

# C O N T A C T

## **Charter night on May 4 2023**

MC Maria Kouppas introduced Vera Maljevac as the 88<sup>th</sup> President of the Rotary Club of Essendon (RCE).

President Vera presented the Acknowledgement to country of the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways and paid our respects to Elders past and present.

President Vera next welcomed guests, including AG – Mr Tony Laycock —and guest speaker Michael LaPina and his son Alex. Vera also welcomed Friends and Rotarians Peter and Sue Duras.

A welcome was extended to Rohan Williams , President Contact RC Melbourne Central (MC). He noted that there were 20 Plus guests of RCMC who were brought into the meeting by Steve Chandler. Many of these guests are Past Presidents.

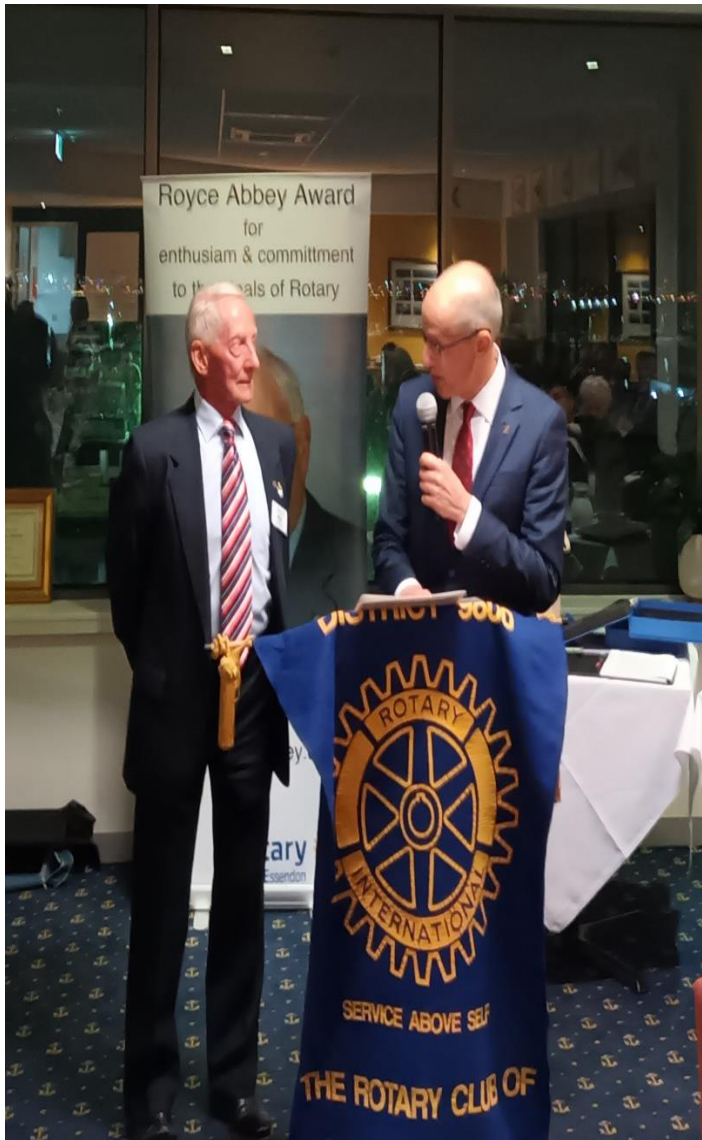
Mr Tony Laycock AG was invited to make the Rotary Toast. He led a toast to Rotary International and Australia.

MC Maria Kouppas then mentioned some historical facts about our Club's very early days. A provisional meeting of a 'select group of business and professional men' was held on 13 February 1935 and decided to form a Rotary Club. On 26 February 1935 the prospective club members met for the constitutional meeting. RCE received its charter on 21 May 1935

Three of our longest standing members —Michael Cariss, Peter Condos and Roger Leask —who collectively have given one hundred and thirty years of service, were asked by Maria Kouppas to cut the club's birthday cake. A happy birthday was sung to our club.

President Vera then invited Peter Duras to join her.

