

Chapter 3

Fellowship

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Birthday Nights

The 1st meeting of the Provisional Rotary Club of North Balwyn was held on the 1st May 1980. The signed charter was received on 8th May at which time the word “provisional” was dropped and we became the rotary Club of North Balwyn. The 8th May is the anniversary of the date of our Charter.

Traditionally, after the first few years, our “birthday” has been celebrated on the Thursday night closest to the 8th May, the anniversary of our receiving the signed Charter of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn. Earlier, some birthdays were held at the end of May to correspond to the date, 29th May, which was our formal Charter Presentation Night held at the Camberwell Civic Centre in 1980.

For many years Betty Carnell made and decorated a wonderful birthday cake and this was always greatly appreciated. In 1998, for our 18th birthday, the task was taken over by Areta Hurnard who provided us with a cake in the shape of a book.



Charter Stan Hibbert, PDG Jack Nankervis, Areta Hurnard and Betty Carnell cut the cake at our 18th birthday.

In the early years we had great speakers such as Jack Nankervis or entertainers such as our exchange students or a suitable old time band or that singing and piano duo Tim McKew and Will Conyers.

By 1990 we started to draw on the talents of our own members to prepare skits, sing songs with a special theme, dress up in suitable or totally unsuitable outfits, and generally “perform”. P.P. Stan provided a summary of the first ten-years of the Club and our team that went to District Conference presented the repeat of the “Vocations” segment which they performed under Carol Ross’ guidance at conference.

1991 saw the memorable Wartime Concert Party and no one present will ever forget such riveting performances of Judy Reddish in the role of "Lilli Marlene".



Judy "Lily Marlene" Reddish and Ensemble

For 1992 we had the "Olde Time Music Hall" with interlocutor Ralph Lee and David Cheney on the organ.

Most memorable act for 1993 was that in which Peter Cleary and Jim Studebaker did an "immigration skit".

"Come as a Song" was the theme for 1994 and we had some wonderful "Old Oak Trees", "Easter Bonnets", "With A Song In My Heart", "Gold Fingers", "Top Hat, White Tie and Tails", and the arrival of our Aida team in the persona of David and Jan Cheney!

1995 saw us combine our 15th birthday night with a Banquet Auction at the Camberwell Civic Centre where we were entertained by the Wesley College Band. The funds raised, approximately \$23,000 were donated to the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund and to the Bone Marrow Registry.



The "Barber's Shop Quartet" of 1991 with Geoff Steinicke, Ron Phillips, Dick Sheridan and Nino Sofra

*It's birthday
1997 with
bathers
Greg Adams,
Ian Taylor,
Judy Reddish,
John Robson,
Imre Lele and
a disappearing
Findley Cornell*



*Youthful Tony McLean being “dressed down” for under-age
drinking by “Headmaster” Max Hunter at the Club’s 18th
birthday performances*

Without doubt, the best birthday the club has celebrated was our 21st Birthday in 2001. Over 200 people gathered at the Manningham Club on 10th May, and enjoyed a great night of fellowship, nostalgia and theatrical masterpieces.

Hosted by Greg Ross, and accompanied on piano by son, Simon, the night's musical, poetic and acted program was of the highest standard, and included the return of "The Village People".

The Club welcomed Past Rotary International President, Royce Abbey and Jean, District Governor Des Jones and Beryl, and Assistant District Governor, John Edmonds and Esme.

Many past members attended – Stan Hibbert and Bev Geoff Clark and Dorothy, Russell Fynmore and Lois, Alan Anderson and Valda, Ron Arthur and Betty, Clive Hughes and Carmel, Roger Wiggill and D'arne, Duncan Ansell and Jane, Peter Cairns, Bill Kneale, Om Pahuja and Asher, Glen Walmsley and Shirley, and June Stockman.

Charter members Ron Carnell, Peter Cleary, John Etkins, Paul Fitz, Graham Foard, Stan Hibbert, Ralph Lee, Ron Liner, Marcel Muntwyler, John Robson, Bernie Smith, Geoff Steinicke, David Willshire, and Tom Wing Young were acknowledged.

Also welcomed were guests from Rotaract, GSE, Youth Exchange and Presidents from the Burke Cluster Group.

