

Chapter 1

Club Service

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How Our Club Was Chartered

Rotary International

First Rotary Meeting
Chicago, USA
23 February 1905

RC of Melbourne

First Club in Australia
Chartered 21 April 1921

RC of Hawthorn

Chartered by
Melbourne
24 August 1953

RC of Camberwell

Chartered by
Hawthorn
2 November 1956

RC of Balwyn

Chartered by
Camberwell
7 September 1972

RC of North Balwyn

Chartered by Balwyn
8 May 1980

DG Jack Nankervis
Special Representative
PP Duncan McKenzie



The Beginnings

Early in 1979-80, District Governor J. R. (Jack) Nankervis of the Rotary Club of Melbourne North made two critical decisions. The first was to request the Rotary Club of Balwyn to sponsor a new Rotary club based in the North Balwyn area and the second was to ask P.P. J.D. (Duncan) McKenzie to be his special representative to oversee the formation of the new club.

Duncan invited a group of proposed members to an inaugural “interest” meeting at the North Balwyn Senior Citizens’ Centre in Marwal Avenue, North Balwyn on Thursday 10 April. Some 40 of them came to the meeting where Duncan and members of the Balwyn Club explained their intention to set-up a new club and invited those present to become Charter Members.

Encouraged by the active interest shown, heightened by the fact that many of those present had already been members of APEX, Duncan invited those interested to a second “Interest” meeting. This meeting was rather an “organisational” meeting and was held on 24 April. Prior to this meeting Duncan, together with proposed Charter President Stan Hibbert, had identified a possible Board of Directors for the new club and this proposed Board was introduced to the “members”. Thirty-three of the proposed members accepted the invitation and an application was made to Rotary International to charter the new club.

Subsequently three of the 33 dropped out and the number of Charter Members (who are identified elsewhere in the list of all members) became 30. These Charter Members were residents of the North Balwyn area and were largely unknown to one another. All but one had no Rotary experience, the exception being John Robson who had been a member of the Rotary Club of Claremont in Tasmania, and John became Charter Treasurer.

The “Provisional Rotary Club of North Balwyn” now came into being and the Club was to meet on Thursday evening each week at 6.00pm for 6.15pm at Marwal Avenue, starting on 1 May 1980. At this meeting the first guest speaker was a Rotarian, Ron Tudor of Fable Records, who spoke on the recording industry in Australia.

The signed Charter was received on 8 May at which time the word “Provisional” was dropped from the club’s title and we officially became the “Rotary Club of North Balwyn”.

The Charter Board, which was appointed to serve through to 30 June 1981, was:

Directors			
President	Stan Hibbert	Fellowship	David Stockman
Vice President	Geoff Clark		
Secretary	Bill Kneale	Community Service	Fred Pike
Treasurer	John Robson	International	
Sergeant	Paul Fitz	Service	Graham Foard
Bulletin Editor	Rob Essery	Vocational Service	Jim Burkhalter
Program	Ken Proposch	Youth Service	Patrick Culshaw

*President Ted Gillies
of sponsor club
Balwyn with P.P.
Duncan McKenzie,
the DG's Special
Representative.*



The formalities of setting up the Club were completed at a Charter Presentation Night held at the Camberwell Civic Centre on Thursday, 29 May 1980. As president of the sponsoring club Balwyn, Ted Gillies chaired the meeting. The Rotary Club of Balwyn had performed magnificently in setting up our new club in the record time of just four weeks from the first "interest" meeting until receipt of our Charter. DG Jack Nankervis presented the Charter of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn to Charter President Stan Hibbert

Present at the Charter Presentation were:

- The Mayor and Mayoress of Camberwell, Councillor Jim Rumpf and Ivy,
- DG Jack Nankervis and his wife Marjorie,
- DG's Special Representative P.P. Duncan McKenzie,
- Representatives of 44 of the other 51 clubs then in our District,
- Representatives of two Rotaract clubs, and
- Many of the wives of the 28 Charter Members present for the occasion.

Following this Charter Presentation Night, the Club settled down to regular meetings at the Senior Citizens' Centre each Thursday. President Stan had announced that this was to be the Club's venue and that his theme for the year was to be "Fellowship and Communication".

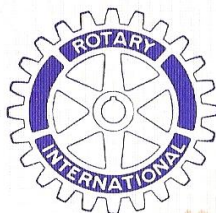


*Charter President Stan Hibbert and Bev with
DG Jack Nankervis and Marj about to greet
Charter Members of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn*

The Original Program on Presentation of Charter

ROTARY CLUB OF NORTH BALWYN

R.I. DISTRICT 980



Service Above Self

Presentation

OF

CHARTER

CAMBERWELL CITY HALL

THURSDAY 29th May 1980

J.R. (JACK) NANKERVIS
District Governor

J.D. (DUNCAN) McKENZIE
Governor's Special Representative

List of Office Bearers

District Governor:

J.R. (JACK) NANKERVIS, Rotary Club of Melbourne North

Sponsor Club:

ROTARY CLUB OF BALWYN

Governor's Special Representative:

J.D.(DUNCAN) McKENZIE, Rotary Club of Balwyn.

Organisational Meeting 24th April, 1980
Club Admitted to R.I. 8th May 1980
Charter Presented 29th May, 1980

Officers:

President STAN HIBBERT
Vice-President GEOFF CLARK
Secretary BILL KNEALE
Treasurer JOHN ROBSON

Directors:

JIM BURKHALTER	FRED PIKE
PATRICK CULSHAW	KEN PROPOSCH
GRAHAM FOARD	DAVID STOCKMAN

Sergeant-at-Arms:

PAUL FITZ

CLUB MEETS EVERY THURSDAY 6.15 p.m.
at SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRE
MARWAL AVE, NORTH BALWYN.

History of North Balwyn

The first name of the District was in fact Boroondara which in the native language means 'shady place'.

As Melbourne grew many wealthy settlers retreated to the quiet of the outer suburbs.

Among those who came across the Yarra bridge at Hawthorn, built in 1851 to replace the punt, was Andrew Murray editor of the 'Argus', also a vigneron, who named the mud brick house he built 'Balwyn', the name said to come from the Gaelic 'bal' and the Saxon 'wyn' means home of the vine.

In 1901 there were barely twenty houses in North Balwyn. The new suburb was described as a mixture of expensive suburban houses with beautiful gardens and decaying dairy farms and orchards with tumbled down fences awaiting the inevitable subdivision.

By 1938 trams were running along Doncaster Road, to Balwyn Road leaving the way open to Balwyn and North Balwyn particularly to expand.

THE FOUR-WAY TEST

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Programme

7.00 P.M. — FELLOWSHIP

7.45 P.M. — CALL TO ORDER

WAL REEVES - Sergeant-at-Arms Rotary Club of Balwyn

8 P.M. — INVOCATION

KEN PROPOSCH, Rotary Club of North Balwyn

Toast — 'ROTARY INTERNATIONAL' — Chairman

WELCOME TO OFFICIAL PARTY, VISITING ROTARIANS
AND GUESTS

GREETINGS AND APOLOGIES—ROLL CALL

GEOFF CLARK, Vice-President Rotary Club of North Balwyn

RESPONSE

Mayor of Camberwell, Cr. J.W. RUMPF

REPORT BY GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

PAST PRES. DUNCAN McKENZIE, Rotary Club of Balwyn

ADDRESS AND PRESENTATION OF CHARTER

District Governor JACK NANKERVIS

INTRODUCTION OF CHARTER MEMBERS OF ROTARY
CLUB OF NORTH BALYWN

President STAN HIBBERT

ACCEPTANCE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CHARTER

President STAN HIBBERT

PRESENTATION OF BANNERS & OTHER GIFTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GIFTS

BILL KNEALE, Secretary Rotary Club of North Balwyn

PRESENTATION OF WEMBLY SHIELD

President RUSSELL SMITH, Rotary Club of Ashburton

CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

Menu

SOUP

Creme of Chicken

MAIN COURSE

Chicken Supreme Portuguese

or

*Roast Prime Sirloin of Beef
with three vegetables*

DESSERT

Apple Strudel with Fresh Cream

or

Cassate Italienne with Fresh Cream

Coffee and Mints

Object of Rotary

THE OBJECT OF ROTARY is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:-

FIRST. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND. High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD. The application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal, business and community life;

FOURTH. The advancement of international understanding, good will, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional men united in the ideal of service.



