

C O N T A C T

President's agenda meeting - July 4 2023

Michael Cariss, as Sergeant, introduced Roger Leask to lead the toast. Roger asked those attending to stand and raise their glasses to commemorate American Independence day and the home of the free.

Michael Cariss then invited our new president Michel Portelli to the podium.



President Michael welcomed all. He especially welcomed potential new members Michelle and Thomas (whose family name I can't recall), and former member Andrew Ha.

President Michael next tabled some apologies, including from Nola Spicer, Regina Davern, Peter Condos and Grant Stephenson.

C O N T A C T

President Michael then introduced a brief get to know you game that involved participants being able to answer questions from other members or guests, without saying yes or no. The aim was to get people to get to know each other a little more than before.

President Michael was impressed that our club was built on strong leadership. This has resulted in, among other things, lots of amazing and ongoing projects in our area. Leading examples are the Essendon Traffic School and the Pioneers' hut on the banks of the Maribyrnong River.

President Michael would love to see each Rotary member using their skills and experiences to help our club and Rotary international to achieve their mission and goals. Each member can put their ideas to their assigned committee. If the Committee sees its value, it can propose it for the Board's consideration.



Sergeant Michael Cariss retook the podium to give a brief rundown on the history of Sergeants with the club. First, the overall role was, and still is, to ensure the smooth and timely running of club meetings.

While managing the timeliness of meetings is necessary, Sergeant Michael also noted that good fun and enjoyment are equally important aspects. One component of good fun is the imposition of fines for poor or incomplete attire —specifically being fined for not wearing the Rotary Badge to meetings.

Sergeant Michael noted that to fulfil this role, information is needed from the floor.

C O N T A C T

President Michael noted that in his year, the Club might bring some of the old things back.

President Michael then detailed his values and aims for his year as president.

President Michael values fellowship with members, and that we treat each other as a family. He values being able to give something back to the community and to help those less fortunate.

President Michael values his vocation where he can use his skills, knowledge and contacts to help others.

He values the history of our club, of our pioneers, of our influence as leaders in the community. President Michael likewise values our ability as a club to talk to people of knowledge and to get things done because of our name as the RCE. Our name can move mountains.

The next topic President Michael addressed was what he as President would like achieve with the contributions and efforts of all club members. He would like to achieve unity in the club through fun and fellowship. Covid put pay to these but we aim to re-stimulate them.

Another aim in Michael's presidential year is to support youth projects. This includes supporting existing programs:

- Educational scholarships
- National Youth Science Forum (NYSF)
- Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)
- Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA)
- Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN)
- Royce Abbey Scholarships

Additionally President Michael would like to look at potential new youth projects. For example he would like our club to support youth sport or activities. A couple of these projects are good posture – check your spine (year nine students); using back packs properly; and skipping.

The BEE HAPPY project has been successful and we could reflect on it.

C O N T A C T

Another area that President Michael would encourage our club to be involved with and to achieve positive outcomes is in supporting the local community. Our work with Carolyn Chisholm society had been successful and should continue. A new program is in the support of upcoming local sports stars.

Strengthening our club fellowship is also on President Michael's like to achieve list.

One such fellowship even t would be to visit Gippsland Rotary to check on the Bushfire region's recovery progress, and our beehive project. Part of this event could be a visit to Alistair Fraser's home town.

A cultural trip to the Mediterranean region —France, Italy, Spain —could also be considered as a way of enhancing fellowship.

President Michael also will seek to identify, with the input of others, the talents of our members and how they might be best used.

Our international projects will also be a focus of attention and achievement. Presode t Michael specified these:

- Myanmar —the stop organ theft program;
- Kenya —the project for Ruben Medical Clinic; a medical waste incinerator; and dental chair and compressor.
- Helping Catherine Scerri and her work in the Phillipines.
- Members support of successful applications for District and International grants by attending relevant work shops/ training sessions.

Fund raising activities feature of Michael's list for attention and achievement. For example, a rubber duck race along the Maribyrnong has been 'floated' by Steve Chandler. Committees will also be asked to explore existing one: e.g. Bunnings sausage sizzles) and dinners at restaurants & c.

