

## Bulletin 25 – 16 January 2020

### DEBS CARLING – HELICOPTER PILOT AND POET



Debs, originally from the UK and a dental therapist, has been living locally for 12 years. After arrival in Australia in 2007 travelling past Williamstown airport an advertisement for helicopter pilot training caught Debs's eye. "I can do that", she thought and after intensive training she began work on 2-6 seat craft conducting Hunter Wine Tours. Seeking greater adventure, she qualified to pilot Bell Helicopters and was employed in shark surveillance along the coast near Newcastle. Seeking further adventure and wider horizons Debs moved to the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. Soon, the vast 425,000 square km of this wonderful part of Australia became

familiar to her. Debs had changed from observation of sharks to the study of crocodiles and she soon learned what the term "wet season" meant. She was responsible for helicopter ferry loops from Whitsundays to Kununurra (via Alice Springs), Bankstown to Kununurra (via Mt Isa) and Kununurra to Lake Eyre (via Alice Springs). She ferried many tourists into this beautiful region with its million years old rock formations and civilisations amongst the oldest on Earth.

Debs described graphically the 12 hour trip along the isolated Gibb River Road from the Mitchell Plateau to Kununurra, a real test for any 4WD vehicle. The journey much along the riverbed over many rocky crossings and unsealed roads was a tooth shattering experience "(especially for a dental therapist)".

Debs was involved in a number of search and rescue missions. One of the most memorable was for a plane which had crashed into a dry Lake Eyre. After locating the missing aircraft and the surviving pilot. Debs decided to land only to sink the copters landing base into the still wet salt pan. She and her rescue crew themselves became the subject of later recovery.

Debs has now moved on from piloting helicopters to writing books, mainly poetry. She has put many of her wonderful flying experiences, observations and feelings into verse which have been published in two books, Bliss and Bliss Two.

Debs provided an appropriate analogy for flying a helicopter. She said that driving a helicopter was like riding a horse. Man and beast become one with controls, responses and feelings being entwined. She described flying home on one occasion with the four doors open, the red dust filtering past and the approach of a giant eagle. She described this feeling as one of merging with nature.

Debs was introduced by Doug Melhuish and thanked by Narelle. Her presentation to our club was a highlight and enjoyed by all.

**Page 2 & 3:** Coming Events, Phill's Story

**Page 4 :** Coming Events, PDG John Glass

**Lucky Winners:**  
H&T; Doug Bairstow  
Raffle: Peter Page

#### **Birthdays this week:**

26 Jan: Ella Clarke  
27 Jan: Ryan Palmer  
28 Jan: Michael Jenkins

#### **Anniversaries:**

20 Jan: John & Yvonne Stuhmcke  
21 Jan: Geoff & Denise Diemar  
26 Jan: Doug & Narelle Melhuish

#### **Member Duties 23 January 2020**

##### **Door:**

Peter Page, Judi Priestley

##### **Meet/Greet:**

Katrina Ridley

##### **Loyal Toast:**

Kathy Rimmer

##### **Grace:**

Helen Ryan

##### **Introduce Speaker:**

Phill Smith

##### **Thank Speaker:**

John Stuhmcke

##### **Bulletin:**

Dieter Greiter

##### **Photos:**

Phill Smith

##### **Binoculars:**

Doug & Jenny Craike.

**Next meeting –John Turner**

**Apologies/Extras to John Crump by noon on Wednesday!**

**Ph 0401 450 239**

**COMING EVENTS**

**Thursday 23 January:** Club Meeting – John Turner

**Saturday 25 January:** Bunnings Barbeque

**Thursday 30 January:** Club Meeting – PDG Helen Ryan – Literacy project proposal

**Saturday Sunday 1-2 February:** Touch Football Carnival and Parking Latitude 1.

**Friday 20 to Sunday 22 March** – District Conference – 16 Footers Club Belmont

**REGULAR EVENTS.**

**First Thursday of each Month:** Dinner Ladies in the Bistro.

**Second Wednesday of each Month:** Project Neighbour at selected locations.

**Third Wednesday of Each Month:** Past & Present Members Morning tea at EVVIVA restaurant.

**PHILL & CHRISTINE'S "HOLIDAY".**

We gave Phill a warm welcome back home to our club. Below Phill has outlined some of his and Christine's adventures over the past ten weeks:

**Holiday!**

Who said it was a **holiday**?

