

Chapter 5

Community Service

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Serving Our Local Community

Health Surveys

During the early years of the Club our resident GP, John Reddish, with the assistance of members, such as Fred Pike, organised our Health Surveys that provided residents with health checks at their local car park. These surveys were held over the years until 1990.

We obtained the use of the Diabetes Association Caravan, often towed by Fred, and two of their nursing staff performed many Blood Sugar tests for Diabetes over the weekend, usually Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. We also used a number of doctors and nurses, including John's two daughters, and a number of members' wives to take blood pressure readings of the many members of the local community who attended. Blood cholesterol surveys were also conducted at the time, and in our peak years, we had the use of the Health Department's mobile Chest X-ray units and Radiographers.

We had some interesting experiences in securing power from neighbours' power supplies and had to overcome many overloads and blown fuses. Power for the X-ray units was taken directly from the main power lines.

Health surveys were held at a number of locations including North Balwyn Village (opposite the Post Office), Greythorn Shopping Centre and in the car park at Camberwell outside Target and Safeway.



The "Team" on duty outside the X-ray Unit in 1986.

The queues were often quite long and all members of the Club and their wives were rostered into groups of queue marshals and recorders for sending information onto our clients' doctors.

Health surveys provided a wonderful service to the community and proved an excellent source of fellowship for the Club. Regrettably the Health Department removed access to the X-ray units and the cost of professionally staffing the other caravans, with nurses receiving weekend rates, became prohibitive.



Dr John checks Betty Carnell's blood pressure

A special memory from past member Capt. Arfon Jones.

The occasion the Club visited the Salvation Army Anchorage in Collingwood as an official club meeting. The Salvos provided the meal and after the meeting we toured the complex and hostel meeting with the homeless men and saw the programs for their rehabilitation. We also saw how donated goods were repaired and restored.

Blood Donors

Another project in which we became involved early in the life of the Club was the regular donation of blood at the Red Cross Blood Donor Centres. Key figures in our commitment to these activities over several years have been Bernie Smith and Marcel Muntwyler.

Collections have been conducted at various centres but the scheme was most effective for us when our collection involved a three-monthly visit to the centre at the Royal Women's Hospital. On these occasions there could be up to 15+ members and wives who were part of a regular donor team and the Service was always impressed by the camaraderie amongst our group. When the Royal Women's Hospital centre closed, support diminished and although some members still attend regularly at South Melbourne at Camberwell, or one of the other mobile centres, the numbers involved have reduced.

It was always fascinating to see reactions of new participants and of some of the “older hands” who took every opportunity to instil fear and concern into whoever was present. So much so that on one occasion David Goldsmith was asked what was wrong with the colour of his shirt. Being on the lookout for a prank he did not react until some moments later he realised that his shirt was soaked in blood and he was still bleeding profusely. After a return to the “couch” and the assistance of the nursing staff all was well again and another donor evening was over. It was also said that Greg Ross only attended to enjoy the sandwiches and free cup of tea or coffee!

In the years since, there have been several members who have, religiously, continued to make donations every three months, including 100 donors, Geoff Perdriau and Stan Hibbert.

It has been found that the mobile blood bank when it comes to the Boroondara Civic Centre in Camberwell is the most convenient location.



*Geoff Perdriau
celebrates his 100th
blood donation*

Home Security

We are all conscious of the need to concern ourselves with home security and this is reflected in the involvement of some Club members with Neighbourhood Watch. It was David Cheney who took the question of home security, particularly at holiday time, to a level that was valued by the whole of North Balwyn. David and his committee produced a glossy printed “Holiday Checklist” sheet of information that was distributed by club members to every household in our area. It outlined the actions we should take, who to inform, how to involve neighbours and so on. The community feedback from this initiative was excellent and our community again recognised that the Rotary Club of North Balwyn is truly a service club.

Public Forum - 'AIDS' Seminar

During the Rotary year 1988-89 there was growing community concern at the spread of the AIDS virus. This was reflected both in the lack of public knowledge regarding how AIDS was transmitted and the slow rate of progress in finding a cure, despite vast sums of money being spent throughout the world on research. The gay community was being targeted for spreading the virus and community frustration was being openly and violently displayed.

At John Robson's instigation and under his leadership, the Club, encouraged by President David Cheney agreed to take the initiative and organise a public forum at which medical experts would make their knowledge available.

Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital agreed that the Hospital's leading experts should form a panel who would speak on their particular field of expertise and then be available to answer questions from the audience. Included in this panel were Professor Ian Gust, Dr. Ann Mijch and Dr. Peter Miese. The seminar took place on 7 September at the Camberwell Civic Centre.

Although attendance of approximately 200 people was less than we had hoped, those present at the meeting were able to obtain the very best medical information and advice available at the time from a very distinguished panel of experts. Judging by the question and answer session that followed the presentations, much was derived from the night.

Because of the physical clashes that had been taking place over this contentious subject, the local police were on stand-by but we were fortunate that the audience attended to listen and learn, rather than to demonstrate.