Fellowship Chairman DAVID STOCKMAN

Program KEN PROPOSCH

International Service GRAHAM FOARD

Youth Service PATRICK CULSHAW

Vocational Service JIM BURKHALTER

Community Service FRED PIKE

Members

BURKHALTER Jim (Lisla)	Photographic Goods- Manufacturing	Home: 859 5300 Bus: 350 1222
CARNELL Ron (Betty)	Air Transport	Home: 857 7981 Bus: 339 4068
CASEY Brian	Quantity Surveying	Home: 857 7099 Bus: 861 7736
CLARK Geoff (Dorothy)	Importing Textile Machinery	Home: 857 5833 Bus: 347 1977
CLEARY Peter (Pat)	Real Estate Valuation	Home: 857 5368 Bus: 80 2334
CULSHAW Patrick (Bronwyn)	Fastener Manufacturing	Home: 857 9153 Bus: 429 1422
MERRICK Daniel (Mary)	Hardware Retailing	Home: 857 6801 Bus: 857 6801
DAWSON Arthur (Josephine)	Banking - Administration	Home: 857 5938 Bus: 63 0171
ESSERY Rob (Pamela)	Marketing-Mailing Order Service	Home: 857 9900 Bus: 798 6055
ETKINS John (Johnnie)	Insurance Broking	Home: 859 4070 Bus: 859 4070
FITZ Paul (Susan)	Wool Marketing	Home: 857 5088 Bus: 341 9111
FOARD Graham (Gwenda)	Time Systems	Home: 857 6630 Bus: 699 3055
HIBBERT Stan (Beverley)	Graphic Art-Lithography	Home: 859 8092 Bus: 428 1925
JANE Graham (Moir)	Civil Works Construction	Home: 857 6268 Bus: 268 0209
KNEALE Bill (Norma)	Local Government Engineering	Home: 859 1418 Bus: 819 2444
LEE Ralph (Lorna)	Stock Exchange	Home: 857 6780 Bus: 62 0241
LEWIS Mervyn (Sara)	Liquor Retailing	Home: 859 9102 Bus: 859 6032
LINER Ron (Helen)	Wallpaper Retailing	Home: 857 7391 Bus: 857 8012
MAUNDER Kevin (Betty)	Wine & Spirit Marketing	Home: 859 8548 Bus: 64 3821
MUNTWYLER Marcel (Anne)	External Sun Shading Awnings	Home: 859 5595 Bus: 88 2965
McCONCHIE Vern (Shirley)	Paper Manufacturing	Home: 857 9591 Bus: 62 0171
PIKE Fred (Gwendolite)	House Painting & Decorating	Home: 857 7596 Bus: 875 7596
PROPOSCH Ken (Gwen)	Commonwealth Service- Housing & Construction	Home: 857 9282 Bus: 810 1446
SCHEIBER Helmut (Gudrun)	Building Construction	Home: 80 3429 Bus: 662 1766
SMITH Bernie (Ursula)	Building Renovations	Home: 857 7661 Bus: 857 7661
STEINICKE Geoff (Judith)	Health Foods - Importing	Home: 89 2102 Bus: 89 2102
STOCKMAN David (June)	Plumbing - Contracting	Home: 80 2364 Bus: 80 2364
WILLSHIRE David (Patricia)	Law - Barristers	Home: 857 8611 Bus: 67 3382
WILSON Bruce (Elizabeth)	Mens Suit Manufacturing	Home: 857 9998 Bus: 41 6066
WING YOUNG Tom (Norma)	Take-Away Foods - Chinese	Home: 857 5589 Bus: 861 7636
ROBSON John (Chesley)	Automotive Servicing	Home: 859 8588 Bus: 88 0748
RAMSAY Eric (Christine)	Accountancy	Home: 859 8552 Bus: 614 1200

Membership

How big should our Rotary Club be? How frequently have we discussed this question at our Club Forums? Some people say that we should aim to increase membership by at least 10% each year and certainly it is necessary to induct sufficient new members each year to ensure that we do not decline by natural attrition.

There can be no doubt that the most important consideration must always be the quality of the membership and providing, any club has enough members to operate effectively, there is no prescribed minimum or maximum. As any club grows larger the club administration faces a challenge to ensure that new members are integrated rapidly and that the channels of communication are effectively maintained and improved.

As a club, we must also recognise that we are all growing older and this in itself has implications that must be addressed if we are to remain the vibrant and active club that is our recognised identity.

There is still much to do to address our gender imbalance. The “great debates” of earlier years, particularly those that occurred in 1988-89, and again in 1991-92, recognised that an evolution had taken place. The delightful birthday night skit when “Susie Wong” (aka Clive Hughes) was “inducted” as our “first lady member” did much to overcome entrenched attitudes (refer to “Changeover Nights” for photo).

Our first “true” lady member was inducted in 1996 when we welcomed our past Rotaract President and GSE Team member Maria Moffat. Since then we have welcomed an increasing number of ladies into membership of our Club. However, we still have a long way to go to redress the club’s gender imbalance.

Another area that has created concern is the length of time that is sometimes taken between the date on which a prospective member is first invited to the Club and the time at which the subsequent induction ceremony takes place. Inevitably, this time is generally greater when the prospective new member has had no previous association with service clubs or, in particular, has little appreciation of the time commitment involved in becoming an effective Rotarian.

However, how’s this for a “quickie”? Brian Hurnard was first inducted into our Club on 28/09/89. Areta and Brian departed for “12 months” in England in March 1993 but after several months Brian was unable to find a suitable club to join and resigned from Rotary. They arrived back in Melbourne on Sunday, 3 March 1996 and Brian was re-inducted into the Club on Thursday, 7 March, and all formalities had been completed!!

With the exception of some minor variations, our membership figures indicate steady growth until the most recent two years. However, although no age profile has been discussed, there is a growing consciousness that “we are not as young as we used to be”!

To underline the importance placed by Rotary International on membership, it was recommended to all clubs that “Membership and Public Relations” be made a board portfolio. Our Club implemented this recommendation in 2007-2008.

The following table summarises our membership growth record since the club was chartered in May 1980

Year	Open				Close
	Active	Hon.	Inductions	Resignations	
1979-81	31		5	1	35
1981-82	35		7	7	35
1982-83	35		10	6	39
1983-84	39		12	1	50
1984-85	50		9 + 1H	5	54 + 1H
1985-86	54	1	9 + 1H	4	59 + 2H
1986-87	59	2	9	5	63 + 2H
1987-88	63	2	4	8	59 + 2H
1988-89	59	2	15	4	70 + 2H
1989-90	70	2	6	3	73 + 2H
1990-91	73	2	2	8	67 + 2H
1991-92	67	2	6 + 1H	4	69 + 3H
1992-93	69	3	5	8	66 + 3H
1993-94	66	3	4	3	67 + 3H
1994-95	67	2	6	4	69 +3H
1995-96	69	3	5 + 1H	2	72 + 4H
1996-97	72	4	6	5	73 + 4H
1997-98	73	4	4 + 1H	2	75 + 4H
1998-99	75	5	8	4	79 + 5H
1999-00	79	5	6 – 1H	1	84 + 4H
2000-01	84	4	10	9	85 + 4H
2001-02	85	4	9	9	85 + 4H
2002-03	85	4	7 + 1H	6	86 + 5H
2003-04	86	5	4	3	87 + 5H
2004-05	87	5	9 +1H	3	93 + 6H
2005-06	93	6	5 – 2H	4	94 + 4H
2006-07	94	4	1 + 1H	4	91 + 5H
2007-08	91	5	8 + 2H	10	89 + 7H
2008-09	89	7	3 – 5H	5	87 + 2H
2009 Dec	87	2	1	4	84 + 2H

Friends of Rotary

Early in 2008, the Membership Committee, under the Chairmanship of PDG John Reddish, proposed to the Board the concept of 'Friends of Rotary.'

Recognising that, while not everyone in our community can become a member of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn, there are many who share our ideals of service and our ethical objectives.

The Friends program is intended to provide an avenue of participation to those people who cannot or may not wish to join the Club as a Rotarian but who still wish to promote Rotary ideals in our community and maintain links with the Club.

Friends of the RCNB are to be kept up-to-date with Club activities and projects, and be invited to participate in and contribute to them.

Former members of the Club are also encouraged through Friends to connect once again with Rotary, but the program should not be seen as a substitute for Rotary membership. Former Rotarians are welcome to become Friends of the RCNB 12 months after their resignation, or as varied by the Club President and Board.

It was agreed that Friends membership would only happen by invitation from Club members, and subsequent acceptance by the Board.

Unfortunately PDG John became ill and resigned from full Rotary membership. The Friends proposal, however, was well received by the Board and when PDG Greg Ross took up chairing the Membership Committee in 2008/09, the Friends program was implemented.

The inaugural Friends of the RCNB meeting took place on 28th August 2008. The following people joined the program: Roger & Pauline Benallack, Mary Dickens, Alan Elliott, Alan & Pam Fabry, Geoff & Norma Griffiths, Don Haycraft, Ron Liner, Sean McGowan, Tony & Dianne McLean, Barry Mitchell & Sallyanne Skeggs, Gerard Munnink, Reg Parsons, Geoff & Margaret Perdriau, Peter & Jean Rive, Debbie & Darren Rumble, Rod & Sue Savage, John & Annette Thwaites and Tom & Norma Wing Young.

Meeting Venues -- Where Have We Met Before?