The 3week cushy stint looking after our son's new business turned out to be 10 weeks of flat out, full on work.

The property was in pretty good condition but there were some issues that needed to be addressed.

The first week we were there a lady slipped on wet tiles caused by condensation dripping from an air conditioning unit.

1<sup>st</sup> chore: stop air-conditioning dripping on tiles.

2<sup>nd</sup> chore: treat tiles with non-slip product.

A new chore immediately arose each time the previous one was completed. No time to detail them all and I'm sure they would bore everyone.

It is a nice place if you can get past the humidity. Very laid back – which took a little getting used to. Food and alcohol very expensive.

Finally, on Christmas day our son arrived having settled the sale of his pizza shop.

Daughter Joanne, son-in-law Zac and granddaughter Madeline along with Christine's sister Karen and niece Claire made up our Christmas family – first time we'd all been together at Christmas for many years.

Met some nice people, enjoyed most of the time there.

Thought I might have lost a bit of weight with all the work, but I didn't. At the end of the day a bloke needed 3 or 4 beers just to replenish the lost fluids. Then a few more to help relax.

If you're looking for 5-star luxury, Adam's "CStay" hostel is not for you. It is at the quiet end of the Island at Picnic Bay. Truly lovely.

A bit up market from a back-packers hostel it features private rooms, fridge, wash basin in room and air-conditioning.

We spent several nights in a room and found it comfortable.

Received many compliments from guests on condition of rooms and facilities. It currently enjoys a rating of 9.3 on trip adviser, which is really high.

Pictures are of Picnic Bay Jetty; Picnic Bay swimming nets with Townsville in distance; Sunset at West Point with Adam, Chris, niece Claire, Grand daughter Madeline and myself; and the entrance and the pool.