John Robson chairing the AIDS Seminar

Helping Our Country Cousins

Ash Wednesday Bushfires

Mid-February 1983 and there was nothing but bad news from our matched club, Gisborne. Our response was to offer immediate, positive and direct help in any form that Gisborne felt to be best. President John Etkins discussed the situation with then Gisborne President Ken Maxfield who agreed that some immediate cash in the hands of those who had lost all would be of most help as clothing and food was pouring in from other sources. So at our next Club meeting the sum of \$1,320 was raised and, as Ken had also suggested, some toys for the children there was a bicycle, a tricycle, billy-carts, books, dolls, games, etc., which were loaded into President John's wagon and delivered to Ken on Saturday with the cash. Gisborne was still under a pall of blue wood smoke, with a fire still burning just to the south and smoking and smouldering patches everywhere. The eyes of the children in the families that had been housed in temporary accommodation lit up when they saw the toys and the parents were delighted to receive some "cash in hand".

The clean up started the following Saturday, 26 February, and the people of Macedon and Gisborne were delighted to have teams of our Rotarians there, on Saturday and Sunday at 7 am, to do whatever was asked of them and our "side-by-side" involvement

was greatly appreciated. By that week a further \$230 had been raised and a painting from Melva Haycraft was being raffled to raise further funds. Work continued over the following two weekends and with other service club groups and 150 US sailors ,whose ship was in port and who contributed both financially and physically, we could feel well satisfied with a job well done.

President
Rotary Club of North Balwyn.

Macedon, 7 March 1983

Dear Sir,

My wife and I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to your Club for the manner in which you assisted in the Macedon clean up project of 26 Feb and in particular the cleaning of our property.

The goodwill gained by the co-operation of all service clubs over the past weeks will ensure a stronger community-minded people in our area. Thank you for your participation.

Yours in Service
Denis Griggs
President, Macedon Ranges Lions Club

Our support was recognised by the Gisborne Club and by many of the residents we assisted. One of the many letters of appreciation was from Denis Griggs who's burnt out home block we had helped to clean up.



One of Our Ash Wednesday Teams

Some extracts from the Gisborne Rotary Club's bulletins at that time read:

Tuesday, 8th February 1983

The disastrous bush fires on Mt Macedon last Tuesday restricted attendance at our meeting with most of the Mt Macedon residents staying close to home and keeping an eye on their property. Thankfully the homes of our Rotarians escaped damage and we sincerely sympathise with the some 24 people who lost their homes or cottages in the fires.

Tuesday, 1 March 1983

President Ken Maxfield detailed the range of aid which had been channeled through the Club by Rotary Clubs throughout Australia. Special note was made of the cooperation received from our neighbouring Club of Kyneton and our matched Club of North Balwyn, for their donation and for their continuing assistance with the clean up.

Tuesday 15 March 1983

"A Tip of the Hat"

To the Rotary Club of North Balwyn who sent another work team last Sunday to assist in clean up of those properties not eligible for "Operation Clean Up" special assistance. Many thanks for your continued assistance fellows.

Benalla Clean Up

Disastrous flooding struck the Benalla region in November 1993 causing devastation to properties and damage to many homes. DG Rob Dunn called upon Rotarians of D9800 for support and in the first instance \$50,000 was raised. However, in addition to the financial support, the need arose for "hands-on" efforts to repair homes and flood damaged property and assist the local people in their rehabilitation.

North Balwyn Rotarians were again to the fore to assist their country cousins. On the weekend of 10-12 December a group of ten headed off to Bernie's at Strathbogie for the night before joining other D9800 helpers at Benalla on Saturday and Sunday. Our main task, in a PYHO theme, was to completely repaint, inside and out, the "Ballendella Home" for intellectually handicapped, which had been severely damaged. With the help of some members from other clubs, including DG Rob Dunn and his wife Faye, and under the watchful eye and sometimes reproachful tongue of our Master Painter, Ron Liner, the task was largely completed by Saturday evening. This brought great satisfaction to the Benalla community and local club members.



Part of the Benalla crew Graham Foard, Bernie Smith and Imre Lele enjoy a well-earned respite

Some of our team returned to Bernie's retreat for a relaxing Saturday night and Sunday, Greg Ross only appearing close to midnight! Once again it was a job well done and showed our ability to respond quickly.

Ian Richardson's Special Memory

Our first conference in Canberra and pre-conference at Bateman's Bay; what a thrill. Joan and I can remember walking into a group one evening at Bateman's Bay and the table groupings had already been established which left Joan and I to start a new table. Immediately Tommy and Norma and Ralph and Lorna came and joined and that made us feel very good and a part of "the team".

EDAR Fete

Support for our local community became an early priority of our young club and from 1981 this was expressed through our involvement in the EDAR (Eastern Districts Association for the Retarded) Annual Fetes. Through the efforts of Fred Pike and David Willshire, the Club became supporters of EDAR and this continued until the EDAR organising committee decided in 1991 to discontinue their fetes as fund raisers.

The Fetes were held in October or November of each year at the school premises in Cherry Rd, Balwyn. Our major role was to run the Trash and Treasure stall and that included the supply of all the goods that we sold. There were times when we had difficulty recognising whether some of our members were themselves the Trash or the Treasure; and over the years there were many attempts to give away, or auction off, some of our fun loving members.