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Peter has made a huge contribution to Rotary and to the local and international community over many years. It is difficult in a such a short time to outline all of Peter's achievements, this is just a snapshot, Peter has achieved so much more and is to be congratulated. In 1973-74 the year Maurice Hawkin was President, Peter Duras was inducted into the Rotary Club of Essendon together with David White, John Chadderton and Roger Leask, all new members that year went on to become Club Presidents. In 1978-79 Peter was the community committee chair raising funds to support Gladswood Home; Royal District Nursing Service; Western Multiple Sclerosis Centre; St John's Ambulance Brigade; AscotVale Autistic Centre and Carolyn Chisholm Society.

In 1985-86 through an interplast project the club was able to bring a PNG policeman, aged 32, to Melbourne for corrective surgery and rehabilitation. Peter and Sue hosted John during his 5 week recovery period. Peter was the driving force behind the sale of the Moonee Valley street signs, always finding innovative ways to market the street signs, the club raised thousands of dollars through Peter's efforts. Peter was for many years the captain of the Club's Relay For Life team.

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The club has for many years supported several Yangon hospitals and orphanages and coordinated funding for a new school in Bagan Myanmar. It was Peter who had discussions with Peter Trebilcock, a local real estate agent who gave up his career to become a missionary in Myanmar, and brought the Myanmar project to the club.

The club has subsequently supported several Yangon hospitals with significant quantities of medical supplies. Many members have witnessed our efforts in Myanmar through annual delegations to that country.

Whenever there were volunteers required Peter was there – Rowallen Scout Camp working bees; Royal Show stall; hosting international students; sausage sizzles; steam train days; art show and a member of club international delegations.

In 2014 Peter transferred to Rotary Club of Central Central after moving to Southbank. Peter is an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Essendon and continues to support projects with the club as well as attending club functions and events.

Peter has done so much work for refugees coming into Melbourne, assisting them with accommodation, furniture, household goods and clothing.

Peter also celebrates 50 years as a Rotarian in November this year and in recognition of this achievement and his ongoing commitment and enthusiasm to the Rotary cause, it was President Vera's pleasure to present Peter Duras with a Royce Abbey Award.

In response to this award Peter said that he was celebrating fifty active years in Rotary, and relying so much on Sue's on-going support. Peter also noted that his parents; influence has had a big influence on his life and his community service. However Peter observed that our societal problems today are more difficult and complex than they were fifty years ago.

President Vera then introduced David Abbey.

David was born in Essendon, attended Essendon Grammar and studied Arts/Law at ANU. After being admitted to practice, he moved to Echuca to begin his career.

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David has had a life-long connection with Rotary. His father, Royce Abbey, joined the Rotary Club of Essendon in 1954, the year David was born, and was World President of Rotary International in 1888/89. David's sister and son were exchange students, and David and Cindy, have hosted about 12 students. Rotary has been a life-long family cycle for the Abbey family.

David joined the Rotary Club of Echuca-Moama in 1987, serving as Club President in 1991-92. He transferred to the Rotary Club of Shepparton Central in 2000 where he remained a member until his retirement and relocation to Melbourne in 2018. He was inducted as a member of the Rotary Club of Essendon in August that year, subsequently serving as both Membership Chair and Club President in 2020-21. David has been Chair of the Royce and Jean Abbey Vocational Scholarship

Committee for many years, and prior to his retirement, spent countless hours on the road between Shepparton and Melbourne attending meetings of that committee.

In a Rotary career highlight, David was presented with a Royce Abbey Award in 2017 by Rotary International World President Ian Riseley. The award came as a great surprise to David but was richly deserved recognition for his many years of dedication to Rotary causes.

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David received a Paul Harris Recognition in 2019 as further acknowledgement of his significant achievements as a Rotarian.

I will focus on the Avenues of Service and keep things simple,” advised David.

The Royce Abbey Award and Vocational Scholarships have been David’s most important projects. He believes that getting involved, attending meetings, fellowship and supporting the board are the keys to being a good Rotarian. “They make a club vibrant. Good attendance is about setting priorities, and it is important.”

President Vera personally thanked David for his ongoing support, encouragement and advice. Your approachable and friendly disposition has always made it easy for me to ask for guidance, particularly as a fairly new member to Rotary.

A more permanent move to Fairhaven made regular Rotary attendance impractical and it was with regret that David’s resignation was accepted late last year. However, tonight President Vera had the great pleasure of formalising David’s on-going connection with our Club by confirming him as a Lifetime Honorary Member.