When the Club was established it was decided that the home meeting place would be the Senior Citizens' Centre in Marwal Avenue but several other venues were also used. The meeting at which the Club Charter was presented was held at the Camberwell Civic Centre and these two venues were our "fall back" venues for special occasions.

After some time the Club moved to the Dragon Seed Restaurant as our "home" from 4th February 1982, but a change of management hastened our need to move on.

Next came the move to The Sentimental Bloke Motel in Bulleen with permanent effect from 5 August 1982, and although this was technically out of D980, as it was then, it still remained our home for eight years. Mind you we had our ups and downs at the "Bloke"

and the quality of meals latterly left something to be desired. In spite of the efforts of our Club Service Directors, and those who preferred vegetarian meals, the meals were frequently well below an acceptable level.

The move to Argenti Receptions adjacent to what is now the site of the Doncaster Road entry to the Eastern Freeway, took place on 21 June 1990. We remained at Argenti's until its closure, (to permit the Eastern Freeway construction) forced a further change of venue, resulting in our move to The Kew Golf Club.

No one who was in the Club during our period at Argenti's will ever forget the momentous official visit of DG Gordon McKern on 19th Nov 1992 in President Tony McLean's year when the heavens opened and Argenti's was wet both inside and out! Argenti's served us very well with generally very good meals but a sound system in the main room which needed attention. Mind you, when meetings were held in the side room, noise level was frequently a problem. Last meeting at Argenti's was 27 January 1994.

The Kew Golf Club, since 3 February 1994, has proved a very good venue for general Club meetings even though some members have at times chosen to enter the upper car park from the wrong side! Having many of our members who are also members of The Kew Golf Club has, at times, been of great assistance. The greatest problem at Kew is that during the summer months some of our members concentrate on the progress up the 18th rather than what is going on in our meeting!

Special occasions such as Changeover nights have on occasions been held at other venues such as Greenacres Golf Club, the Veneto Club, the Manningham Club, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel and the Box Hill Golf Club, but while our increasing numbers can be accommodated, we are likely to continue to enjoy the ambience that The Kew Golf Club provides.

The Weekly Newsletter

For the first five years after charter, the Club's newsletter was called the Weekly Bulletin. In 1984-85 the then president, John Reddish, ran a contest to come up with a better name and Paul Fitz won it with 'Grapevine' and received first prize of a set of Rotary cuff-links. At the time, the symbol which the Club used on its newsletter and banner was a bunch of grapes to represent Balwyn as the name 'Balwyn' was derived from the Gaelic 'bal' and the Saxon 'wyn' meaning the 'home of the grape'. The 'Grapevine' is an efficient way of disseminating information so the name 'Grapevine' married the two concepts together.

NBTT

Peter Courtney: (Fining four of our female members for all wearing red on the same night) "When I was at Teachers' College, the ladies were specifically instructed not to wear red because it would inflame the passions of the men"

Ted Wilkins (as Sergeant): "Peter, I think the ladies of this club have nothing to fear"

Editing the Grapevine

While it is still a time consuming job, today's Grapevine editors have certain advantages associated with the modern electronic age which certainly speed up the process—tools such as word processing, desk top publishing, Excel, digital photographs, use of colour and transmission by email. However, these were not available in the earlier years of the Club and the process used by the editors in those times was certainly far more convoluted.

Back then, the process was similar to the old ways of editing a newspaper. The articles needed to be typed and, together with diagrams, photos (black and white), cut out caricatures and cartoon figures, etc, were cut and pasted, mostly by sticky tape, onto A4 sheets. Some of the articles could be prepared in advance, such as Rotary information material, but other input could not be written until after each meeting. Each edition was put together over the weekend as the finished copy needed to be delivered to Ralph Lee's home by Sunday night. Ralph would take it into his office at the Stock Exchange on Monday morning where it would be photocopied, folded and collated into a front cover and then posted out to each member and selected District representatives.

As is the case today, the editors received a great sense of achievement and pride, much the same as a newspaper or magazine editor would, with each weekly edition. They generally improved the production techniques as the year unfolded and no editor has ever begrudged the time consumed in producing the Club's most important information vehicle.

One editor, Findley Cornell did encounter a problem with "Letters to the Editor" – a regular feature of the Grapevine until he made the mistake of publishing the following letter:-

Dear Findley,

I am moved to write to you as Editor of the North Balwyn Rotary Club's weekly Grapevine, in the belief that my letter should be printed, in the public interest, in the next available issue.

I wish to see that an end is made to the gross distortion and misrepresentation of truth by our present Sergeant who, being a lawyer, should be well aware of the penalties for character assassination.

Members and, importantly, their partners, will recall the reference during the fines session on 22nd April to the practice of gentlemen leaving the toilet seat UP after use. The Sergeant clearly stated that the writer was such a person, an allegation which caused a number of ladies to approach the writer's wife after the meeting to express their sadness that she too was married to such an ignorant person. Embarrassment to both the writer and his wife was intense and painful.

The truth could not have been more harshly distorted.

The matter arose as a result of the recent Club Fishing Weekend, during which, at least one of the writer's guests (the two lady members staying in the house are, naturally, under no suspicion) failed, after each of his (or their) several and regular visits to the facilities, on all occasions, to replace the seat in a down position.

Whilst no names will be mentioned, this practice, the writer considers, shows a total lack of consideration for the rights of others, a lack of breeding, and a sad absence of manners.

Hence, to be accused, publicly and volubly, of such an inconsiderate and disgusting habit, is, the writer believes, sufficient to expect that an apology of an equally public and voluble nature be made without delay, qualification or attempt at self justification.

In the absence of such, the writer will find it necessary to seek alternative remedial action elsewhere.

Your publishing this missive, Mr. Editor, will be both appreciated and expected without delay.

Many thanks,

Signed (name withheld at authors request).

The reaction of members was unbelievable! President Bruce McIver's phone rang hot; more than one member came close to resigning at the prospect of one member suing another member; the editor received both calls of support and condemnation; and, in the end, to "calm the storm", the author of the letter made an abject apology for his peculiar brand of humour at the next partners' night. The episode also signalled the end of "Letters to the Editor!"

In recognition of the efforts required to produce the "Grapevine", week in, week out, here are the names of those who took on this onerous role:-

Past Grapevine Editors

Year	Grapevine Editor	Year	Grapevine Editor
1980 – 1981	Rob Essery	1995 – 1996	Geoff Steinicke
1981 – 1982	Ken Proposch	1996 – 1997	Anthony Stokes
1982 – 1983	John Etkins	1997 – 1998	Brian Hurnard
1983 – 1984	Paul Fitz	1998 – 1999	Findley Cornell
1984 – 1985	John Etkins	1999 – 2000	Peter Elliott
1985 – 1986	Peter Kagan	2000 – 2001	John Gartlan
1986 – 1987	Ron Phillips	2001 – 2002	Geoff Steinicke
1987 – 1988	Stan Hibbert	2002 – 2003	Delina Schembri-Hardy
1988 – 1989	John Thwaites	2003 – 2004	John Rennie
1989 – 1990	Geoff Perdriau	2004 – 2005	John Rennie
1990 – 1991	Peter Cairns	2005 – 2006	John McBride
1991 – 1992	Ray Zuccala	2006 – 2007	John McBride
1992 – 1993	Bill Kneale	2007 – 2008	Graeme Bird
1993 – 1994	John Reddish	2008 – 2009	Graeme Bird
1994 – 1995	Dick Johnson	2009 – 2010	John Cook

The Rotary Club of North Balwyn Web Site

The idea of a web site was formally introduced to clubs at the 1997 District Assembly when DG Jeff Bird championed the idea of every club in the District having its own web site and email link. President John Thwaites nominated Dick Johnson as the Club's representative in computer matters. At the time the concept of a web site seemed good, particularly in view of the fact that Vicnet was providing free hosting and that the Club would only be charged a one off fee of \$50.

Nevertheless, the idea had a difficult passage through the Club and while there was considerable support for an email account, established through the Camberwell ISP, Netspace On-Line Systems, the Board rejected the creation of a website on two occasions. It was hard for some to picture in their minds the benefits of something so totally unfamiliar. Dick retired with some disappointment to visit his mother in NSW; but while he was away a web site miraculously materialised on the Vicnet server in our Club's name.

Dick quickly transformed the site to suit our needs despite a great deal of huffing and puffing about how this had come to be. As it turned out, we were promoting our "Riverdance" concert at the time and the web site gave us a free outlet on which to promote it. This was the turning point in the acceptance of the site as a useful addition to the Club's publicity.

In the 21st Century, the website has become an increasing centre of information for Club members. An apology for non-attendance via the website is now the preferred form of advice. Members can also advise of guests they are bringing, partner attendance, longer periods of absence and the attendance of Friends of Rotary. The duty roster for forthcoming weeks is now published in an easily accessible spot. There is a secure area where members' contact details are listed as well as the Club committees for the current year.