A donation of \$5,000 was presented to Professor George Werther of the Centre for Hormone Research of the Royal Children's Hospital.

Paul Harris Recognitions were presented to PP Bruce McIver and Ian Taylor. Glen Walmsley also presented the "Olympic Bell".

Traditional "cake maker" Betty Carnell presented the 21st birthday cake to Charter President, Stan Hibbert, and Editor David Goldsmith announced the publication of the club's history and presented all members with a copy.



President John Mollison and Anthea, with Past Rotary International President Royce Abbey and Jean at the Club's 21st Birthday Party.

The 25th Birthday celebration held at the Sentimental Bloke Hotel featured the internationally renowned Australian pianist, Alan Kogosowski. Alan had visited the club as a guest speaker earlier in 2005.



Alan Kogosowski with President Jim Studebaker

“Changeover” Nights

Club “Changeover” nights have always been special nights that we have shared with our partners and special guests. These nights have frequently been held either on the last Saturday in June or on our Thursday meeting night at the end of the Rotary year.

The theme of these nights has focused on the celebration of the achievements of the “old” guard (President and Board) and the hand over to the “new” guard and their presentation to the assembled company as our leaders for the coming year.

The format has tended to become that of a dinner-dance and so the quality and popularity of the music has become central to our enjoyment. Changeover Nights are always great fellowship nights and an opportunity to catch up with friends. From time to time, comments have been made that there are too many speeches or that they are too long or the music is too loud!

The Sergeant’s session has often been one of the highlights of the night, shared between the out-going and in-coming “dictators” and the presentation of “awards” has become a very popular feature. One of the funniest occasions was at the 1989-90 Changeover when we experienced the “induction” of our first “female” member.

Our support for the Rotary Foundation is also frequently recognised by the naming of Paul Harris Fellows on Changeover night, or alternatively on “Birthday Night”. Since 1987 the out-going President has also presented the President’s Award which was renamed in 2000 as the Ron Carnell President’s Award. This award recognises the Rotarian who, in the President’s opinion alone, has made the greatest contribution to the Club in the past year.



The induction of "Susy Wong" (aka Clive Hughes) accompanied by her "husband" "Sum Ting Wong" (aka Glen Walmsley).

Attendances at Changeovers had dropped in the late 90s but after a special effort, especially from John Magor, we saw an improved attendance in 2000. That night the chairperson, P.P. David Cheney, took us back to the days of the Roman Empire, although whether he was seeking to regain the favour of the out-going President by transforming himself from the treacherous "Brutus" to the wily "Mark Antony" was unclear! However, all present did "lend their ears", including the Disk Jockey who handled with aplomb being unexpectedly elevated by David into the hierarchy of D9800. Transfer of power was so bloodless that even the chairperson was not tempted to find similarity with that Roman assassination of over 2,000 years before!

The 2009 Changeover was held as a Sunday Luncheon at the Box Hill Golf Club rather than the traditional Saturday night dinner dance. On a beautiful, sunny afternoon, both the venue and the timing proved very popular with the majority of members and partners present. The one hundred and forty members and guests present were entertained by our much-loved Polish exchange student, Paulina Gauka on the piano

A Special Memory From Tom Wing Young

The hilarious satirical skit at my installation as Club President for 1989-1990 when we "inducted" our first "Lady Member" one Miss Susy Wong alias Clive Hughes accompanied by "her" husband, Sum Ting Wong, none other than Glen Walmsley!!!

Nothing but the Truth!

For several years, one of the highlights of the Changeovers has been the section entitled “Nothing but the Truth” – a series of historically accurate incidents which happened to members during the Rotary year.

The perpetrator (author?) of this much-looked-forward-to interlude was John Gartlan whose memory of such hopefully forgotten moments never fails to astound his rapt audiences – many of whom silently prayed that their own names would not receive a mention.

Your editors have taken the liberty of reproducing a number of John’s recollections and sprinkled them, sparingly, throughout this History. (The usual disclaimers apply - Ed).

Melbourne Cup Night

How many variations are there of the “Racing Game”?

In almost every year, on the Thursday before the Melbourne Cup, we have experienced the fun and fellowship of trying to “beat the bookies” and individually, or as table teams, became punters supreme.

The variety of “jockeys” who have performed is quite amazing and it has often been our Exchange Student who has dominated the field.