President Michael highlighted the club's need for new members. He believes that approaching leaders in industry, education, government and community organisations is a good way of identifying and encouraging new members.

This effort should also help our club to secure great guest speakers from these fields.

C O N T A C T

As well as gaining new members President Michael suggested that we may like to organise some new club awards: for instance, a Rotary legend award.

President Michael also wants new promotional materials to be developed and used: specifically banners, flyers, stickers and hats.



Next Maria Kouppas next presented a wellness report.

Firstly Maria noted that she needs to be advised of unwell members so that she can do what is relevant and helpful.

Confidentiality is important as some members have indicated that the unwellness is a private matter and they do not want it to be publicised.

Recently Maria met with and spoke to the wonderful Pert Rotarian couple who were extremely helpful, kind and generous in their support of Jenny Mann and Peter Mifsud after their caravan accident in outback WA in the middle of last year.

Sergeant Michael Cariss spoke of one of his in our club, being the printing of our annual Directory and a range of other documents. While sorting out some paper work, Michael found the Charter night brochure for our fiftieth charter night in 1985. In that year, the club had 86 members.

C O N T A C T

Michael then spoke of the now non-existent Rotary Youth exchange program and personal experiences thereof.

Under the youth exchange program, a Rotary club agreed to have a local student sent across to a specific other Rotary club overseas, and agreed to host a student from that club. The stay was for a school year. Several families nominated and were selected to house and host the student for an agreed portion of that year.

Michael and Gaye Cariss's first Japanese youth exchange student was Ureka (probably misspelt!) Her father was a teaching professor of gynaecology. Interestingly, Dr. Peter Condos (recently retired) was in the same field. The stay with Gaye and Michael formed the basis of a long term friendship. So much so that Ureka and her mother attended Gaye and Michael's daughter's wedding.

The second Japanese foreign exchange student to stay with Michael and Gaye was Tomako (again apologies for probable misspelling). After finding a local karate teacher (sensei) and school (dojo) to the surprise of Michael and Gaye, she was not a novice but a very skilled black belt karate proponent. Her skills far surpassed those of the local karate sensei and his dojo.

Michael and Gaye also hosted Canadian, American, and Mexican foreign exchange students.



Tony de Fazio then announced that RCE is part of an \$80,000 funded project in the Philippines. The project is to refurbish and extend a wellness centre to support disadvantaged youth in the Philippines.

The following invitation to attend a function on August 22 2023 at the RC of Balwyn provides more information about this wonderful project and how we might help in its fruition.

C O N T A C T

Meeting at RC Balwyn 22 August 2023

Members and guests are invited to join President Michael at the RC Balwyn meeting on Tuesday 22 August at 6pm, cost \$40.

The reason for the visit is to thank the RC Balwyn for the centenary grant received by the Club in December last year.

The grant is in partnership with RC Essendon and RC Leeton Central to refurbish and extend a wellness centre to support disadvantaged youth in the Philippines. Our long term partners Bahay Tuluyan are managing the project in the Philippines.

The grant is \$50,000 with Bahay Tuluyan contributing \$30,000 total project \$80,000.

Catherine Scerri, Executive Director, Bahay Tuluyan will be the guest speaker on 22 August.

Any member wishing to join President Michael at the RC Balwyn meeting on 22 August should contact Shirley Kukk by 15 August. Car pooling will be arranged.

Thanks Tony if you require any addition information do not hesitate to contact me.

Cheers
Shirley Kukk

Upcoming events

- [Maintain your healthy body](#)
Windy Hill
Jul 18, 2023
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- [John Nesci](#)
Windy Hill
Aug 01, 2023
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM
- [Emma Davis](#)
Windy Hill
Aug 15, 2023
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

C O N T A C T

- [Annual General Meeting](#)
Windy Hill
Nov 21, 2023
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- [District Governor's visit](#)
Windy Hill
Nov 28, 2023
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

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