The web activities are now well stretched. There is a "Radio Don" site where the broadcasts of the Rotary Hour on FM-96.5 are stored for two months for access by members. Special events such as Jazz at the Farm, Fun in Retirement Expo, the 2009 District Conference and the Rotary River Ride also have their own sites and this latter is now geared for on-line payment of fees.

Dick has acted as webmaster since the site was established. It has links to the District site and to other local Rotary and Rotaract sites, lists our forthcoming meeting details, our members, our charity activities, as well as containing a pdf of The Grapevine, our weekly magazine that any visitor or member can download and read.

The Club's web presence continues to grow and to become more sophisticated as this relatively recent medium of information exchange continues to evolve and offer more facilities to people at large.



An example of our “Home Page” listing all the links available.

The Sergeant-at-Arms

And while we are on the topic of “jobs requiring an inordinate amount of time and little reward”, we must mention that of the Sergeant-at-Arms. In our club, you will recognise the sergeant by the almost complete lack of applause when he/she is called to the microphone to conduct the “Sergeant’s session’.

Therefore, in this History it is appropriate to point out the endless list of duties that fall to the Sergeant – very much more than merely telling a few stories in order to extract money from reluctant members. The Sergeant is responsible for ensuring that the entire meeting proceeds on time, in an orderly fashion; that the room is properly set up; that the “top table” has the required number of occupants; that all equipment required is both present and working; that those rostered for duties do, in fact, discharge those duties, and that members behave in a quiet and respectful manner, refraining from private conversation whilst there is a person at the microphone.

A complete list of these dedicated, overworked contributors is as follows:-

Past Sergeant-at-Arms:

Year	Sergeant	Year	Sergeant
1980 – 1981	Paul Fitz	1995 – 1996	Ron Arthur
1981 – 1982	Mervyn Lewis	1996 – 1997	Greg Matthews & John Magor
1982 – 1983	Bernie Smith	1997 – 1998	Geoff Griffiths
1983 – 1984	John Robson	1998 – 1999	John Gartlan
1984 – 1985	Marcel Muntwyler	1999 – 2000	John Moyle
1985 – 1986	Ralph Lee	2000 – 2001	Dick Johnson
1986 – 1987	Ian Collins	2001 – 2002	John Moyle
1987 – 1988	Roger Benallack	2002 – 2003	David Cheney
1988 – 1989	Gregory Ross	2003 – 2004	Ian Mollison
1989 – 1990	Terry Keyhoe & Glen Walmsley	2004 – 2005	Ian Adams
1990 – 1991	Tony McLean	2005 – 2006	Elisabeth Hall
1991 – 1992	Brian Hurnard	2006 – 2007	Terry Gretton
1992 – 1993	Jim Studebaker	2007 – 2008	Ted Wilkins
1993 – 1994	John Mollison	2008 – 2009	Findley Cornell
1994 – 1995	Peter Elliott	2009 - 2010	Matthew Pauli

Leadership in District and National Programs

In addition to providing three outstanding District Governors to D9800 in Greg Ross (1991-92), John Reddish (1996-97) and Jim Studebaker (2008-09), the Club has a proud record of involvement in District, State and National committees. There is hardly any area of District activity in which North Balwyn members have not given leadership and service. Indeed, in some years it was felt that with up to 15 members either on District committees, or chairing them, that the energies of our members were going more into District activities than into our own club's programs. The old adage "to get a job done, give it to a busy person" has been proven correct time and again.

The Club has provided DG Representatives / Assistant Governors, the DG Newsletter Editor, District Secretary, District Treasurer, Information Officer, and Radio Hour compere. We have been particularly involved in leadership in all aspects of Rotary Foundation, especially Group Study Exchange and the Ambassadorial Scholar program, and in Youth programs such as International Youth Exchange, Youth Art Exchange, Rotaract, RYLA, RYPEN and MUNA,. There has also been continuing leadership in Literacy programs and the Shine On Awards.

The Club has hosted or organised many District activities including three D9800 District Conferences, the Presidents Elect Seminars, DG Changeover, Raft Race, RYLA and RYPEN camps, and welcomes and farewells for both in-going and out-coming GSE teams.

While the commitment of club members to these District and National activities has involved many additional hours of work, it has also meant that all club members have the opportunity to become better informed Rotarians. This ensures the prospect of on-going commitment to the ever increasing spheres of Rotary influence.

Behind every successful District Governor.....

There stands an excellent District Secretary!! Our Club has had three:-

- Paul Fitz for DG Greg Ross in 1991/92,
- Ralph Lee for DG John Reddish in 1996/97, and
- Brian Hurnard for DG Jim Studebaker in 2008/09

Members who have served as Chairpersons of International, National and District Committees:

Michael Barden

2007-09 Chairman, RYLA Committee

Graeme Bird

2000-10 Chairman, Rotary Information Line

2001-04 Chairman, 'Shine On" Awards Committee

Ron Carnell

1991-95 Manager, Victorian Districts Information Service

David Cheney

1989-90 District Governor's Group Representative

1991-92 Chairman, District Conference Committee

1999-00 Chairman, ROMAC Committee

1995-97 Chairman, National "Paint your Heart Out" Committee

Joseph Ebbage

2008-09 Chairman, Marketing Innovation Committee

John Etkins

1983-84 District Governor's Group Representative

1984-85 Editor, District Newsletter

Paul Fitz

1986-87 District Governor's Group Representative

1988-91 Chairman, GSE Committee

1991-92 District Secretary

1992-93 Chairman, Humanitarian Grants Committee

1992-93 Leader, District GSE Team to District 5050, USA/Canada

1993-94 Chairman, Youth Service Committee
1994-95 Chairman, International Service Committee
1995-99 Chairman, Rotary Foundation Committee
1998-99 Chairman, ROMAC Committee
1098-99 Chairman, Victorian Multi-District ROMAC Committee
1999-01 Chairman, National ROMAC Committee
2001-04 Vice Chairman, National ROMAC Committee

Phil Francis

1996-04 Chairman, Major Events Committee

Stan Hibbert

1996-97 Chairman, District Conference Committee
1997-98 Chairman, Conference Consultation Committee

Max Hunter

1990-91 Chairman, Rotaract Committee

Ros Horne

2005-07 Chairman, RYLA Committee

Brian Hurnard

2008-09 District Secretary

Ralph Lee

1991-92 District Governor's Group Representative
1996-97 District Secretary

Greg Matthews

2008-09 Chairman, District Conference Committee

Kevin Maunder

1984-85 District Governor's Group Representative

John McBride

1996-98 Chairman, Rotaract Committee

Bruce McIver

2001-02 Chairman, Summer Schools Committee

Tony McLean

1995-96 District Governor's Group Representative
1998-01 Chairman, GSE Committee

Maria Moffat

2000-02 Chairman, RYPEN Committee

John Mollison

2002-04 Assistant Governor

Matthew Pauli

2009-10 Chairman, Rotaract Committee

Ron Phillips

1988-89 Chairman, Youth Art Exchange Committee

1994-97 Chairman, Youth Exchange Committee

1998-99 District Treasurer

2000-01 District Treasurer

2004-10 District Auditor

John Reddish

1990-93 Chairman, Youth Exchange Committee

1994-95 District Governor's Group Representative

1994-95 Leader, District GSE Team to District 3280, Bangladesh

1996-97 District Governor

1997-98 Chairman, Portsea Camp Committee

1999-01 Chairman, Humanitarian Grants Committee

1999-03 Chairman, National RAM Committee

1999-00 Australian DG Zone Trainer

2000-01 Zone 8 Coordinator, Disaster Relief Task Force

2000-01 Chairman, District Assembly Committee

2001-02 Chairman, Membership Committee

2001-02 Coordinator, "Polio Plus" Partners Task Force

2002-03 Chairman, RI Literacy South Pacific Committee

2003-06 Zone 8 Coordinator, Rotary Foundation Committee

2003-06 Administrator, National RAM Malaria Control Program

John Robson

1988-89 District Governor's Group Representative

Greg Ross

1989-90 Editor, District Newsletter

1991-92 District Governor

1993-95 Chairman, Public Relations Committee

1994-95 Chairman, National "Paint your Heart Out" Committee

1995-96 Chairman, RYLA Committee

1997-99 Chairman, Interclub Rotary Quiz Committee

2000-02 Regional Coordinator, Rotary Health Research Fund

2001-03 Chairman, Rotary Foundation Alumni Committee

2003-05 Zone 8 Coordinator, Membership

Geoff Steinicke

1990-92 Chairman, RYLA Committee

1993-94 Chairman, Functional Literacy Committee

Jim Studebaker

1996-98 Chairman, RYLA Committee

2006-07 Assistant Governor

2008-09 District Governor

Roger Wiggill

1985-88 Chairman, Youth Art Exchange Committee

Tom Wing Young

1990-91 District Governor's Group Representative

Rotarian of the Millennium

Everyone who has been a member of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn for any length of time when confronted with the question "whom in our Club could we legitimately honour with this title?" would all respond with the same name, that of Ron Carnell.