Mind you, no one could ever outdo what Judy Reddish might wear for such occasions and even Dr John was known to have presented ready for the “course” in top hat and tails!

No one could ever make a “killing” on such a night but it is always lots of fun and with not too much money being lost.

The annual “Calcutta” is always much more serious. Members wait anxiously to find whether they have drawn the favourite or the donkey that will come last, and who knows you might just be lucky and draw a “Kiwi Stayer”!

And of course you have to actually wait until the club meeting after the race to find out whether the return you received for drawing a successful horse was actually worth waiting for!

Long may such enjoyable evenings last, and who knows, someone may yet invent a new variation of the “Racing Game”?



*John Reddish
ready for the Cup*

Guest speakers at the Cup dinners have included Ms. Sheila Laxon, Melbourne Cup winning trainer in 2001; Rohan Hughes, race house syndicator in 2004; Graham Duff, VRC Chairman in 2005; Judge Russell Lewis, Chairman of the Racing Industry Appeal

Tribunal in 2006; Robert Smerdon, race house owner/trainer in 2007; and David Rush, part owner of Weekend Hustler in 2008.

One of the features of Cup Nights is the “Fashions of the Field” awards to the best dressed male, female and couple.



Cup Night Fashion Stakes winners – Heather Matthews, Ros Horne, John Gartlan and Maria Gouvoussi.

NBTT

Elisabeth Hall: “I went to the Caulfield Cup on Saturday and enjoyed a few drinks – quite a few if the truth be known, so that, by the end of the day, I felt exactly like one of the horses that was running – Plastered”.

Larry Fitzpatrick; “I was at Caulfield on Saturday, Elisabeth, and the only place I ever saw you was in the mounting yard”.

Chairman Tony McLean (returning to the microphone and attempting to restore some decorum)

“Yes, well...um...we’ll ...uh...look forwards to hearing about your next race meeting, Elisabeth, which is...er....I take it, the ...um....Melbourne Cup?”

Elisabeth (tersely): “No! Cox Plate!”

Tony: “Oh! I see. Well....er...we won’t go down that path”.

Christmas Meetings

Another of the highlights of our Club year has always been the pre-Christmas meeting which has become a Christmas party usually held a week or more before Christmas. The meeting immediately before Christmas has become a Breakfast meeting barbecue, initially at the home of such members as Ron Liner, Gregor Matthews, John McBride and Ron Phillips, and, in more recent years, at "Café in the Park". This meeting is always informal and provides an opportunity to wish fellow members the "compliments of the season".

Our Christmas Party night has been one of the best-attended functions of the year with a high percentage of partners and other family members. When many of us still had younger children our "Santa" was always kept very busy. Our two main themes at the Club are Fellowship and Service and these have always been predominant at our Christmas nights.

Our exchange students, particularly those about to depart for their year away have been part of the Christmas night celebrations when they have been presented with their blazers. In-coming students such as Matti Paljakka in 1986 entertained us on his trumpet and Charles Swanson did similarly on his viola. In 1994 Mika Makita combined with our Ambassadorial Scholar Noriko Shibaki in a bracket of songs and carols.

We have had various visiting musical groups such as the Salvation Army Band, the Victorian Scout Band, the Balwyn HS Orchestra and Junior Choir and Simon Ross's group to play for us.

We have also had some very moving presentations at our Christmas nights. In 1995 Ron Liner sponsored a boy with spina-bifida, Mario Filintatiz, who was presented with a lap top computer, jointly from Rotary and Rotaract by P.P. Maria Moffat and Pres. Chris Howell from Rotaract. (*Ed. - The photo is included in the Rotaract section*) P.P. John Robson also created a special atmosphere with his introduction to the Club of Joanne Clarkson from Shepparton who was recognised for the care and selfless support she provided for her family especially her disabled son.

In 1996 Moira Kelly's letter from Bosnia "Nobody's Children" was read out and a presentation was made to Eve Lustig for the Association of the Blind as result of our Ladies' Card Luncheon function at the MCG. Alan O'Callaghan, our first "Shine On" awardee, and his wife and young children were our special guests in 1997, sponsored by David Goldsmith,

In 1999 Greg Ross wrote a special tribute to Rotary set to the tune of "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and Ron Carnell was honoured by being named our "Rotarian of the Century".