"White Elephant" specialists Stan, John R., Geoff P. and Bernie

As well as the fascinating selection of items that were provided for sale, Geoff Steinicke and his family operated their Peanut Butter making machine that became a feature of the Fetes, as well as of subsequent sales at the club meetings.

EDAR also benefited from our monetary donations, and we provided volunteer labour and materials to assist with maintenance at Cherry Road.

EDAR continues to provide service to those in need through an administrative office in Whitehorse Road, and through their three Adult Training and Support Services centres in Balwyn, Bulleen and Surrey Hills.

Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal

The Club has continuously supported the annual Red Shield appeal by ensuring that a team of collectors is available to assist each year.

Memories tend to be a little hazy, but the regular participants will recall the conviviality, before and afterwards, at the home of whomever our host Rotarian happened to be for the year.

While tales are told of unfriendly dogs and unwilling residents, for the most part we have enjoyed the participation in a respected community activity. It has been interesting too to observe the changing character of our North Balwyn streets and perhaps we could contribute to a demographic study relating to the changing residential profile of our area.

It is good when you are greeted warmly by those who do care and who are only too ready to make a donation however small or large. Of course it is great when someone hands over a substantial cheque, but it is even more gratifying when an elderly resident who looks as if they can ill afford it, willingly makes a small contribution without wanting a tax receipt!

Perhaps the worst days are those when it is raining heavily and the wind is blowing. We have had many of these of the years. Such a day was experienced in 1988 when the report heading in the Grapevine was "Success in the Rain". We had one of those days again in 2000 when Lewis and Eve Lustig were our hosts.

Armed with the 'official' plastic bag containing the receipt book, pen, laminated map, and envelopes the collectors set out. As usual the weather presented its special challenge. Collectors tried to juggle receipts and money along with an umbrella and still find the doorbell / knocker without getting too wet. Frozen hands soon followed as it was very difficult trying to write out receipts with gloves on. The receipt book managed to absorb a good deal of rain and very quickly became rather bedraggled. The pages stuck to themselves and legibility was lost in the damp. We were not deterred and the team had once again successfully collected from our neighbourhood, letting the residents know that the Rotary Club of North Balwyn was alive and well.

It was back to the Lustig's for a very welcome warming drink, some delicious food and a chance to thaw out. Money was soon spread all over the dining room table as collectors

counted their takings and the amounts were tallied on the official sheet. These donations were then delivered to the Salvation Army and far exceeded their expectations and they were very grateful again for our ongoing assistance with their appeal.

For a number of years, Ian Richardson's home became "Headquarters" where food and refreshments were plentiful for the diminishing number of collectors taking part, as enthusiasm for door knocks waned

Subsequently, from 2005 to 2008, a slightly more "aggressive" approach under David Cheney was taken to the "volunteering" of members – members were "in" unless they had "opted out".

Thus, for each of those four years, there were 66 collectors, each pounding the pavement for up to two hours over two weekends. In spite of tsunamis, bush fires, floods and declining economic conditions making community support difficult, our club's collections contributed close to \$6000 each year.

In 2009, sadly, the Salvation Army adopted a new approach which was rightly believed to be outside the guidelines with which our club felt comfortable.

By June 1993 our contribution to the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund was \$13,966 which made us, at the time, the fourth largest contributor in D9800

A Special Memory From Bill Kneale, Our Charter Secretary

Our 10th anniversary birthday night when I was invited to say the Invocation and received a special thank you from Capt. Arfon Jones. My rendering of the invocation was:

*"Lord, as we gather here tonight to reflect on our past ten years,
We thank You for the many banquets we have shared and the wonderful companionship;
We thank You for ensuring that so many willing men and women have been joined in service.
Most of all Lord we thank You in anticipation that You will continue to provide the opportunity to serve in Rotary for many more decades."*

The Variety Club of Victoria (VCV)

The VCV has as its main focus support for Victoria's Special Needs Children 18 years of age and under. This support covers a wide spectrum of aid and assistance but never includes payments to the children, nor indeed to their respective Special Needs organisations. VCV always purchases the goods or services and passes them on to the children.

Our Club first became associated with VCV through the 1996 Formula One Grand Prix when the Grand Prix Corporation Board nominated VCV as a recipient charity of the Grand Prix. Part of the money raised by our Club was donated to VCV to aid their work with children. A cheque for \$10,000 was presented to VCV and accepted by Rob Gell, then Chairman of VCV, at our "Sponsors" Club meeting.

In December 1996, Wayne Brown, CEO of VCV, approached Phil Francis asking whether we could provide 15 volunteers to assist with the staging of the VCV Christmas party for 5,000 of Victoria's Special Needs children to be held at the old Exhibition building. Our fifteen volunteers made Fairy Floss, gave out presents, ice creams and assisted with many party activities. All were unanimous that it was, without doubt, the most moving and rewarding "hands-on" Rotary project with which they had ever been associated.