Ron was a Charter Member of the Club and had been the person who while largely remaining in the background had been its greatest advocate and a totally committed member. Ron, a well-retired TAA Pilot, was involved as Secretary from 1982-83 until 1991-92, a period of ten years and had served on the Administration Committee continuously.



For many years he was the Club's "official photographer" and as such had been responsible for really maintaining an historical collection.

Ron's knowledge of Rotary was unsurpassed. He was a member of the D9800 Quiz team for the Rotary International Convention in Melbourne in 1993 and coached our Club's successful Quiz Team and that of our Rotaract opponents to face each other in the District Final in Sydney in 1995.

Ron and Betty had been stalwarts in their participation in Club activities and in attending District Conferences and our Murray River Golf excursions. They frequently undertook the preliminary reconnaissance to ensure the quality of the accommodation sought for our families. They were involved in nearly all our fellowship functions, and it was only in 1998 that Betty was forced, by ill health, to give up making the Club's annual birthday cake, a labour of love for the Club.

At District level, Ron ran the Information hotline, established in 1995, and anchored our participation in the Rotary Hour on Community Radio - hence his title of "Radio Ron".

Ron and Betty looked after “apologies” and kept us all up to the mark with the front desk administrative tasks. If there was ever something anyone needed to know about Rotary or about our Club in particular, one could always ask Ron.

Sadly, Ron died on 25th August 2008 after a long illness.



The Club’s recognition of Ron and Betty reads:

1986-87	Ron named as a Paul Harris Fellow
1987-88	Ron first recipient of the President’s Award
1991-92	Betty named as a Paul Harris Fellow
1995-96	Ron named as Paul Harris Fellow (Blue Sapphire)
1999	Ron named as our Club’s “Rotarian of the Millennium”
2001	President’s Award renamed the Ron Carnell President’s Award in honour of Ron’s 80 th birthday



*Bernie Smith
presents the
Sapphire Pin*



*Gregor Matthews presents
the “Rotarian of the
Millennium”*

Maria Moffat – our First Lady!

Until the Council of Legislation decided otherwise at its meeting in Singapore in January 1989, the Rotary Constitution allowed for only male members. Accordingly, from 1st July 1989, it became the prerogative of each Rotary Club to decide who could (or could not) become a member, irrespective of gender.

Our Club's first female member's story follows:-

In 1995, Maria Moffat was working for the Transport Department of Shell (Level 25 of Shell House, 1 Spring St, Melbourne). She clearly remembers a visit from Rotarian Bruce McIver. Bruce had a GSE application form, having had a discussion with Maria's supervisor who encouraged her to apply. There were a few catches:

- Applications closed in three days and had to be completed, along with an essay and
- Having been married earlier that year, was she prepared to be away from husband David for 5 weeks?

Bruce was a great support through the first round interviews and prepared Maria for the two day selection process in Country, Victoria. When she was selected, Maria knew he was as proud as punch, and she felt that same pride was shared by many members when she attended North Balwyn Rotary meetings as the first GSE Exchange Team Member nominated by the Club from its own Rotaract Club. Most members already felt that they knew her as a Rotaractor and as the then President of the North Balwyn Rotaract Club.

The GSE to Brazil was a life changing experience for Maria.

When Maria returned, family circumstances took an unexpected turn and she took leave from Shell to act as General Manager of Puradown Australia for 6 weeks.

Within a month, Maria handed in her resignation in order to run the sleeping bag manufacturing business in Thomastown. During that time, Maria received invaluable support from Rotarians Bruce McIver, Alan Fabry and John McBride who guided her throughout, approaching staff, taking control of a small firm, quality control, etc., all the while suggesting that it would be a great benefit to become a member of the North Balwyn Rotary Club.

Maria remembers laughing and saying "I'm only 27. I've got plenty of time and it's only been seven years since the Club voted against inducting female members". As an invited guest, Maria did not know who the "male only" club members were, but there were "always up to a dozen members helping me to feel welcome". Within a few months, Maria took the jump, being inducted the same night as Past President Bill Oakley. After the meeting, Maria recalls that she was approached by a Rotarian in a "very grandfatherly" manner who stated "Maria, I just wanted you to know that I voted against having women in our club, but I feel I know you and you are most welcome".

To Maria, one of the great things about the club is that we were "very welcoming and jovial" in our volunteer pursuits. She found this an overwhelming, positive and binding force that continued through the years. With her family in Canberra, the club has filled lots of the gaps that living away brings.

In her two years as District RYPEN Chairperson, Maria has found the club to be very supportive.

Maria also recalls:-

- The first fishing weekend which she remembers, more for the undulating waters than the fishing, as well as later causing some amendments to the video selection at the Saturday evening dinner. Overall, Maria remembers it as a very enjoyable weekend of fellowship and sensed that her host was doing his best “to guide me away from some club traditions”. The second year she found was easier as there were two “girls” attending.
- One night, Maria was at the head table when it slipped out that she was finally pregnant. There was a feeling of great joy throughout the Club, especially when Maria announced that, after eight years of trying, she was actually expecting twins. Maria wished later that she had gone up and asked Geoff Dwyer for tips about surviving infant twins.
- During the pregnancy, Maria became so large that her arms were too short to reach the steering wheel. She was very grateful to Max Hunter and David Wilshire for regularly shuffling her to and from her home in Glen Iris to Rotary.
- Maria’s “Baby shower” organized by club members – it was just “so totally unexpected”.
- Maria remembers her disappointment when going into labour on a Tuesday morning. The Caesar had been scheduled for 6pm on Thursday, and husband David had programmed Delina’s phone number into his mobile, so he could ring her and give live updates to the Club during the meeting!
- Members and their partners provided enormous support once the twins were born - from preparing meals, dropping in to talk, or keeping an eye on the twins whilst she had a nap.
- The help continued for a long time. When the twins were eleven months old, Maria broke her wrist and several wives of members would drop in and change a nappy, open jars, or hang out the washing – things that are beyond doing one-handed. As Maria says “This is one of great examples of the North Balwyn Rotary Community in action”.

A Memorable Presidential Year

All North Balwyn Club Presidents have had memorable years and this segment from PP David Cheney, indicates that his year 1988-1989 was no exception.

This was the year of the Club’s “Great Sex Debate” that was held after the normal meeting at the Sentimental Bloke Hotel on Thursday, 11 May 1989. The debate arose as a result of the decision of the Council of Legislation, taken at a meeting in the previous January in Singapore. The Council changed the rules of Rotary by eliminating reference to gender, and in doing so, enabled clubs to induct ladies into Rotary in response to an anti-discrimination ruling from the California Supreme Court.

There was a hearty debate, at times with very emotional statements, with some 32 speakers expressing their views on where our Club should head. Several motions of dissent from the chair, points of order, and generally spirited but controlled debate, occurred. This settled the matter for the time being. While members voted in favour of the motion to revert to a male only Club, (31 – 19), they failed to provide the necessary 75% majority to put the reference to “male” gender back into the Club By-laws. Effectively, this decision left us as dual gender club in name, but with an underlying feeling of a majority of members that, for the time being, no ladies were to be invited to join the club.

Three years later, the then President, Ron Phillips, circulated a questionnaire on the subject. This resulted in a majority in favour of welcoming ladies into the Club. The rest is history and none of the threatened resignations actually occurred.

A Numerical Poetic Sergeant

The Sergeant in 1988-1989 was Gregory Ross who introduced the President in verse. No poet was free from Greg's plagiarism, and Banjo Patterson, Lord Tennyson and others found their poetry contorted to refer to the highlights of the time and the foibles of the President and Club members.

Greg also introduced the “numbers’ concept into his fines sessions, ensuring that the most obscure fines were levied, but he usually managed to end up with a number which involved Charter Secretary Bill Kneale.

Overseas Visitors

On 20 October 1988, during the autobiographies of John Magor and Vince Caputi, two Rotarians visited the Club from Japan. They entered the room, grabbed two chairs, enjoyed a free meal each, and then, when formally introduced by the President, took over the microphone and each gave us a five-minute address in perfect Japanese. Once completed, they immediately left the meeting. The President then dissolved into hysteria, but was able to do a passable rendition of his own in Japanese.

Special Highlights

The year also was significant for several highlights:

- It was Australia's Bi-Centenary-1788-1988.
- Royce Abbey was RI President.
- Our Club sought and was granted incorporation.
- We redrew the Club by-laws.
- We formed the initial Administration Committee.
- We inducted fifteen new members, seven of whom are still members.
- Max Hunter joined a team of Rotarian volunteers on a FAIM (RAWCS) trip to the Solomons.
- “Away” Club dinners were conducted at Containers Ltd, Dandenong, Canterbury Lawn Bowls Club, the Salvation Army Anchorage and at two other Rotary Clubs (Ashburton and Chadstone/E. Malvern).
- John Robson used his putter to get out (successfully) from a bunker at Renmark on the way to the Adelaide District Conference.