Carol singing has been the main activity and since 1984 our various renditions ("render", of course meaning, to tear apart!) of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" have become integral to our celebrations and generally "brings the house down"!

We have had choirs led by people such as Kevin Maunder, Ron Phillips, Ted Wilkins or Greg Ross, and our special Honorary Member, Keith Glover who has frequently acted as MC. “Ten-thumbs” Cheney usually accompanies the choirs on piano or organ. By popular demand, “The Twelve Days of Christmas” was dropped one year, but was reinstated the following year, again by popular demand!

Yes, Christmas nights are happy occasions for the Club because of the special spirit and extended fellowship which abounds. Our guests, frequently including the current District Governor and his special representative with their wives, have found these evenings very special.



Greg Ross leads the choir of members' children with 1993 South African exchange student, Neil Cable, in the background

NBTT

David Cheney (in giving his autobiography): It is always a pleasure to speak to an intelligent audience, but tonight, I do not have that pleasure.

New Years Eve Parties

Christmas nights alone were not the only end-of-year fellowship activities. Many will remember warmly the pool parties and New Year's parties at the homes of people like the Reddish's, the Cheney's, the Rubenstein's or the Richardson's, and for those who chose the Mornington Peninsula for their holidays the many “Club Meetings” held at the Matthew's beach home.



*New Year's Eve around the piano
with Club Pianist, David Cheney*



*1987 New Year's Eve at the Reddish's
with many special people*

Fellowship Activities

Fellowship and the name of the Rotary Club of North Balwyn have been synonymous from the start of the Club. Our Club "Father" Duncan McKenzie and our Charter President Stan Hibbert certainly established the fellowship theme and the Club and everyone associated with it have been the beneficiaries of that initial wisdom.

It is not possible to record here everything that comes under the heading of "fellowship" as indeed all of our fundraising activities have centred on the relationships between members and their families. Whether we think of those activities when large numbers have gone away together, or just selling raffle tickets in pairs or manning the "cash-a-can" collection bin, we have had fun and have got to know one another well.

Thompson River Dam

The earliest of the "away together" functions was probably the visit to at the Thompson River Dam in Pres. Kevin Maunder's year. On the weekend of 12th and 13th November 1983, 38 members and their wives/partners, together with our Japanese exchange student Koichi Hara, visited the Thompson River Dam in the mountains to the east of Melbourne. Accommodation on the Saturday evening was in the huts previously provided for the workers on the dam (the "Dam Workers").



The facilities including the food hall and accommodation were made available to groups such as ours to tour the dam. Sleeping facilities were in workers' wooden huts divided into small rooms containing two single beds each. The Rotary Club of Box Hill used 20 of the 60 rooms available during our visit.

Saturday saw a bus tour of the dam and Sunday we visited the old gold mining town of Walhalla which generated great fellowship.

This first jaunt laid the foundation for the annual “Golf and Fellowship” weekends held in November each year in various towns along the Murray, Paynesville, Port Fairy, Mount Gambier, Bright, Marysville, etc. and their associated golf, winery visits, gliding, ballooning and local sightseeing. Such has been their success that a further weekend was introduced some years later – the Annual “Peninsula” fishing and golf weekend when members are accommodated at the beach homes of members at Portsea, Sorrento, Blairgowrie, and Rye.

Golf & Fellowship Weekends

Our first fellowship venture to the Murray River took place on the weekend of 4-6 October 1985 when 13 couples, some with children, journeyed to Moama and stayed at the Rich River Country Club for a weekend of golf, tennis, pokies, eating, singing, sight-seeing and Trivial Pursuit. Since then these weekends have become an annual fellowship venture with perhaps as many as 45 couples participating.



*Greg Matthews presents
a Winner's Trophy to
Carmel Francis*

On that first trip the weather was not particularly kind and some time was spent indoors where those present will no doubt recall the special “skill” shown by one of Roger Wiggill’s daughters playing Trivial Pursuit!

These excursions have normally taken place during spring and in most years the weather has been very kind. It is impossible to record all the highlights of these fellowship weekends. The golf courses have been excellent and even the “hackers” have had enjoyable and successful rounds. Some “burglars” have also come to the fore to win our special trophies in spite of the efforts of the handicapper to “nobbles” some participants.