Wayne Brown was so buoyed by our reaction that he asked whether in future years, we could arrange for 100 volunteers to assist with setting up for the party (the day before) and 300 volunteers on party day. Since John Reddish, who was then DGE, was one of those original volunteers, the basis for District support was assured.

Now known as "The Project of a Million Smiles", and held at the new Exhibition building (Jeff's Shed), the recruitment of 400 volunteers each year has become a D9800 project. Our Club, through Phil Francis, played a leading role in providing volunteers and in the recruitment of volunteers from the rest of the District. The party relies on volunteers for its success and over the years many clubs have accepted it as their foremost annual "hands-on" project and willingly provide assistance. VCV now looks to Rotary for its significant input and contribution to staging this outstanding party. What a wonderful achievement!

Our club has annually provided over twenty members and family members to assist in the running of the Party, organize the registration desk, and contribute hands-on labour for the various party activities.

Additional Variety Club Involvements

As an off-shoot from the children's party our Club, for some four years, also provided ten volunteers to assist with running the VCV Grand Final Luncheon held at Crown Casino on the Wednesday before the Grand Final. In 2000 this lunch raised \$105,000 for the work done by VCV.

For several years, a dozen members and family turned up at the south Melbourne studios of Radio 3AW at 7.00 am to man the phone room for the Annual Variety/3AW Bike-a-thon where listeners donated \$200 to pay for a brand new bike to be given to children from needy backgrounds. Annually, this project provides enough money to pay for some 2,000 bikes.

One year, with a number of callers offering to donate a used bike, our club offered to collect them and pass them on to those in need in our community. This led to the collection of over fifty bikes from all over Melbourne; their storage at Larry Fitzpatrick's warehouse, and subsequent repair and distribution. This "once off" exercise proved to be a great success, but, for logistical reasons, was not repeated.

Eva Tilley Memorial Home, Inc.

Since the early 1990's, the Club has had a close relationship with Eva Tilley, the not-for-profit residential aged care facility in Burke Road, North Balwyn, by way of the occasional working bee to clean up the gardens, making donations to their re-building appeal, and in providing "waiters" to serve refreshments at various official functions.

There has also been member involvement in the management of the organization. Max Hunter joined the Board in 1994 and served as Treasurer until his passing in 2009. Delina Schembri-Hardy was a board member for two years till she moved out of the area. Alison Adams, wife of PP Ian Adams, joined the Board in 2007. David Cheney joined the board in 1998 and became chairman in 2008.

Trees and the Environment

From our earliest years we endeavored to do our bit towards improving the environment.

PP Stan Hibbert initiated a special project in June 1982 when he attended a Camberwell Council meeting to present our plans for a "Rotary Park" adjacent to the Eastern Freeway. The plan was very well researched and planned and was well received by Council. Our aim was to provide not only trees and shrubs but to create a recreational environment of tracks that would attract residents to make use of what would hopefully become a replacement environment of flora and fauna. Under President Kevin Maunder's enthusiastic encouragement we commenced planting trees in what was hoped to become "Rotary Park" on Saturday 10 September 1983. We were pleased to have the Mayor and Mayoress Jim and Ivy Rumpf present to support us and we planted some 730 trees and shrubs over two weekends. Our involvement continued and working bees were held to maintain what we had done and were generally followed by barbecues enhancing the fellowship already established. Subsequently the Council changed their commitment to the program and effectively negated the understandings made by refusing to continue with the "Rotary Park" concept.

In 1989-90 former Governor-General Sir Ninian Stephen launched the Australia wide program "Trees for Survival" to help restore the earth's forests and overcome the Greenhouse effect on the world climate. The program is sponsored by Rotary Clubs and is conducted in conjunction with local primary schools. As a club we acted as project leaders at a planting of 3,000 trees in Koonung Reserve during Arbor Week.



Working Bee at "Rotary Park" 1983. That's P.P. Stan Hiibbert in the middle, with Rotarians, families and neighbourhood residents enjoying a well-earned break

Discussions were held with Boroondara Park State School in the early 90s in our being involved in a tree planting program to coincide with the move of the school to its new site in Balwyn Road. This activity was at first deferred but was subsequently supported by the Club.

In 1996-97 the Boroondara Council accepted our offer to support the tree-planting program which they planned for the Freeway precinct. Although this was viewed by "older" members of the Club as somewhat ironic, in view of our experiences in our early years, we did provide logistical assistance to the program.

Trees and the environment have been central to many discussions we have held with local and country community groups but, for reasons not of our making, planned projects have not come to fruition in the manner for which we had hoped. Who knows, our efforts in this direction may yet be rewarded?

Bill Kneale reported the following conversation with Norma.

Norma: I see in the Grapevine that Russell Fynmore is popular with the ladies.

Bill: Yes, he and I have that in common. Today at the meeting I had three young girls sitting with me.

Norma: I wouldn't get too carried away. The girls probably felt safe, as one look at you and they could see you are harmless!!

