



Bulletin # 32, 25th February 2021

Salvaging BHP's "Pulang Lupa"

Our speaker tonight was our own Milton Williams, who entertained us with his real-life story of rescuing this BHP ship that ran aground in the Suez Canal in 1997. As Richard Turner said it was like something from "Boy's Own Adventures".

Milton commenced his maritime career with BHP as a junior seagoing engineer, rising to chief engineer, supervising engineer and finally fleet manager of 12 bulk carriers.

In Jan 1997 he received a phone call to be advised that the Pulang Lupa had run aground in the Suez Canal. He immediately jumped on a plane and made his way to Cairo – and on to his accommodation (by the sound of it one star accommodation) – following a hair-raising night-time taxi trip with no lights!

To make things more interesting it was Ramadan, meaning alcohol was non-existent and food was very basic.

The grounding was mainly the fault of the pilot who left the ship early without giving the captain sufficient information to safely enter the canal after leaving Port Said.

Instructions were given to the captain not to do anything until Milton arrived. But the Port Authority new better and ordered two large tugs to attempt to free this ship while the ship was ordered to assist by starting its engines. The result was create a large hole under the stern and tearing off the rear of the ship.

Loaded with 150,000 tons of ore, 30,000 tons needed to be off-loaded in order to re-float. Unfortunately, the only method available was to transfer 1 ton at a time! Eventually the ship was re-floated but not before Miltons passport needed replacing. On a trip to the Australian Embassy, he was advised by the ambassador to formulate an extraction plan. (The area was very politically charged at the time). Once afloat Milton was quietly advised to make himself scarce and with his team raced of to the airport where they caught the first plane out and didn't look back until they found themselves in a London pub where they caught up on their 5 week "dry".

Milton's presentation was well received with many questions following. It must have been a great adventure. Unfortunately, there were too many side stories to report here (similar to the taxi ride).

Hopefully, Milton will return to elaborate on some of these at a later date.



In this Bulletin:

Pg.2: A special toast, End Trachoma, Golf Day, Coming up

Birthdays 26/2 –4 /3

28/2 Jenny Craike

2/3 Chris Smith

Anniversaries

None this week

Heads and Tails: Milton Williams

Raffle: Lesley Freeman

Next meeting

4th March

Door: Milton Williams/
Peter Arena

Grace: Doug Bairstow

Intro Speaker: Ian Brigden

Thank Speaker: Ella Clarke

Bulletin: John Cropley

Photos: Phill Smith

Binoculars:

Milton Willaims

Next meeting – Carolyn Virgona – Port Stephens Community Arts Centre

Apologies/Extras to noon on Wednesday!

Ph 0401 450 239

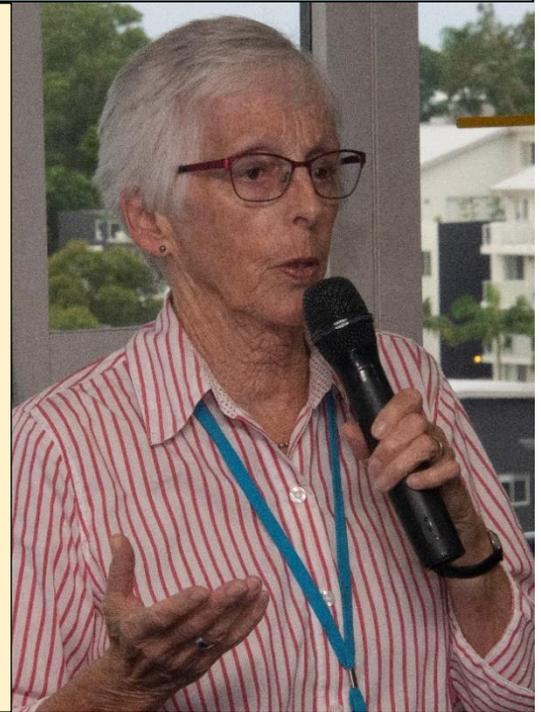
A Special Toast

Rotary has had a long working relationship with organisations like the United Nations, UNICEF, WHO and Gates Foundation. Through youth programs like RYLA, RYPEN, YEP and humanitarian funding for water, sanitation, disease and educational programs Rotary has changed the lives of millions of people around the world.

Locally we have supported projects such as literacy in schools, the Tomaree College, the Yacaaba Centre, Gan Gan lookout and Fly Point to name a few.

With Rotary in Australia celebrating its centenary this year Helen invited us to raise a glass... to Rotary International.

"This is a changing world; We must be prepared to change with it. The story of Rotary will have to be written again and again". said Paul Harris in 1935.



End Trachoma Raffle

Raffle tickets in the wheelbarrow full of tools will be available soon for the end Trachoma fundraiser. It will be a short campaign with the winner being drawn at a joint social luncheon at Murrays Brewery with Salamander, Raymond Terrace and Williamtown on Saturday 10th April. No cover charge - pay for your own meals everything.

Please let Warwick Mathieson know if you are going. (Murrays need to have an idea of numbers).

Raffle proceed will go to providing toiletries bags to Northern Territory Children



Up-coming Golf Day on March 26th.

Golf Committee Chair Arja Levonpera reported that she is expecting 80 to 100 entrants, but as usual entries are coming in slowly. Sponsorships have been good considering the past twelve months.

Coming up:

- 1st & 2nd March: Mherv van at Salamander Centre
- 4th March: Dinner meeting Speaker Carolyn Vergona – Port Stephens Community Arts Centre. *"Dinner Ladies" meet in Marlins Bistro*
- 10th March: Board meeting
- 11th March: Club meeting. Address by Area governor Christine Walmsley.
- 20th March: Assist SES with Bunnings BBQ
- 26th March: Golf Day (no dinner meeting Thursday 25th March)