There is always time for wine tasting, buying and consuming wine, some playing the pokies, eating far too much food, much conviviality and the opportunity to visit historical sites or community activities.

Some of the greatest memories, however, will be of hot-air ballooning, with the occasional uncomfortable landing, and of gliding expeditions. Many of our members and their partners gained new experiences as they soared above the ground; so different from being up and away in a 747.



Are these “burglars”? Ralph Lee, John Moyle, Norma Wing Young and Ray Zuccala make a great team!

And there are those who will remember ruefully the additional cost of these enjoyable weekends when somehow their feet were too heavy on the accelerator, particularly on the homeward journey, and the speed cameras, and their “supervisors”, did the rest! All in the name of Rotary fellowship! One camera in Rochester managed to capture five members in the space of thirty-five minutes!

Whilst the initial weekends were very much aimed at those wishing to play golf, emphasis after the first few weekends has been directed towards other than golf – sightseeing, winery visits, etc. in order that all tastes can be catered for, and a wider group of attendees may participate. From the following list, the reader can see the diversity of venues chosen from Swan Hill to Bright; from Paynesville to Mount Gambier, and, only three months before its destruction in the Black Saturday bush fires, Marysville.

Fellowship of a different kind surrounded an excursion for children from Yooralla when we took them for an outing to the Winneke Dam.

Pictured: - Dorothy Clarke, Judy Steinicke and Judy Reddish



Over the years, these wonderful weekends have involved visits to:

1985-86	Rich River	1998-99	Swan Hill
1986-87	Rich River	1999-00	Tocumwal
1987-88	Corowa	2000-01	Corowa
1988-89	Barooga	2001-02	Rich River
1989-90	Rich River	2002-03	Port Fairy
1990-91	Rich River	2003-04	Paynesville
1991-92	Rich River	2004-05	Swan Hill
1992-93	Yarrawonga	2005-06	Bright
1993-94	Rich River	2006-07	Echuca-Moama
1994-95	Rich River	2007-08	Mt Gambier
1995-96	Swan Hill	2008-09	Marysville
1996-97	Yarrawonga	2009-10	13h Beach
1997-98	Rich River	2010-11	Tocumwal

NBTT

Ros Horne (as acting sergeant): There will be no more “sheilas and fillies” in this club from now on!

Tony McLean: That’s a bit rough! Just the other week, we had a Sheila as guest speaker and she was only here because of her filly.

Some Special Memories from P.P. Kevin Maunder

Just a few special memories of the first six years.

- Charter night
- District Conferences at Albury, Adelaide and Canberra
- Labelling of Rotary wine (Stan Hibbert)
- Fashion Parades (Ron Liner and Paul Fitz)
- Ash Wednesday Cleanup
- “Raft” races
- Tree planting near the Freeway
- Hosting the President Elects’ training seminar

Grapevine Hackers Trophy

In the belief that “everyone likes to see their name in print”, the names of the winners of the prestigious Annual Fellowship Weekend Trophy (plus a couple of awards on the way to or from various district conferences) are listed below:-

1988 June Phillips, Gwen Proposch, John Robson, Tom Wing Young.
1989 Ron Carnell, Sue Fitz, John Moyle, June Phillips.
1989 Ron Carnell, Terry Keyhoe, John Reddish, Norma Wing Young.
1990 John Moyle, Ralph Lee, Norma Wing Young, Ray Zuccala.
1991 Murray Carr, Lois Fynmore, Ron Carnell, Roger Benallack.
1992 Carmel Hughes, John Rennie, Tony McLean.
1992 Tony McLean, Lorna Lee, Max Hunter, Maurice Ellis.
1993 David Cheney, Sue Fitz, Ron Liner, Cathie Maggio.
1994 Cathie Maggio, Anita Swanson, John Rennie, Bernie Smith.
1995 Clive Hughes, Dianne McLean, June Phillips, John Rennie.
1996 Geoff Griffiths, Valda McIver, Ron Phillips, Geoff Steinicke.
1997 Geoff Griffiths, Tony McLean, Maria Moffat, Kevin White.
1998 David Cheney, Sue Fitz, Dianne McLean, John Mollison.
1999 Cathy Maggio, Frank Libman, Dave Wilshire, Marcel Muntwyler.
2000 Cathy Maggio, Jenny Ryan, Greg Ross, Lindsay Pegg.
2001 Geoff Dwyer, Jan Cheney, Geoff Steinicke, Ros Horne.
2002 Paul Fitz, Anita Swanson, Ron Liner.
2003 June Phillips, Lorna Lee, John Magor.
2004 Ian Mollison, Brenda Bowden, John Magor, Thelma Wright.
2005 Peter Cleary, Greg Matthews, Anita Swanson, Ian Taylor.
2006 Phil Francis, John Magor, Peter Sutherland, Marcel Muntwyler.
2007 Brenda Bowden, Peter Elliott, Phil Francis.
2008 Bill Studebaker, Jim Studebaker, Carmel Francis, Greg Matthews.
2009 Imre Lele, Dave Morris, Don and Brenda Bowden.