A Complex Situation from Geoff Steinicke

The changeover in June 1988 at Argenti's in Doncaster Road, North Balwyn (now demolished to make way for the Eastern Freeway) went the usual way of introductions and speeches. The changeover nearing completion, one of the duties for the incoming President, David Cheney, was to present bouquets of flowers to Chresley, wife of Past President John Robson and to Jan, wife of David. Judy, wife of Vice President John Reddish was also in the party to receive a bouquet.

The ladies wore pastel dresses and it was intended that the specially selected bouquet of flowers was to match the colour of the recipient's dress. A distribution of bouquets having been made by David it seemed that that was the end of the presentation, but no, a whisper in David's ear resulted in David collecting Jan's bouquet and swapping it with Chresley's. Further whispering resulted in David collecting Judy's bouquet and swapping it with Jan's and then with Chresley's.

Chaos and laughter for all concerned resulted in one of the best finales to a changeover seen for many years.

Probus Clubs

The idea for the formation of our first Probus Club of North Balwyn arose when David Cheney attended, as our Club's Community Service Director, the District Assembly at La Trobe University in 1984. The Board approved, and the committee sent out some 80 letters of invitation to local retired and semi retired business and professional people to meet, form and join the NB Probus Club.

An information meeting, attended by some 35 prospective members, was held in March 1985, and was chaired by PP Stan Hibbert. The meeting decided to proceed to form the club, and 33 members signed on. Judy Reddish's father, the late John D (Jiggy) Harris, was elected as the inaugural President.

This club soon grew to over 100 members, and a waiting list for membership.

A further Probus Club was formed in 1994-95 by a committee under the leadership of George Selkrig who, with Terry Keyhoe and Ian Richardson, co-opted Marj. Selkrig and Past Member Bill Kneale to launch the new club. Following an advertising campaign President Peter Cleary chaired an interest meeting in May 1995 at the Uniting Church Hall in Doncaster Rd with an attendance of 80. The enthusiastic response assured the future of the new Club named the "Probus Club of Balwyn Heights", and all first three Presidents Bill Kneale, Gwenda Foard and Keith Glover have close associations with North Balwyn Rotary.

Their first meeting took place on 5 June 1995 and by November 1995, the membership had reached 100 with 30 on the waiting list. The Club moved to the Baptist Church Hall in Doncaster Rd in August 1995.

In 2007 Bill Thackray led a committee to investigate the formation of a new Probus Club in our area. A Foundation meeting was held on 8th May 2007. This was chaired by George Selkrig who introduced President John Magor and Chairman of D9800 Probus Committee, PDG David Wills who then spoke on the history and growth of Probus from its inception in England.

Copies of the proposed constitution and by-laws were distributed for consideration over a cup of morning tea. The meeting was later resumed and a total of 57 joining members accepted the Probus constitution and by-laws, set the membership fees and voted to name the club - '*Probus Club of Greythorn.*'

The convenor then called for the election of office bearers and Peter Courtney was duly elected President, with Erin Courtney as Secretary.

The Charter Meeting was held on 12th June 2007

The PC of Greythorn is a mixed club, meets monthly at St Aidan's Church, has had great speakers and is famous for outstanding morning teas!



The Charter Meeting of Greythorn Probus Club

The club has grown considerably and, at one stage, had to restrict membership to 110 members! It has become a very active with ten interest groups. Members are becoming more adventurous, with 20 spending a week on the Murray River on a Houseboat and large numbers staying at Inverloch and attending races at Woolamai each year.

The persistence of Bill and his team has been rewarded with a vibrant club which, hopefully, will continue to thrive.

The club has formed a total of five Probus Clubs - North Balwyn Mens; North Balwyn Ladies; North Balwyn Mixed; Balwyn Heights Mixed; and Greythorn Mixed.

The Radio Hour – “Radio Ron”

The Rotary Hour on Community Radio Station 96.5 Inner FM started in July 1995. Each Tuesday from 4 pm to 5 pm Rotarians from different clubs and districts present the program. North Balwyn participates on the first Tuesday every month. Other clubs involved are Doncaster and Templestowe from D9810 and Heidelberg North from D9790.



Ron Carnell, “Radio Ron”, was the continuous anchor-man for North Balwyn from inception in 1995 to 2004, a period of 10 years. Health problems caused him to vacate the microphone and Don Bowden took over the role early in 2004. Over many years John Mollison has been a part of North Balwyn’s Rotary Hour bringing along guests to be interviewed during the program. In 2007 Tony Wells joined Don Bowden as co-presenter and they share the anchor roles on alternate months.



“Radio Don” Bowden, assisted by “Radio Ron” Carnell

To tie in with the radio station’s objectives the program presents a mix of relaxing music interspersed with news about Rotary and interviews conducted by John Mollison with the various guests who give up their time to talk about Rotary, what is happening in the District and around the world. District Governors and Chairmen of various Committees get involved. The program also provides listeners with information about what Rotary is all about, our aims and programs, and encourages community participation in fund raising events, and the opportunity for others if interested to join our ranks.

