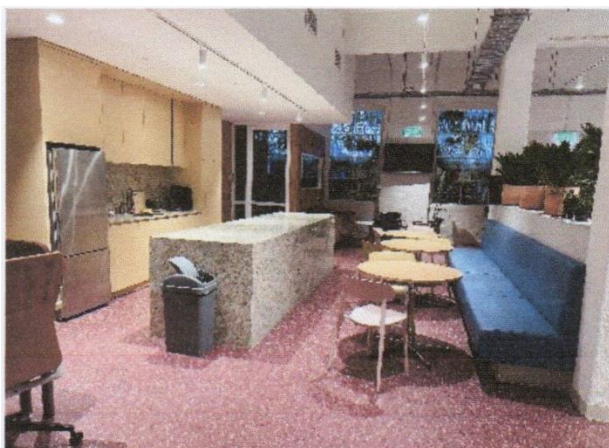


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## A journey with the Night Nurses of Youth Projects:

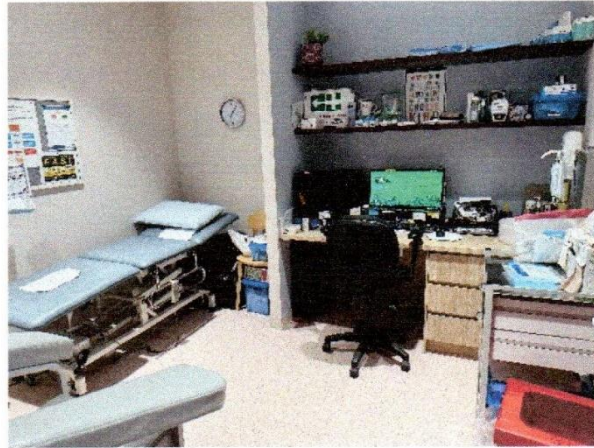


Wednesday the 22nd, a balmy evening, 2 Essendon Rotary Club members accompanied Nathan, Peter and nurse co-ordinator Teddy on their regular mission visiting People who are street based in Melbourne's Central Business district. The major purpose was to befriend and offer help if needed with food packs, hats, clothing and sunscreen lotion. The Night Nurses provided information and invited clients to attend their newly renovated premises, The Living Room in Hosier Lane where they could shower, relax in the lounge room, use computer facilities or have a meal. They could also see a general practitioner, physiotherapist, dentist, podiatrist and have nursing care of wounds and other ailments dealt with. Unfortunately The Lounge Rome cannot offer accommodation.





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Our first port of call was behind Federation Square where The Big Umbrella, a food relief organisation going on for 13 years, catered for over 60 with an extensive array of delicious meals from food salvaged from stores and cooked in a professional kitchen. They even managed to create a birthday cake for one of the ladies at short notice which was enjoyed by all.



Behind the scenes however there were continuous discussions with particular clients about their wellbeing, mental health and the administration of medicines.

The team then meandered to Flinders Street Station and up Swanston Street to the State Library amid throngs of pedestrians commuting and attending the numerous Asian food establishments at the top end. Along the way we engaged with those squatting on footpaths or in a wheelchair with their meagre belongings. Conversation was established and some accepted our handouts. The team then headed down Russell Street with further encounters before returning to base.

The whole experience was humbling with the prevalence of poverty in the streets but also the compassion and caring nature of the nurses from Youth Projects.

**Any help with money or goods donation will go a long way.**  
Youth Projects is a registered charity <https://www.youthprojects.org.au>