Peninsula Fishing and Golf

Everything starts with a good idea. Towards the end of 1994 some of our very spirited members with boats, suggested that they had enough boating capacity to host a fishing weekend, and an idea was born. Friday night could be spent at Koonya, Saturday morning fishing, the afternoon resting in preparation for a fish BBQ, and video “entertainment”, etc on Saturday night. Sunday morning could be a round of golf with BBQ lunch at Max Hunter’s boatshed, at Blairgowrie, then home - all the rudiments of a good Rotary fellowship weekend. This first weekend took place over 17th -19th February 1995 and “Commodore” Ted Angleton, David Cheney, Peter Cleary and John Mollison generously provided the use of their boats.

One of the participants suggested to his wife afterwards that the ladies had missed a great weekend and they’d be included next year but this was greeted with a cold stare by “she who must be obeyed” who can’t stand boats or fishing!

The first BBQ was at Mollison's and everyone gathered eagerly and anxiously to learn how the various boats had performed. How many fish did we catch? Did we get stuck on a sandbar, etc? Everyone quickly became aware of the bay's features, the Pope's eye, the seals, the main channels, sandbars and even flat batteries!

Ted's boat was popular as he always assured us that he had just had it serviced, and being the sort of bloke that he is, he gave each of us the thrill of steering the boat. Ted's watchful eyes noted the colour changes from deep blue in the main channel to lighter shades of green where we were stuck on a sandbar. For the amateurs it always seemed a long swim home if you were near Mud Island and Ted turned the key to move and all you could hear was the "er er er", and it won't start! The back up battery is not switched on and as the small amount of wind increased the boat was rocking 90°. There is no land to be seen and someone anxiously asks, "Where is the mobile?" And just as the serviceman is about to launch a bay tow, the gentle throb of the Chevy V8 stirs into action.

While leaning over the back of the now moving boat and hanging on to a line trying to catch a fish a buzz could be heard from an electric motor and there was water spurting out a hole at the rear of the boat, at least something was working. "What's this Ted?" Ted's eyes glazed over before an explanation emerged from his quivering lips. "The bung, the bung" cried Ted. "I forgot to put the bung in." "No problems" said Ron Liner, "What does it look like?" Ted explained.

Ron stripped off (ah, there's a sight to behold) and he dived over and fossicked around for some time before he emerged from the water with the bung in his hand. "Is this it, Ted?" Ted nearly collapsed because it really is designed to stay attached to the boat and if Ron dropped it? Ron climbed back on board and Ted did a Malcolm Campbell getting his boat back to Sorrento. Ted was sure that if he drove the boat fast enough, the rate of inflow of the water would balance the outflow from the speed of the boat!

It was with great pride that each group prepared and filleted the catch for the BBQ. Roger Benallack took great pride in the presentation of his catch. Mollo was in full flight arranging the BBQ. "Pass me the flour, Mollo" was heard and a container of white stuff was given to Roger and his catch was dutifully "floured". Roger was heard to say "this flathead is beautiful, so fresh and sweet" but little did he know just how true those words were to prove. Bernie, who had had a cricketing commitment in Melbourne arrived with a substantial purchase of chips and it was amazing to see a group of hungry "human" males behave like seagulls! The fish was now ready to be devoured and the comments were of the form "My word, Roger, this flathead really is sweet!" And it sure was, because the "flour" was actually castor sugar! Not to be deterred it was our versatile ex-Hungarian, Imre Lele, who solved the problem with lashings of soy sauce and so was born "Flathead Sweet and Sour"!

