

Changeover Speech – Jan Palmer, 2020-21 President

When I was asked to be president of our club 4 years ago little did we know I would be diagnosed with bowel cancer in November 2019. I had no symptoms, so this came as a great shock to me, Doug, my friends, and family. Luckily, I was operated on quickly and am lucky enough, and although I still have ongoing issues at this stage, I appear to be cancer free because of the early diagnosis. Doug and I are now advocates of “Early detection saves lives” and spend a lot of time fundraising for Bowel Cancer NZ.

Not wanting to “hide in a cupboard” I decided to continue with my upcoming role as President for the 2020/2021 rotary year.

I could not have done this without Doug’s support and the support of a lot of club members and Loperamide!

Special members of the club who helped get me through include:

Brian Clarke who was my mentor and reminded me to take my medication when I arrived at Rotary each week.

Glenda Barratt who received a copy of my weekly running sheet to give to someone else to run the meeting if I didn’t make it over to run the meeting or had to leave the meeting in a hurry.

Richard Perry who was on guard to take over at short notice if necessary.

Having made it through to the end of my year relatively unscathed, I am pleased to hand the baton to Anne.

I’m looking forward to attending meetings and being a lot more relaxed.

I have enjoyed guiding the ship through my year and I feel we, as a club have achieved a lot despite covid 19.

We have enjoyed a lot of great guest speakers. I thank Linda and Glenda for their hard work.

The visit by the American Ambassador Scott Brown and his wife Gail was a highlight for me. A special thank you to Annette Ruck who started the planning for the visit but covid got in the way and to Linda Goss Wallace for eventually making it happen.

I believe the committees have worked well this year despite limitations around fundraising due to covid.

I thank the members who took part in the various collections, often in trying conditions.

I thank Colin Alford who prepared the overheads for various slide show presentations I wanted to make.

I thank Absie for taking over the preparation of the roster when our colleague Michael Jameson could no longer do it. We were all devastated to lose Michael, one of our very valued members.

I thank the members who assisted with RYDA on two occasions. This has become one of my passions and I look forward to encouraging other rotary clubs and colleges in the Hutt Valley to get involved in this very important event.

I am confident if we can help young people drive more cautiously, we will surely save lives, maybe one of us!

I thank Richard Perry and members who took part in the Riverbank clean up, the planting of trees and the provision of the Dave Comparini Memorial seat.

Thank you to John Matthews and his team who arranged last Christmas trailer raffle. A special thank you to Kathy Bryant who arranged to have eftpos at the stand. I am sure this helped raise more funds for community groups in the Hutt Valley.

I thank Richard Perry for arranging our club's participation in the annual "Ride the Train for Polio" event. It was a great day.

I thank Richard, Sue & Wim for arranging the very successful wine tasting evening raising almost \$5000 for the whanau rooms at the soon to be opened Wellington Children's Hospital.

I thank Shelley Bryant and James Wheeler for arranging the very successful Walk for Mental Health. I thank John Matthews for sponsoring the advertising for Walk for Mental Health. In excess of \$5000 was raised from the walk going to Youthline – a very worthwhile cause.

I thank Shelley Bryant and Paul Giles for the organising and running of Healthy in the Hutt. Thank you to the members who assisted in the running of the day.

A special thank you to Shelley's husband Paul for his help in the running of this event.

Thank you to Jaye and the members who assisted with the Hutt Tryathlon.

Thank you to Margaret McIver who contacted me about the need for fridges for the family areas in the medical ward at Hutt hospital. Thank you to Inner Wheel who provided the funding for one of the fridges.

It was great to have Madi Arps represent our club at RYLA and come and tell us about it afterwards.

I was pleased to present the Eastern Hutt Rotary scholarship to Niamh Cusin, Head Girl at Naenae College in November.

It was great to receive a donation of \$1000 from Hai Tran, a previous student of Naenae college and a recipient of the scholarship 8-9 years ago. This will be put towards next year's scholarship.

I was very disappointed that we had to postpone the golf tournament at Shandon Golf Course in November because of the lack of entries.

I wish to thank John Matthews, Paddy Wells and Brian Lummis for the work they did towards the event. O hope incoming president Anne and her team can find another way to run the golf tournament.

As you can see, we were a very busy club achieving a lot despite Covid 19.

My hope for the future is that we continue our good work assisting folk in our community.

I also hope also that we will do a better job of letting the community know what we do. At the moment it largely goes unnoticed.

I was disappointed we were not able to attract new members during my presidency. Each and every one of us must all take responsibility for growing our numbers so that our club survives into the future.

Thank you to Brian Klee for his work as Bulletin Editor and his efforts in establishing a satellite club.

Hopefully, this coming rotary year he will be successful. Thank you also Brian for your patience whilst I learnt how to use Club Runner. No easy feat!

I thank the almoners, Robin Fenwick, Ron Hunter, and Glenda Barratt for your great work in supporting our members who were unwell.

Lastly how lucky are we to have David Thompson, our secretary, Tony Cornelius, our treasurer, and Ron Hunter, the "go to" person for everything. They are all outstanding members whom we could not do without. Thank you so much for the outstanding contribution you make in the running of our fabulous club.

I thank each and every one of you for your support during my presidential year, often in trying times.

Doug said to me a while ago "I've often wondered over the years why you choose to drive to the Hutt most Mondays for rotary for the last 22 years. Now I know why. They are a very special bunch" I can only but agree.

I would like to wish Anne and her incoming board the very best and I hope you have a great year.