Regards

Phill





**Look at that! Of course, it was a HOLIDAY. Editor Don.**

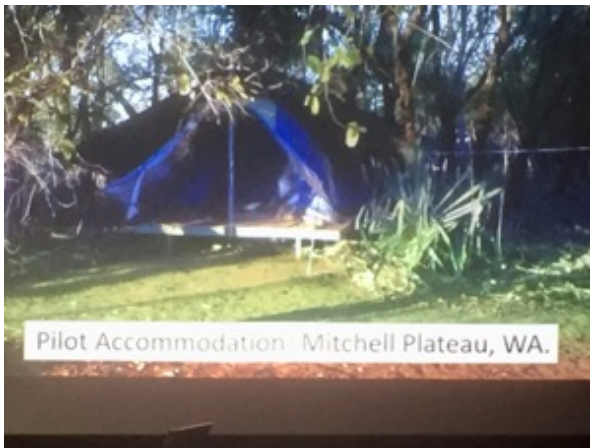


### **CLUB NEWS AND EVENTS.**

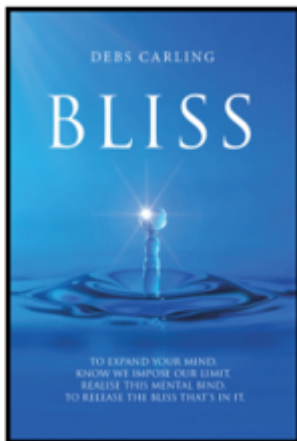
- **BUSHFIRE APPEAL WRAP-UP:** The final figure for community donations to our appeal is \$15,718.95. This total amount will be transferred to the National RAWCS appeal which is being administered collectively by the current Australian Rotary District Governors. This will ensure that our contribution will be available for relief of victims in all fire affected areas throughout Australia and not confined to a specific area. The 2.75% administration fee which will cover such necessary items as bank costs, postage, phone and internet costs etc. will be paid separately to RAWCS. This will ensure that every cent donated by the public will be available as fire relief. This decision was made at our December Board meeting well prior to the appeals commencement. Our club thanks Peter McBean for co-ordinating the appeal on behalf of the Rotary Club of Nelson Bay. Thank you to Charter Hill Shopping Centre Salamander Bay and a big thank you to all members who assisted and contributed.
- **Honorary and Members Morning Tea:** Held the third Wednesday of each month at EVVIVA Restaurant, this event is becoming increasingly popular. Our honorary members look forward to the event and they enjoy keeping in contact with our club and members. Please avail yourself of a very pleasant half hour or so at the next event.
- **BUSY TIME AHEAD:** Community Service Director Milton has plans for our next event complete. The Bunnings Barbeque will be held Saturday 25 January. Those assisting on the AM shift are Phill Smith, Dieter Greiter, Arja Levonpera with transport and set-up by John Stuhmcke. Those rostered on the PM shift are Lesley Freeman, Milton Williams, Chris Bartlett with transport and clean-up by Don Whatham.
- **Touch Football Tournament:** Milton is seeking additional volunteers for the Nelson Bay Touch Football tournament in Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 February. Our club will run the canteen at the main oval both days and possibly be involved with parking. Some assistance will be required with transport of goods and set up on Friday 31 January.
- **Official Opening Latitude 1 Community Clubhouse:** Our club has been invited to provide parking management on Saturday 1 February for the official opening. This will be mainly in the morning and our club will be generously rewarded by Latitude 1. Please contact Milton Williams or Geoff Diemar if you can assist.
- **Yaccaba Women's Refuge Project:** A working bee will be called in the near future to level an approx. 16m square area and the laying of pavers. The area is already fairly level and the pavers on site. More news later when the weather cools.
- **DISTRICT 9670 CONFERENCE:** Coming up soon, Friday 20 to Sunday 22 March at Belmont 16 Footers. Please book ASAP if you have not already done so. Many of our members are staying at the Belmont Tourist Park where van sites and cabins are available. Please inform management that you are part of the conference if you wish to make a booking.

PDG JOHN GLASS: Rotarians throughout our district were saddened by the news of the death of PDG John Glass on 19 December 2019. John served as a member of Rotary International for over 42 years. He was President of the Rotary Club of Newcastle in 1983-1984 and 1995-1996. He was District Governor of District 9670 in 1992-1993. John received Paul Harris Fellow awards in 1987, 1993 and 2014. John served Rotary in Australia through RAM, ROMAC & RAWCS and D9670 as YEP chair and the Rotary Foundation. John's funeral took place at Christ Church Cathedral Newcastle on 13 January 2020



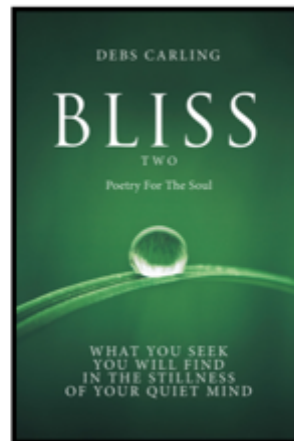


Pilot Accommodation and Arrival & Departure Lounge Mitchell Plateau Kimberley Region Western Australia



*Bliss* in a simple and unique way, shows that the very act of investigating how to quiet the mind is enough for our higher self to show us answers. All that is required is to be open to what floods into that space once it has been created. This experience is simultaneously followed by an enormous sense of wellbeing, reinforcing that one is on the right path.

[Buy The Book](#)



Expand and fill the space with grace! The collection *Bliss Two* seamlessly follows its predecessor, *Bliss*. In simple and unique ways, these poems show how enlightenment comes to us only in the stillness of a quiet mind.

[Buy The Book](#)

Debs presented me with a copy of both her books. I will make these available to all members and I am sure you will enjoy reading her works.



The Rotary Club of Nelson Bay at work and at Leisure.