Many other nefarious activities occurred that weekend on the Saturday evening and at golf on Sunday and some of the stories are good, and some not so good. (The term "schnapper-gate" will not be used within these pages).

So were born our Peninsula Fishing and Golf weekends.



Which is the seal? Lew Lustig and Geoff Perdriau entertain a friend!

These weekends have become very popular although there are fewer members going fishing but more are playing golf on both days. It has become “traditional” for the Friday night BBQ to be held at the Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron, Saturday evening’s fish and chips extravaganza at Ted’s (or more recently at Morris’s), and the after Sunday golf lunch at the Matthews’.

Our many members who have homes down the bay generously provide accommodation and fishing excursions include the use of craft which are chartered for the occasion. The seals too have learnt to expect our arrival, and as long as Ted refrains from reading the accommodation list at Club nights, this delightful fellowship weekend could retain its position as a feature of our Rotary year!

Editorial Comment

Many other stories arising from the activities of these fishing and golf weekends were submitted for publication in this history. However, the editorial committee, acting out of a sense of good taste and the potential to avoid possible litigation has chosen to refrain from publishing some of the events suggested. The editorial committee trusts that those who submitted these special memories will not be offended by the omission of such well-intended offerings!



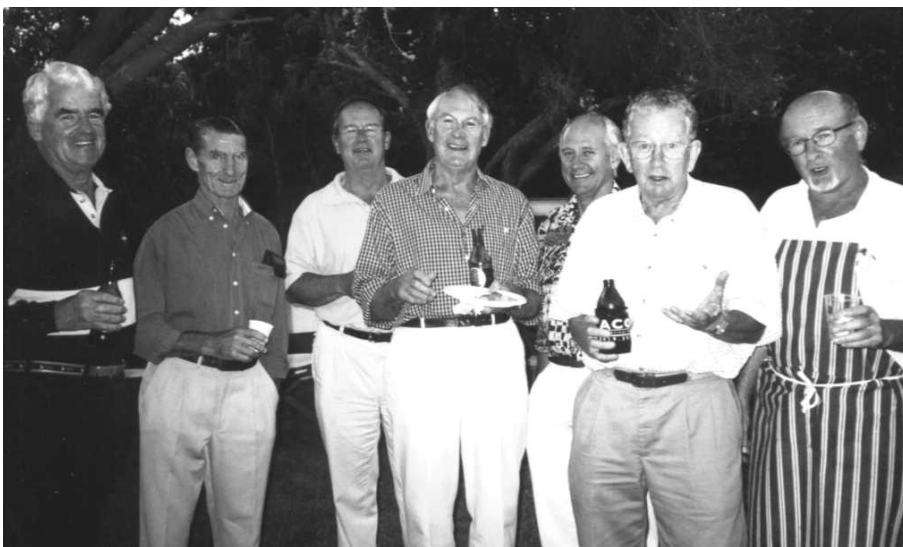
Peter Cleary and Roger Benallack prepare to fillet the catch.



*Ian Mollison and Peter Courtney
- the chefs for the night*



Post-fishing Jollification!
*Ian Taylor, Ron Phillips, John Robson, Maurice Ellis,
John Moyle, Phil Francis and Peter Baird
seem well fed and relaxed fishermen.*



*Max Hunter, George Swanson, Jim Studebaker,
Dave Morris, Peter Elliott, Don Stewart and
Jim Romanis enjoying both "Fish and Fosters".*

The Strathbogie Experience

Since the early 1980s, not long after the Club was chartered, members have been invited to Bernie Smith's Strathbogie "Lodge" for a weekend. This became an annual event in which members participated and enjoyed that special fellowship.

Bernie's Strathbogie property is located 160km from Melbourne and is surrounded by State Forest. It has a permanent creek where "guests" have spent many pleasant hours fishing for brown trout and Murray crays, and solving the problems of the world! The marksmen have shot their share of rabbits, and Strathbogie has an 18-hole golf course.

In the early days some members "helped" with the various chores around the house to help Bernie with maintenance, others just think that they did! In recent years it has all been very leisurely, mostly eating and drinking with members demonstrating their cooking skills and the highlight has been the Saturday evening "in ground" roast.