For part-time DJ's from Rotary, it's not always plain sailing behind the microphone and console at 96.5 Inner FM, and Don and Tony have had their share of interesting moments. Push the wrong buttons and you are off the air. Play a station promo spot and the system doesn't work. On one occasion they went to air for the first 10 minutes and very little happened and it was a quick move to another studio to get things back on air, most embarrassing. Rotarians, however, always rise to the occasion when challenges arise and the Rotary Hour on radio keeps everyone on their toes.

The hour-long radio program each week presents Rotary in a very positive light. The continuing program provides a strong public relations base and, with four different clubs involved in presenting the program and different presenters, it is a varied and interesting one.

The Jack Nankervis House

Our Club, in February 2000, chose as its major project the construction of a new house that would act as a home for youth in needy circumstances. The project was initiated under the auspices of the Child & Family Care Network (previously known as the Burwood Boys Home) which operates the Foundation for Homeless Youth. For our Club, the project fell within its goal of making a significant contribution to the local community in an area where there was a clear and outstanding need.

The project would have cost up to \$350,000 but for the major contributions of those who worked on it. For its part, the State Government, a strong supporter of the Foundation for Homeless Youth, contributed the land free of charge. Our Club's contribution was \$50,000, saved over seven years from Christmas raffles, catering for the Melbourne Grand Prix and the 2000 Olympics. Greg Matthews, who was Club President when the project gained Club support, championed the project from beginning to end and, through extensive contacts in the building industry, was able to organize \$20,000 of in-kind sponsorship. Other major contributors included the Jack Brockhoff Foundation which donated \$50,000. Much of the work was done by student tradesmen and builders from Holmesglen TAFE as part of their on-the-job training and all who have visited the finished house have commented on the fine workmanship of the completed structure.

The concept was to create a stable home for young girls aged 16 to 20 who are at risk of dropping out of high school or university. Before the house was built, local residents were briefed on the plan of how the home was to be run, allaying any fears that the tenants might turn out to be trouble makers.

Our plan was that the four tenants would remain in the home between two and three years, and would have to meet house rules to stay on. A 'lead tenant' would provide advice and help the younger tenants with budgeting, cooking and other life skills. Each tenant would be referred from other help agencies. Many of these were young people who had already left home and were 'sleeping rough' under bridges or their friends' floors.

NBTT

Hugo Goetze (proposing the toast):

Members and guests: Are your charges glassed?"



A lot of people just standing around and looking at the camera

The house was completed and the keys officially handed over to Sue Sealy of Anglicare on 5th December 2002 at a regular meeting of the Club. Anglicare now manages the home on behalf of the Child and Family Care Network. This club meeting was preceded by an Open Day allowing club members and all others associated with the project to see the house and its workmanship and to discuss how it would operate.



The finished home in Hilda Street, North Balwyn.

The home was named 'Jack Nankervis House' in honour of the Rotarian who worked tirelessly for Rotary and is best known for the many Foundation projects in District 9800 he piloted to completion. Jack Nankervis, as D9800 District Governor, also played an important part in the founding of our club.

The Club continues its association with the project, with members contributing their time and effort in maintaining the grounds and house.



The fully landscaped back garden in Hilda Street.

ABC Giving Tree

For a number of years, the Australian Broadcasting Commission and Rotary collaborated on a Giving Tree project which took place in December of each year up to Christmas Eve.

Various ABC shops allowed a large collection box to be placed in their premises where customers and other members of the public could place purchased items to be donated to a charitable group for distribution to less fortunate families at Christmas.

The ABC provided the venue and publicised the event on local and national radio. Rotary, through its districts, arranged for the collection of the gifts and the delivery to the charity of their choice.

In D9800, this was organised through the clusters. The Eastside cluster was responsible for the ABC shop at the Chadstone Shopping Centre.

In 2003/04 and 2004/05, our club was given the task of organising the project on behalf of the cluster. Findley Cornell was our co-ordinator.

Findley's task was to roster the clubs in our cluster to collect the presents from the ABC Shop and store them at a suitable location. In the early part of December, this was done 3 times per week and in the last 2 weeks daily.

A large box was obtained and subsequently decorated by Areta Hurnard. It was then placed in the foyer of the Chadstone ABC Shop. Large numbers of presents were collected and temporarily stored in Duncan Ansell's garage.

Camcare was chosen as our preferred charity and the gifts were duly delivered to them on Christmas Eve for distribution to deserving families.

Boroondara Family Network

The Boroondara Family Network is a Rotary community project offering a service by trained volunteers who visit families in need on a weekly basis.

Many families are today isolated from the traditional support services so often offered by relatives and friends. When problems do arise, they find it hard to cope, especially when a new baby arrives.

The support that new parents previously received from the extended family when grandparents, aunts, sisters and good friends lived close by is often no longer available.

Volunteers, through their personal experience and additional training, can help parents enjoy their new baby. With such assistance, all members of the family find enrichment and can gain great pleasure in the new baby.

Volunteers are also there to help families to access the many professional services which may be required. They can provide information on medical services and support in times of crisis.

Our Club's involvement has included the offer of financial support and the provision of volunteers willing to undertake training. Several of our lady members and partners became closely involved.