In response David Abbey congratulated President Vera on her leadership and the fantastic job she has been doing.

David noted that there is a need for newer members to become actively involved in the management of the Royce Abbey awards. David noted that RCE has presented 35 Royce Abbey awards, and RC of Central Melbourne has presented 21. Each of these awards contributed US\$1000 to the Rotary Foundation.

David also observed that the Rotary Foundation is a marvellous potential funding source and is available to clubs to double the amount of their project grants.

President Vera then invited Luke Docking to join her.

She noted that Luke played National League basketball for Westside Saints. Luke ran his own software company for 10 years, building Bespoke business applications for various organisations and has worked in software sales since.

Luke is happily married to Grace and has two children.



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In the few years Luke has been with the Rotary Club of Essendon, he has demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm. Luke has taken the lead in a major project 'Here comes the Sun', collaborating with the Youth Projects organization to support the welfare of homeless people in Melbourne.

Luke has often stepped up to assist in several events during the past few years and it was never a problem for him. I remember how Luke's height was useful at a WERN working bee last year when they were shifting premises.

Luke has also volunteered to step in and lead committee meetings for Community and represented the committee at Board meetings.

He uses initiative and has generated some great ideas.

Luke has also represented the Club for the Kangan Institute Awards and volunteered with Days for Girls on several occasions. He has volunteered at our Bunnings barbecues, setting up for the Art Show and assisted at DIK.

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Personal circumstances have forced Luke to take a break from Rotary, but please know that you will always be welcome to rejoin us when you can. In the meantime, we all wish you and Grace all the best for your future ventures.

It was President Vera's my great pleasure to present Luke with a Royce Abbey Award.

Luke responded that it was a very nice award . He thanked the Community Committee and members who come on the streets of Melbourne to offer help and support to disadvantaged people. Luke also thanked Peter Halaseh for his contributions with sun screen.



President Vera invited Sue Duras to receive an award for her host of service contributions to both RCE and RCCM. These have been especially in fund raising and voluntary work.

Tonight Sue was awarded with a Paul Harris double sapphire. She received a Paul Harris sapphire in 2018

Sue Duras found the award pretty amazing and said that she was lost for words actually. Rotary has been a fantastic group of people. Sue is very proud for Peter to get a Royce Abbey award.

Maria Kouppas introduced the meeting's guest speaker, Michael La Pina.

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Michael started his Rotary career in 2005, while he was an IT Project Manager at National Australia Bank and an opera singer for Opera Australia.

Michael's first impression of Rotary was that it was a group of mainly aged, mainly guys. As a young parent Michael was also intimidated about having to pay \$25 for a box of cereals at the club's breakfast meetings.

Michael was also nervous about being a Filipino youngish man in the midst of senior managers and business owners.



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To overcome these fears Michael joined teams with the RCCM. Michael's singing skill also helped him to be recognized within Rotary and it changed his view of Rotary.

One of the biggest roles that Michael has played is that of artistic consultant.

Michael clearly has managed to successfully navigate our Rotary world. Witness that he was President of RMMC in 2020. Now Michael is nominee Rotary DG for 2024-2025.

One of the key themes of Michael's talk was that of the central role that member's vocations can play in helping others to achieve their goals and in aiding Rotary to meet its strategic aspirations. He for instance uses his singing skills to raise \$500 per performance that is paid directly into the Rotary Foundation.

In particular Michael believes that young or intending Rotarians can learn from older, more experienced Rotarians through being shown or explained how the Rotary designated member Vocation can help to create contacts, explore areas of mutual interest and identify multi vocation service projects.

Michael noted that diversity is working together across vocational, ethnic, religious and so on differences. Michael related the story of a joint Rotary project in the Philippines. Briefly the outcome was the construction of a new school that eliminated the need for long walks over a very basic, hilly path. The new school had potable water and basic but functional toilets. The new school came out of cooperative diversity.

In closing Michael La Pina believes that very single Rotarian is valuable and that Rotary revolves around its members. We need to remember that every Rotarian matters.

Maria Kouppas thanked Michael La Pina for his endearing talk and personal style.

Several interesting questions and answers followed Maria's note of thanks.

Michael sang 'This is the moment.'

President Vera closed the meeting and thanked all members, guests and special guests.