- The Change-over Dinner on 29 June 1989 saw the “first lady” inducted into Rotary in the District, a lass named “Suzie Wong”, played by Clive Hughes, and inducted by Tom Wing Young.
- John Thwaites (with enormous assistance from Annette) received recognition from the District for the quality of his Grapevine.

A busy but most enjoyable year!

Memories from Past Member Ian Lucas

In his time in our Club Ian and his wife Jean and their family became very involved in the Club and the Rotaract Club. Ian served a year as Vice President and in several years as a Director.

Ian’s most vivid memories are the Melbourne Cup Race nights, with last minute betting plunges and tough bookies, and the Hole-in-One fundraisers with people like David Cheney directing traffic from a mobile golf cart. Not to forget Glen Walmsley and his ambitious Christmas stocking extravaganza and the badgering of North Balwyn residents to buy tickets while they did their shopping.

There were cricket matches against Rotaractors with Ralph Lee keeping wickets and the busy days of the Aeromodellers displays with Tom Wing Young in charge of the hot food. The “gambling” weekends when we drove for three hours to Moama before Jeff Kennett legalised the one-arm bandits in Victoria. The big risk was not what you lost at the pokies but whether certain members got pinched for speeding as they returned to Melbourne. Ian certainly remembers well the ballooning over Rutherglen from Corowa and one incident when the pilot “misjudged” his descent and tangled the basket in the trees with the ballooners three metres above the ground. The eventual fall shook-up all aboard and broke a few bones for some of our “crew”.

The pleasant Sunday mornings at Ron Phillips’ house peeling off those damned address labels for the bulletin wrappers.

Meetings were always a good night out (with better meals at Argenti’s), with interesting speakers and entertaining sergeants; Tony McLean’s dry humour comes to mind immediately. I also enjoyed regular Sunday morning tennis with Imre Lele, Morris Ellis and Ian Richardson.

Ian and Jean did quite a bit with exchange students over the years, including two Rotary Exchange students from Finland. One of them was Matti Paljakka, to some extent a complex boy but very smart. Ian remembers that on the morning of Jean’s birthday, they were awoken with a rendition of “happy birthday” on his trumpet as he marched down the hallway in Rochester Road. The other exchange student was Tiina Huoviala, a happy girl and a delight to have in the house. Like all good exchange students they put on several kilos during their time with North Balwyn.

The other main memory is of special nights with skits and songs to bring out our acting talents. Jean has a lovely photo of her in the role of an Italian fishwife. It was all great fun with many happy memories.

Classification "Hit Man" - A Special Memory from John Reddish

Early in the Club's history a decision was made to hold an "Ethnic Night" to introduce potential members with different ethnic backgrounds. John was at a loss to identify a suitable "candidate" but Merrick Daniels, the owner of the local Hardware shop in Boroondara (prior to Ron Arthur) and an earlier member, suggested an Italian he knew, Frank T., who owned half of his asparagus farm in Koo-We-Rup. Full of enthusiasm John rang Frank and was delighted when Frank agreed to attend our club's "Ethnic Night"

Subsequently, John picked Frank up for our meeting at the Sentimental Bloke and had a great night. He was very affable, mixed in very well, and provided drinks for everyone at the table appearing to show a lot of enthusiasm for Rotary.

When John drove him home, Frank invited him in for a cup of coffee. John was taken into his study where there were numerous decorations his father had received from Mussolini, and pictures of their "house" on the Mediterranean. He told John about his wife, and of his children-all of whom attended a private school here in Melbourne, and he described his property and "farming interests" in Griffith, NSW. After a very enjoyable evening John went home and told Judy that he had found the ideal first "New Australian" member.

For some unknown reason John did not complete his nomination for him straight away, and was very surprised when he was subsequently approached by one of the members who showed him an article about Frank T. in the daily newspaper.

The article described how Frank had been charged with murdering two people in a drug-related crime, and stated that he was a 'hit man' for an internationally renowned criminal. John thought how nearly the club had come to having its first new member with the classification of "Hit Man". John has never lived this down!!

After spending some time in gaol here, Frank "allegedly" was deported to his home country where he "died presumably of a heart attack"!!

A Special Memory from Brian Hurnard

At the time of my induction in 1989 with Tom Wing Young as President. Poor Tom was in a great deal of pain with health problems. Instead of pinning my new badge on my lapel, Tommy tried to fix a Dispirin on my lapel instead!!

On Monday, 29 January 2001 The Age published a front page article regarding the impending release of the hit-man convicted for the murder of anti-drugs campaigner Donald Mackay. It contained the statement "Two of the key figures are now dead. An informer, Gianfranco Tizzoni, died in hiding in Italy in 1988..."!!!

District Conferences

Not all addictions are harmful, although this truism may be debated in relation to attendance at District Conferences! Many members of our Club have become "Conference Addicts". But it is not just conference attendance that is the addiction but rather the opportunity to meet fellow Rotarians, learn more about Rotary and the world, and above all else enjoy the fellowship associated with such occasions. Over the years a major part of conference attendance for many has become the R & R activities that successive "on to conference" chairmen have organised and it is the memory of these activities which often far outlive the details of what may have occurred at the conference itself.

In our first year the District Conference was held at Albury and four couples attended. It was an enjoyable occasion except for the standard of accommodation organised by District. A major theme of the conference was "Pride in Australia and its Achievements", a theme that was conveyed back by our members with the encouragement to interpret that theme in our own vocations and in our own way.

March, 1982 saw the conference being held at the Central Coast Leagues Club at Gosford. Stories abound of the delicacies consumed by several of our six couples attending at our pre-conference "prawn meal" rather than attendance at Conference Roll Call. Our Club's failure to appear on the opening evening was noted by all but, fortunately, our youth and inexperience as a Club was recognised as an acceptable excuse – nothing to do with the weather, or the prawns!

Our Exchange Student, Manami Kondo and Ambassadorial Scholar, Dorothea Bringmann accompanied ten couples to Adelaide in 1983. Several couples enjoyed a leisurely trip over prior to the conference and partook of many vintages.

Back to Albury in 1984 with 13 couples and our Exchange Student, Koichi Hara, attending. Our "crew" decided that it would be better to stay at Beechworth and commute daily. "A great weekend of fellowship and Rotary inspiration" is the quote from the annual report.

Launceston in 1985 again saw below standard accommodation and this really laid the foundation for subsequent years when we arranged our own rather than accept what District had to offer. Denise Macksail, our Exchange Student, joined the six couples attending.

Significant for us at Launceston were the presentation made by John Reddish and Geoff Steinicke of the "Autoroll Ripple Mattress" program and receiving the District Bulletin Award recognising the quality of John Etkins' production.

NBTT

Ron Phillips: "I would like to say a word about the Club Awareness Program, which many of you may not be aware of".



The “crew” ready for the 1984 Albury Conference

Ron and Betty Carnell undertook a “reconnaissance” trip to Canberra prior to conference in 1986 and booked our own accommodation much to the pleasure of our twelve members and their wives who attended along with student Vanessa Lowe. Highlights of the conference included the address by Sir Ninian Stephen and the fellowship dinner held with members from four other clubs.

From 1986 onwards, largely because of greater satisfaction with accommodation, attendance at Conference and participation in pre- or post-conference “R & R” became a feature of our Club’s year. This conference saw a presentation of our Youth Art Painting Exchange by Roger Wiggill and this was very well received.

Adelaide again in March 1987 with pre-conference R & R at Mildura. Matti went with us and we also hosted the GSE team from Finland at our club dinner at the Stoneyfell Winery. Our Honorary member, Keith Glover, was an excellent MC for the conference which was opened by D9800’s own RI President Nominee, Royce Abbey from Essendon.



A happy group in Canberra in 1986

1988 saw another great but shortened conference in Albury with our pre-conference activities at Yarrawonga. Recognition as a 100% PolioPlus Club and the award of the District Rotary / Rotaract Involvement were highlights for us.

Back to Adelaide in 1989 with the R & R at Renmark enjoyed by 14 couples. This conference was “ordinary” by usual standards but the MC, Greg Ross, resplendent in naval uniform, did his utmost to lift everyone’s spirits. As a result of John Thwaites’ efforts as Grapevine Editor we were delighted to gain the District Bulletin Award for the second time.

Canberra in 1990 for the “Enjoyable Conference” and it really was. Pre-conference R & R was enjoyed by 16 couples at Bateman’s Bay and some of their stories have grown like the “fisherman’s catch”. Judy Reddish panned and found a “speck” of gold and Betty Carnell won a jackpot at the “pokies”! The revelers were joined by another 10 couples at the conference where one of the highlights was undoubtedly our “Vocations” presentation well choreographed by Carole Ross. There were excellent speakers and the conference ran effectively to a tight schedule. Our “Club Dinner” was at the motel with an attendance of 49.

“A Devil of a Conference” was held at Hobart in 1991 with 16 couples and our exchange student, Tiina Huoviala, attending. R & R was at Launceston prior to the conference and 10 couples participated. The conference program was excellent and was special to us when Paul Fitz was presented with the District Rotary Foundation Award for Special Service and President Ralph Lee invited the assembled District to join us at our “Vintage Conference” in Adelaide in 1992.