Paint Your Heart Out (PYHO)

It was PDG Greg Ross who, on his return from DG training in USA, brought back with him a project that he saw run by the business people, the Civic Leaders and the Service Organisations. It involved a "hands-on" activity painting the homes of the elderly who were unable to meet the cost or effort for themselves. Greg decided that he would like to start the project here in D9800.

In March 1992, a committee was formed which included our Ron Liner as its painting expert with both knowledge and good connections. Like so many committees there were plenty of great ideas, some very good marketing and a lot of great intention but little practical knowledge. The first paint supplier used was ICI Dulux who kindly donated 8,500 litres of paint. Our early committee meetings included a marketing representative from Dulux and after each meeting she would confide in Ron that she hoped that the committee could get its act together!

Many meetings followed here, there and everywhere. It was all very exhausting, since no one else really understood the requirements and procedures for setting out to paint 126 homes on one day – 1st of March. Some members realised the need for paint but not for drop sheets, empty tins, brushes, rollers, trays, ladders, etc. Ron personally organised 3,500 empty tins and the necessary equipment which was supplemented by what a few other committee members managed to get.

Storage had to be arranged and we were lucky that our chairman had a huge warehouse in Mount Alexander Road. Because of the procrastination of committee members, we nearly lost out on the Dulux offer and Ron was left to provide colour schemes and quantity details for tinting to Dulux almost at the last minute.

With approximately 2 weeks to go, the floor at the storage facility had to be completely clean and marked out to receive the 118 paint lots for the homes designated by each participating Rotary club so that members of each club could go to an area, designated on a worksheet to pick up the goods. Great idea, but when the time came, some members “couldn’t read” and picked up the wrong paint and equipment, which had to be returned promptly after a phone call.

It all seemed so simple, except you need very reliable help. It was 24 hours a day for 6 days with no sleep for Ron who stayed in the warehouse with 3 members of North Essendon Rotary Club during the night.

When deliveries arrived, such as equipment and empty tins, they were put into their allotted areas with some help. The last 2 days Dulux started to deliver paint but what a nightmare. Everything was mixed up in quantities and colours instead of being in house lots as ordered. But no, all had been thrown on to three large trucks without thought of an actual requirement. Since Ron had all house sheets and quantities everything had to be sorted out – but that in itself is another story because Ron’s three helpers had other things on their minds!

By Friday, everything was ready for pick up by the Rotary Clubs. It was like a trash and treasure market. There were people with trailers, trucks and panel vans all trying to drive in and load up. It was total mayhem! At the end of the day all clubs had to return unused paint and equipment and that had to be removed that night so the warehouse could be used for business the next day.

We had previously arranged with the committee that all paint and equipment left over could be sold and picked up that night, which was not a problem.

By 10pm all was over, Ron could hardly walk as he was so exhausted and tired. But he was not entirely finished as at Olympic Park there was food, drink and entertainment, with all Rotary Clubs and 3500 volunteers. It was a great Rotary project and Ron was anxious to repeat it all again - or was he?

*Is that Don Haycraft
on the ladder?*



An immense amount of work but what a success story with outstanding input from our own Ron Liner -- ***No Painter Finer than Liner!***



Over the years, many members of our Club have been involved in PYHO activities. In addition to the many private homes of the needy, we have used our skills at the Senior Citizen's Centre at Marwal Avenue, at the Birrell Centre and at the Portsea Camp and enjoyed great fellowship in the process. The project also enjoyed TV publicity when in April 1995 "Hey, Hey It's Saturday" devoted a segment to PYHO in Richmond.

Paint Your Heart Out received a further boost when in Melbourne in March 1994, then RI President Bob Barth, in the course of a world tour during which he gave special emphasis to "hands-on" projects, participated in a PYHO activity.

The following year Greg Ross decided to make "Paint Your Heart Out" national with a committee under chairman Howard Healey. After Howard's untimely death he was replaced by our own David Cheney.

Ron Liner arranged a meeting with Bristol Paints who agreed to sponsor Paint Your Heart Out, Australia wide, providing \$25,000 per year for the next 3 years. This was used to promote the program to all Australian Rotary Clubs, covering printing and postage costs. Each club received a voucher from Bristol to buy paint at a price better than trade and paint a home on in the first weekend in March each year. In the ensuing three years, more than 1500 sites were painted Australia wide.

NBTT

Ian Taylor at Club Forum after John Robson pointed out that Ian had not answered John's question:

"John, I do know that was not an answer to your question. But I was not a salesman all those years for nothing, so that answer that I have given is the only answer that you are going to get!"

Portsea Children's Camp

Over the years the Portsea Camp, traditionally used as a holiday camp for under-privileged children, had fallen into disrepair, but what a prime piece of real estate it was! What a pity that successive governments failed to provide the necessary funds to maintain these historic buildings. But what an opportunity for Rotary to show its true value in the community.

Ours was the first club to take up the challenge when, in February 1996, under the guidance of our Community Service Director, John Mollison, and approximately 60 Rotarians, restoration work commenced, starting with the historic building used as a Manager's Cottage. To allow us to participate in this way, 14 of our members made their holiday homes available for a weekend of work and fellowship. The cottage required a new veranda roof and replacement of the wrought iron. Geoff Griffiths' carpentry skills were reflected in the cornices on the pillars and his expertise was greatly appreciated. There was other restoration work, gardening and painting to be done and the tasks were attacked with great gusto. Our efforts laid the foundations for a continuing Victoria Rotary project.