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## Upcoming events

- [Cancellation - Stuart Hayes Business Consultant](#)  
An alternative speaker is being sought  
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
- [Bunnings BBQ 3 June 2023](#)  
Jun 03, 2023  
8:15 AM – 4:15 PM

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



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

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.

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## **Volunteers requested for FAMFED - The Big Difference**

Please see the email from our District Governor, Amanda Wendt who has initiated this event. I am asking for 3-4 members who are able to volunteer as supervisors for the day (3-hour shifts) please.

You do not need to be registered for the International Convention to participate in this worthy cause.

DG Amanda wants to secure over 50 Supervisors who will assist in the set-up of the equipment, the supervising of the packing and the clean-up at the end of the event. It is being held on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> May from 10.00am – 4.00pm at Fed Square, although the set-up team will arrive much earlier. There will be 4 tables on the stage and 11 located in the Atrium. We hope to attract over 1,000 members of the public to attend in one hour blocks to pack the meals.

DG Amanda has a goal to have 100,000 meals packed by the end of the day. All the meals will be going to people affected by the disaster in Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

Here is a link to show you a packing event.

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/qd2xercjafamxq1/ForAMeal\\_PackingDay.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/qd2xercjafamxq1/ForAMeal_PackingDay.mp4?dl=0)

Please see the link below for supervisors to register for:

- Single list for numbers/shifts
- We will tick off arriving supervisors onsite on the day through app and QR codes

<https://wayvolunteer.org/big-difference-supervisor>

Supervisors will need to attend a hands-on training on either 11<sup>th</sup> May at DIK in Footscray or 18<sup>th</sup> May in Canterbury at 6.30 pm. This training is a requirement of the job.

Thanks again  
Vera Maljevac  
President - 2022-2023  
Rotary Club of Essendon



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## Thank you note from George Anderson, St Bernard's College

Dear Madam President Ms Maljevac

My name is George Anderson and I'm a year 12 student at St Bernards college, Essendon. In December 2022, I was awarded a Visual Art Bursary from the Kailor East and Essendon Rotary clubs.

I would like to thank you and your club for the very generous bursary. I really appreciate the support and assistance that organisations like the Rotary Club give artists like myself.

By supporting events like the Moonee Valley Art Show, young and established artists are given the opportunity to do more with their artwork.

By receiving this bursary I feel motivated to push myself in an artistic context. I feel recognised and receive a major boost in my artistic interest.

Once again thank you for the bursary and your support.

Kind regards.

George Anderson



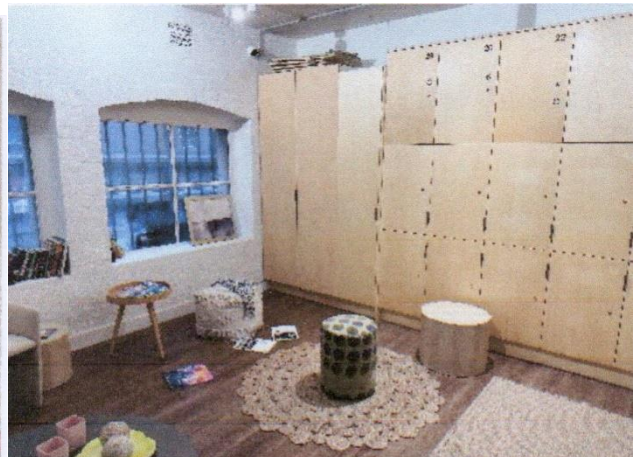
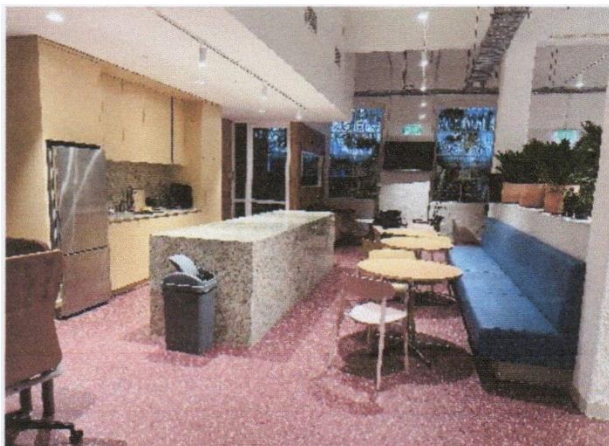
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## A journey with the Night Nurses of Youth Projects:



Wednesday April the 22nd, a balmy evening, two 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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## **RCE presents \$1000 toy voucher to Metropolitan Remand**

### **Centre:**

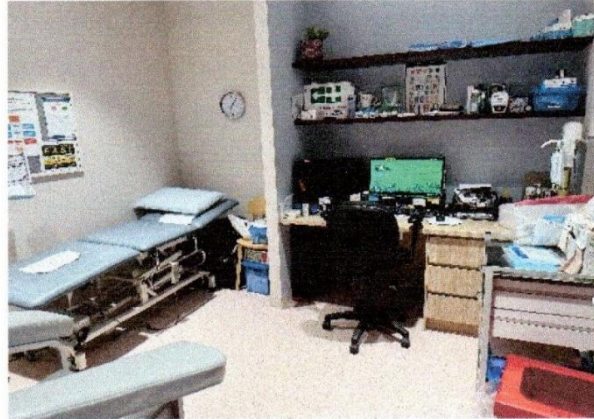
On the 2nd of May six 2023 members and partners from the Rotary Club of Essendon (RCE) visited the Metropolitan Remand Centre (MRC) to present a voucher for \$1000 to enable MRC to purchase toys for children visiting relatives in the centre. The donation was timely as the area where children can visit is currently being refurbished. This project was put into action by Community Committee pre COVID. It was great to finally be able to make the presentation.

MRC were so grateful and generous with their time. They provided us with morning tea and time to meet staff. This was followed by a comprehensive tour of MRC with all our questions being answered. During the tour we met the Security and Emergency Services Group who provide special services to Corrections Victoria. These include transporting high security prisoners to court, emergency and K9 services. The General manager from MRC has kindly agreed to attend our meetings as a guest speaker.





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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>

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## **WERN UPDATES**

Hello WERNies,

Our latest WERN Story to Date highlighting the outcomes you have all contributed towards.

I have also attached the Flood Appeal Flyer which you are encouraged to support through your Club by promoting the combined efforts of WERN's Member Clubs and the strength in numbers when we pull together. Currently, WERN has promises of over \$8,000.00 towards the appeal. Can your Club join our efforts. With a commitment to match \$ for \$ from the District Foundation Committee, please encourage Clubs and members to consider a donation or participate in a community appeal for goods requested.

Please ask your Bulletin Editor to include both Flyers in their Newsletters.

Thank you for your continued support.

Warm Regards,

Ross

Ross Butterworth

Administration Manager, Western Emergency Relief Network (WERN)

## **WERN Facts to share with our Partners:**

- WERN assisted over 9,000 people since commencement;
- To Date: ← Over \$2,000,000 worth of goods donated;  
← 80,000 items provided to families in need; ←
- Almost 26,000 Volunteer Hours provided; &  
← Over 3,100 collections completed.



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## **Western Emergency Relief Network(WERN) Flood appeal**

WERN is supporting efforts to assist residents in both Maribyrnong and Campaspe Local Government Areas.

Many of the families affected by the October floods are struggling and still in temporary accommodation and hundreds more are in caravans with families and because of delays are looking at going through a very cold winter with little to keep them warm.

Rotary is running an urgent appeal to get the goods to families by 1st May 2023. Drop donations off at WERN or call for your nearest collection point.

A Rotary Community Service Project endorsed by D9800

### **Can you help?**

Natural disasters need planning and support for the best outcomes and lessons have taught us families take many months to come to terms with their loss and devastation. The Residents of Maribyrnong and Campaspe are now emerging as ready for our support in a number of ways. WERN is providing that support for those families in need, can you assist through your Networks & Clubs to raise awareness, encourage Volunteering or donate goods or funds?

- 1,000 Doonas and Blankets
  - Single, Double and Queen
- New Pillows & Sheet Sets to match
  
- Fan Heaters
  
- Weed Killer - the weeds are still growing!

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If you are interested in helping please contact our WERN Team led by PDG Ross Butterworth on 0411 228311 or email [administration@wern.org](mailto:administration@wern.org).

Donations can be arranged through [www.wern.org/donations](http://www.wern.org/donations)