At the time of the Benalla floods Bernie made Strathbogie available to our work teams that helped so much to assist the locals in the clean up. A favourite discussion, mainly on the Friday nights, has been who is to be President Elect in the coming year, and just occasionally the suggestion has been correct!

On more than one occasion the "odd" Rotarian, after having a few, would forget to open the flue to the large fireplace – the result is blurred in more ways than one!



Host and Chef Bernie Smith, carves the meat for John Robson, George Selkrig, and Bill Kneale

NBTT

Brian Hurnard: One thing I learnt from Peter Courtney is that it's not what you say that matters, but rather how sincere you can make it sound.

NBTT

Bernie Smith (as chairman when Ian Adams (teacher) and Duncan Ansell (Ansell Rubber Company) were to deliver their autobiographies):
"Our two diverse speakers tonight are both men of letters".

NBTT

Mike McKay (in fines from the floor): "Last Sunday morning, my wife's boss secretary was awakened by a loud knocking on her door which she opened to find standing there, a stout Greek-looking gentleman".
Nino Sofra (tersely): "The gentleman was neither stout nor Greek!"

Children's Christmas in the Park

2003 was the year the Club reintroduced the Christmas Family Picnics at an especially reserved area in Westerfold Park, Templestowe. The venue included a shelter shed, two bar-b-ques, and members decorated the area with Christmas bunting. This Fellowship function turned out to be a delightful family day highlighted by the arrival of a heavily disguised Rotaractor as Father Christmas (in subsequent years, a stout Rotarian took on the role) much to the delight of all the children present. Their proud parents and grandparents provided all the presents.



Jane Pennington with a well known gentleman

Emirates Stakes Day

In November 2007, on the initiative of Don and Ala Taylor, the first fellowship activity at the Spring Racing Carnival's Emirates' Stakes Day was held.

Since then, about fifty members and guests have spent a very enjoyable afternoon, in perfect weather, at the club's Super Site at Flemington Race Course.

Most members travelled to Flemington by train, and, as the day progressed, the wisdom of this mode of transport became increasingly obvious.

The highlights of the days include the women's fashions; our own marquee; and the home made food served throughout the afternoon, per courtesy of Ala and her assistants.

All those who attended will remember the function as a great fellowship day.



Emirates Stakes Day organizer, Don Taylor

Lawn Bowls Evening

In 2004, the Rotary Club of North Balwyn held its first fellowship evening at the North Balwyn Bowls Club in Buchanan Avenue.

The evening replaced a regular Thursday club night and was extremely well attended.

Approximately 80 members, partners and friends met from 6pm for a few liquid heart starters and nerve settlers. The easier the nerves became, the more confident everyone seemed as they embarked, in most instances, on their first foray into this "easy game" of geriatric marbles".

A dinner of roast chicken from the local business "Lemon Grass" in the Village was accompanied by an impressive array of salads, followed by desserts, all prepared by the wonderful lady members of the Bowls club.

At 7.30pm, everyone was provided with a set of bowls (as closely matched to their claw size as possible) and then turned loose on the beautiful, very slick, synthetic surface of the North Balwyn greens.

The realisation that "it is not as easy as it looks" was quickly evident as bowl after bowl rolled effortlessly into the sandy ditches - the bowler's equivalent of the dreaded golf bunker. There was also ample evidence that Rotarians are unable to determine "bias" and many bowls were seen racing, out of control, across several neighbouring rinks.

An hour and a half later, under the very effective lights, it was time to call it a night and listen to tales of woe and undeserved hard luck of the one that 'just missed', over a little post mortem libation.

Several people realised that the game was not quite as easy, or gentle, as they had imagined, mainly through the discovery of several muscles that had not been used for any purpose whatsoever for a number of years.



Obviously there is a “sheep station” at stake!

The evenings have always been a great success and have become an annual fixture on the club calendar.

The Club’s thanks, of course, must go to the committee and members of the North Balwyn Bowls Club for their continued co-operation and ready assistance.

NBTT

Ian Mollison: Was the list of golfers just read out by Greg Matthews meant to encourage more to come or to encourage others to stay away?

Greg Mathews: In your case, stay away!