The 1992 conference is reported on separately. In addition to the success of our own conference we received District Awards for our Vocational Project “Adult Literacy in Small Businesses” and for the Diary Project. After the conference 25 hardy members and wives enjoyed R & R at the Murray Downs Golf and Country Club where the more culturally inclined spent time visiting many historic sights. There was superb weather and fellowship with the satisfaction of a “job well done”.

Ralph Lee’s Memories of Gosford 1982

The conference venue was the Leagues Club at Gosford. We had arranged our own accommodation at a motel by the sea at Terrigal. Being inexperienced Rotarians, we decided that due to the heavy rain around 6:00pm we would remain at our motel and have a feed of prawns and miss the opening of the conference.

Imagine our surprise when on our arrival at Conference, everybody asked why North Balwyn had missed the Opening Night. Our Leaders (?) had overlooked the Roll Call of Clubs in attendance, and when North Balwyn’s name was called there was deathly silence.

Needless to say, North Balwyn has not missed a Roll Call since!!!

Ballarat was the site for the 1993 conference with 30 members and partners attending but no special R & R activities took place. Our Club dinner at the “Bell Tower” was a great success. A feature of the conference program was the address from the RI President's Representative, Bhichai Rattakul and his personal rendition of “I Did It My Way”. One highlight was the introduction of Paul Fitz's GSE Team prior to its departure for North America.



*An attentive group from North Balwyn
at the 1990 conference*

Back to Adelaide in 1994 for the “Festival Conference” with 18 couples attending and R & R at Renmark. Conference presentations saw us receive the Bulletin Award again with John Reddish leading our Grapevine team, the Rotary / Rotaract Involvement Award and a Presidential Citation for Balanced Club Achievements.

Another highlight was the introduction of John Reddish's GSE Team prior to it leaving for Bangladesh.

Darling Harbour, Sydney 1995 saw 26 couples in attendance with R & R in the form of golf, wine, and wine (!), in the Hunter Valley. The Club won the District Award for Attendance for clubs with over 56 members with special commendation for Bulletin and for Rotaract Involvement. Ron Phillips and John Reddish each hosted conference segments and Paul Fitz received a Rotary Special Service Award.

The “Gold Medal” conference in Canberra 1996 was another great success with the theme of “achievement”. Among the outstanding speakers were Past RI President Cliff Dochterman, remembered by many from the RI Convention in Melbourne, and Acting Inspector Lorraine Blackwell from Broadmeadows who moved us all with her stories of child abuse. We again gained the Rotary / Rotaract Involvement Award and this was great recognition not just for the Rotary Club but for Chris Howell's wonderful efforts with the Rotaract Club.

Another highlight was the presentation made by Cliff Dochterman to PDG Jack Nankervis of a "Service Above Self" award which was greeted by a thunderous standing ovation from the 1,100 privileged to witness it. The Gala Dinner Dance was a "beauty" and the entry of "Neil Diamond" on a Harley capped off a memorable night of dinner, dancing, entertainment and fellowship.

Following our outstandingly successful 1997 "Melbourne On Yarra" Conference (reported on separately) it was really get up and go to Jupiter's on the Gold Coast in 1998 to a conference that was smaller than has become usual and attracted fewer of our own "die-hards". Never the less, those who attended reported very favourably on another successful event with valuable Rotary input.

Back to Adelaide in 1999 attended by 19 members and most of their partners, and our Exchange Student, Hanna. There were some excellent presentations enhanced by those made by David Cheney (ROMAC), John Reddish (RAM), Tony McLean (GSE) and Paul Fitz (Ambassadorial Scholars and Matching Grants). Great fellowship was experienced by all who attended and the R & R episode again kept our members refreshed.



*Judy Steinicke, Ron and Betty Carnell, Valda McIver
and Joan Richardson relax "on board"
at our "Melbourne on Yarra" conference.*

Bob Ballantyne recalls "after returning from a two-year absence in Sydney, I attended a North Balwyn meeting with a view to rejoining this Club. At the bar I spoke with Murray Carr who greeted me with the comment "Have you been away on holidays?" It's nice to be missed!!

Year 2000 produced few Y2K bugs and they certainly didn't interfere with the Canberra Conference attended by 23 members and most of their partners and included several "newer" members. Our fellowship dinner on the Friday night was held at our accommodation at the Waldorf apartments where Ambassadorial Scholars and past and present Exchange Students joined us. Ten couples ventured on after the conference for their R & R to Jindabyne and the Snowy Mountains Horizon Resort and had a wonderful break.

In 2001 the Conference was held at Darling Harbour in Sydney under the banner of the "Federation Celebration". R & R was in Merimbula where those attending stayed at a motel right opposite the golf club!

In a break away from the traditional locations, the 2002 Conference was held at Mount Bulla with the appropriate theme of "Rotary at its Peak". About 40 members and partners attended. One highlight was our Cluster Group winning the best presentation as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Another regional part of Victoria was the venue for the 2003 Conference. Our members and partners attending drove to Bendigo and enjoyed a successful conference despite it being held in a venue still under construction! Our Club received the Rotary/Rotaract Cooperation Shield and the presidents of our Cluster Group accepted the challenge to give its report in a unique way and did so in the form of a "Full Monty". The Conference dinner dance was a joyous, unrestrained celebration, with people dancing not only on the dance floor but in passageways, on the stage and even on tables! Lindsay Pegg stole the limelight from the official entertainment with some brilliant miming in a Marcel Marceau imitation.

Under the theme of "Lend a Hand", 25 members plus partners attended the 2004 Conference in Adelaide. One of the highlight speakers was Theo Loehr, a grandson of Gustavus Loehr, one of Rotary's four founding fathers. It was one of Campbell McComas' finest, and possibly his last, Rotary performance and it was a complete show stopper. At the dinner dance the delegates were wowed by the "Fab Four" who arrived in a London cab and proceeded to mobilise them onto the dance floor in an assortment of Beatles classics. R & R was held in Renmark on the way home.

To celebrate Rotary's centennial year the 2005 Conference was held in Hobart with the theme "Celebrate the PAST – Create the FUTURE"/ "A Century of Service – A New Century of Success". In attendance were 39 members and partners. Professor Geoffrey Blainey was a last minute cancellation due to ill-health but those attending were very impressed with Dr. Judith Slocombe who was very interesting and entertaining. The Club dinner was held at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania which was a most enjoyable evening at a venue overlooking the harbour. The Gala dinner with a Chicago 1905 theme featured James Morrison. Post Conference activities were centred up the East coast of Tasmania in and around Fracinet National Park where quad bikes were the main form of transport. All those attending did make it back to North Balwyn!

In 2006, 27 members and partners attended the Conference in Geelong on the waterfront with the theme "Embrace the Rhythm of Life – Rotary". The plenary sessions were held on the Deakin University Campus and the dinner dance was held in a local basketball stadium with entertainment and dancing. R & R was held in Queenscliff.

The 2007 Conference was held in Canberra under the banner of “Experience the Power of Rotary” and was attended by 35 members and partners. The welcome reception was held at the National Museum of Australia while the Plenary Sessions were held at the Australian Institute of Sport where the Master of Ceremonies was Tony Charlton. One highlight was the talk given by the Australian Astronaut, Dr. Andrew Thomas who used a number of his own photographs during his presentation. Michael Barden and Rosemary Kelly represented our Cluster in the Cluster relay which was held during the BBQ lunch on the Sunday on what was a very hot day!

Shepparton was the venue for the 2008 Conference where the delegates were invited to “Share Rotary” over a weekend of 36C+! This was a particularly important conference for our Club since it was to host the following year’s conference in Launceston. As a consequence, 69 members and partners attended. The erection of a ‘Hokka’ in the gardens opposite the conference hall proved to be a bonus when on the Saturday afternoon in the sweltering heat the power failed in the hall and it was possible to avoid the overpowering heat indoors and continue the conference activities in the gardens with minimum disruption to the program. The gardens were also the venue for all meals and the conference dinner. The Club dinner was held in an Italian restaurant arranged by Nino Sofra and was a great success. During the closing segment of the conference there was much fanfare from the brass band, Itchy Feet, and its eccentric conductor who presented Ian Adams and Greg Matthews with the Conference Banner twice before the bedlam settled down!

The 2009 Conference was held in Launceston with the theme ‘Make Dreams Real’. It was hosted by our Club, the third conference to be organised by us, and arguably it was the best conference ever held! It is reported on separately and in detail elsewhere.

At the time of writing the Club is organising attendance at the 2010 Conference to be held in Perth.



*Ready for the Canberra Conference Dinner-Dance 2000.
President Greg Matthews surrounded by many
“smartly attired” friends. Not a “Grumpy face in sight!”*



*Heather Matthews and “glamorous” friends
pre the Conference Dinner-Dance 2000*

Summary

District Conference is a very important part of the life of all Rotarians. Members of North Balwyn have certainly made sure that they have enjoyed their participation in this important annual event whether as ordinary Rotarians or as presenters or hosts. By associating the opportunities for extended fellowship through our R & R excursions we have helped to cement the links within our own Rotary families and helped to keep enjoyment and involvement as vital parts of our Rotary commitment.

Hosting District Governors’ Changeover

Just as each year our Club has its own Changeover so the District too has a changeover function to pass the baton to a new District Governor.

In 1990 it was DG Lawrence Atley who was handing the “baton” (Governor’s Badge, Jewel and Collar) on to DGE Colin Martin from the Balwyn club and we were invited to host the occasion. This important District function was held at Chaucer’s on Canterbury Road on 23rd June 1990 and was quite spectacular.

John and Judy Reddish ably led our organising committee who did an outstanding job using as the theme for the evening “The Phantom of the Opera”. The table and hall decorations were superb with single red roses for the ladies and especially designed “Phantom” programs decked out in “phantom” masks, as well as flowers, streamers and small masks. Our own Greg Ross acted as MC fully cloaked and masked as the Phantom and there was outstanding entertainment from opera and the shows from the group “Pot Pourri”. This was the first of their many performances for Rotary and they have gone on in their very special style to gain an international audience.

In presenting his summary for the year DG Lawrence Atley made special mention of the work as DG's Newsletter Editor by Greg Ross and of Paul Fitz's leadership of the District GSE Committee.

The function was well attended by 46 of our members and their wives, and all thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and we again showed our fellow Rotarians in the District just how well North Balwyn could perform.



Phantom Greg Ross as MC

An excellent meal complemented by wines helped make the evening one of memorable conviviality.

Rotary International Convention Quiz

The Rotary International Convention in 1993 was held in Melbourne. Greg Ross, who had been North Balwyn's first DG the year before, was asked to MC the international Rotary Quiz at the convention.

Teams of three represented their districts and the quiz was a popular educational and multi-cultural event on the program. Elimination rounds were held on stage daily until the grand final on the last day, which was won by a District from New Zealand.

The following two years, Greg modified the quiz, wrote hundreds of new questions and presented it as a D9800 inter-club activity. Unlike the convention, the questions were two thirds general knowledge and only one third Rotary.

As can be seen below, it was a great way to promote fellowship between clubs and to learn a little more about Rotary, and North Balwyn was an enthusiastic participant.

NBTT

Near Enough! Introducing a new member, one David Curby, the 2007-8 President Ian Adams, invited Chris Curby to come forward.

At the conclusion of the meeting, President Ian did get David's Christian name correct, and made a special mention of our newest members, David Corby.

The Great Rotary Quiz

The Inter-Club Rotary Quiz was first held in 1993-94 and repeated in 1994-95. Its purpose was to improve the Rotary knowledge of all members and at the same time be a basis for inter-club fellowship. It succeeded on both scores.

Each match was run as a knockout between clubs. The teams consisted of three members of whom at least one member had to have been in Rotary for less than two years and one for less than five years.

Our teams met regularly and had enjoyed great fellowship as they improved their Rotary knowledge under the expert guidance of team coach Ron Carnell.

In the first year our team members were Bruce McIver, Peter Mrzyglocki and Geoff Steinicke or George Swanson. In their matches they defeated the Rotary Clubs of Camberwell, Caulfield, Hawthorn and Brighton and lost in the semi-final to Melbourne South, the eventual winners.

In 1994-95 our team included Peter Elliott, Stan Hibbert, Richard Johns, Bruce McIver and Peter Mrzyglocki, again coached by Ron Carnell.

In this year our North Balwyn Rotaractors Anne-Marie Heath, Chris Howell, Damien Mecoles and Graham Prowse also entered the competition as a District Rotaract Team and up until the final they were also coached by Ron Carnell and by Chris Howell.

In the early rounds Ron's coaching skills and the sheer brilliance of our team rapidly became obvious with wins over the Rotary Clubs of Prahran, Bendigo, Point Gellibrand-Williamstown, and Werribee-Wyndham to take us into the final. Our

Rotaractors kept pace defeating the previous champions, Melbourne South on the way to a finals berth at the 1995 District Conference at Darling Harbour, Sydney.

The assembled Rotarians couldn't believe that North Balwyn so dominated the quiz that their Rotary and Rotaract Clubs met in the final and Ron had to withdraw from coaching the Rotaractors. After a close encounter we were relieved to defeat our younger rivals and the prize money of \$2,000 and \$1,000 was well earned by our teams. The Rotaractors deserved special praise, having defeated so many more experienced Rotarians and, we believe, really didn't feel too bad about losing to their own senior Club.

Would we do so well again if the quizzes were repeated?

The Great Debate

1997-98 saw the running of a District-based inter-club debate. Once again we were coerced into participating with teams of three drawn from the group of "volunteers": Greg Adams, Murray Carr, Findley Cornell, Peter Courtney, John Gartlan, Stan Hibbert, Clive Hughes and David Morris with David Goldsmith as "non-playing Captain / Coach".

PDG Greg Ross again found himself thrust into an organisational role but the concept seemed to receive less than the desired amount of support required from some clubs so that it became impossible to have the desired final at the District Conference. There were also some problems, with a number of the topics being approached with somewhat veiled enthusiasm. Included as topics were:

- “That the President of a Rotary Club should hold office for two years”(Balwyn)
- “That members and their clubs derive great benefit from involvement in District Activities” (Camberwell)
- “That the District Conference should be held outside the District” (Gisborne)

Our first debate was with Balwyn and, in spite of a spirited performance by Balwyn’s PP Gary Le Get, our team of Murray Carr, Findley Cornell and Peter Courtney successfully demolished them.

Our next performance was against Camberwell who again were no match for this same team. Following this, Hawthorn were so demoralised by our reputation that they defaulted and this took us into a fourth round against Gisborne at Gisborne. Our team this time was John Gartlan, Clive Hughes and David Morris who debated the third topic quoted. There was a very even contest until Clive drew on some statistics from our hosting of the Melbourne Conference which so flawed the opposition in content, volume and speed of delivery that we won by half a point!!

Our final round was held at short notice at Kew East where our opposition was Footscray. Again all went well until their team drew a killer punch by reverting to presenting in verse. From that moment on we knew we had lost, in spite of the lack of content in their arguments, but we had fun!

Family of Rotary

One of the strengths of Rotary membership is the support clubs give to Rotarians and their families at times of personal grief.

At North Balwyn, members make it their responsibility to help partners and families of Rotarians at times of bereavement or personal loss.

Partners of deceased Rotarians are regularly invited to club functions and contact is maintained to check on their health and wellbeing. Working bees have been initiated at the homes of past members to assist with gardening, painting, etc.

Members and partners are ready, willing and able to “drop in a casserole” to help out in times of stress.

It is important to our Club that these partners stay in touch with the Club and be acknowledged as very much a part of the Family of Rotary.

Horizons Committee

The formation of the Horizons Committee originally called the New Horizons Committee, dates back to 1995-96 when President Bernie Smith invited Stan Hibbert to be its inaugural chairman.

The following year, under David Cheney’s chairmanship, a comprehensive report delineated its aims and mission statement with the emphasis on strategic planning for the future. Areas addressed in the original report covered meetings, membership, service, fund-raising, administration and communication.

Seemingly not a great deal has changed since then other than to re-couch its "Terms of Reference" which may be stated as:-

"To oversee the strategic planning of the Club by:

- determining the Club's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- identifying the areas for future development, and
- making recommendations to the Club's Board via the President".

The Committee seeks to continue to provide past, present, future and potential club leaders with an opportunity for relaxed and informal discussion, and the canvassing of new ideas and initiatives.

Ideally, the Committee tends to include the President, Immediate Past President, President Elect, President Nominee, two club Members and a Chairman who is an experienced Rotarian.

Past Chairs have been:-

1995 – 1996 Stan Hibbert

1996 – 1998 David Cheney

1998 – 2000 Gregor Matthews

2000 – 2002 John Reddish

2002 – 2003 Brian Hurnard

2003 - 2004 Ron Phillips

2004 - 2006 Geoff Steinicke

2006 - 2008 Paul Fitz

2008 - 2010 Phil Francis

Tony McLean's Very Special Memory

That infamous occasion when on the District Governor's (Gordon McKern and Anita) official visit in my year as President on 19/11/92 when we had the most incredible rain storm at Argenti's. It was also Peter Elliott's induction night. No forgiveness because:

- Several members were required to leave during the meeting (including PDG Greg Ross) to monitor flood damage to their homes
- During the meal water began to drip through the roof and light fittings quickly turning into constant waterfalls
- The DG and his wife and all at the head table had water in their soup, on their potatoes and in their wine
- The good news was that no one was electrocuted or poisoned
- The aftermath – the DG sent us a letter giving Ron Liner a serve for talking during his speech!