Restoration work on the historic Manager's Cottage

In 1996-97 we made Portsea our "Paint Your Heart Out" project and over 30 members, partners, Rotaractors and our exchange student, Pon, participated. The veranda posts were repaired, rotted wood was replaced and the decorative frieze was re-installed and all were painted. For those few robust members not otherwise occupied, an immense rock pile took their attention.



A happy but tired team in front of the Managers' Cottage 1996-97

The stories from that first excursion to Portsea are many and varied and only a few can find a place here. This was the first of many occasions when we did our share down at Portsea Camp.

Lew Lustig got all tangled up with the electric cord on the belt sander. The sparks were really flying until quick action from John Mollison saved Lew from getting belted by 240 volts. It was suggested that perhaps Lew should stick to drills of the dental variety!

For most of Saturday morning George Swanson was seen holding the ladder for Ron's apprentice, Nancy, who had no fear of heights. We're told that Anita was always in his thoughts!

Winston Churchill was reported to have worked 24 hours at a stretch by taking short naps during the day or the night. We're sure that our Master Painter, Ronnie, has perfected that skill!

Does anyone else have the type of ebullient neighbours like the Angleton's? As an open top Suzuki cruised past a voice was heard to cry "Good day Tedeeeee!" On the way back the neighbour was given some of his own medicine by Ted and the rest who were standing on the balcony



Another group of “happy” Portsea workers

Over successive years there has been excellent support for our Portsea work and for the fellowship that surrounded these activities and none of this would have worked so well without the generosity of our “Peninsula Hosts”. Ron Liner has continued to be a tower of strength in leading the painting program and obtaining what seems to be a never-ending supply of materials. Greg Matthews, too, has organised supplies and many of our members, and our Rotaractors have turned out regularly. We have painted, repaired, and gardened successfully to provide better facilities for staff and for the children who are fortunate enough to visit.

Nino Sofra has taken a particular interest in everything that has been done and his family has been a wonderful contributor. A special mention must be made of Nikki Sofra for the outstanding murals that she has designed and painted and that now adorn the stage and other walls.

NBTT

Our guest speaker was Michael Crennan on “Hearing Loss as we Age”.

Peter Courtney: “I have a question for Paul”.

Michael: “The name is Michael”.

Peter: “That’s odd. I’m sure I heard Paul”.



*Nikki Sofra displays her mural which
adorns the wall of the dining hall*



The freshly painted dormitory block



*Have Ted Angleton, Ian Richardson
and Ron Liner really
earned this respite?*

Carols in the Park

This annual event, presented by the twelve churches of North Balwyn, was first held in December 1989. It attracted about 1,000 local residents who came to spend a pleasant summer evening having a picnic, a glass of wine and to join in the singing of well known Carols whilst their children played and eagerly awaited the arrival of Father Christmas.

2009 saw an audience of close to 4,000 people gather at Leigh Park to participate in a revised and more “up-market” evening. The large flood lit stage featured the Boroondara Brass Band and a community choir of 30-40 people. Father Christmas made his annual appearance and the evening concluded with a spectacular Fireworks display accompanied by the Halleluiahs Chorus. Gregory Ross was compere for the evening.

Although not a Rotary Club of North Balwyn project, “Carols” would probably not exist today had not a number of our members offered to assist the organizers in the early 90’s.

In most years since then, the Club has financially assisted this event, and members have assisted with setting up, program sales, security etc. The presence of North Balwyn Rotarians has been so visible for so many years that the audience sometimes refers to the evening as “Rotary’s” Annual Carols in the Park.



The scene at Leigh Park before the 2009 Carols in the Park

Lower Eyre Peninsula Bushfire Relief Project 2005

Following the South Australian bushfires in the areas of Wangarry and the Lower Eyre Peninsula in January 2005, and a request by “Maca” on his ABC program “Australia all over”, Charter President Stan Hibbert was prompted to suggest to Peter Cleary that the Club may be able to assist with reconstruction work in the area.

With the agreement and encouragement of Club President Jim Studebaker, Peter contacted the Bushfire Relief Co-ordinator and sought volunteers from the Club.

The co-ordinator suggested he would speak with the Pt. Lincoln Rotary Club and within 30 minutes Peter received a call from Malcolm Schluter, Sergeant-at-Arms of the Rotary Club of Pt. Lincoln, Commissioner of Scouting and Commissioner of Police for the Eyre Region. Clearly, the project was in good hands.

Thus commenced a partnership between the two Clubs that has strengthened over the following years and lead to several further joint projects.

Ten members flew to Pt. Lincoln and were met by a group of Pt Lincoln Rotarians who, once setting eyes on the North Balwyn “city slickers”, decreed that, due to the temperature (41 degrees!), work for day 1 consisted only of a tour of Pt Lincoln and surrounds, lunch at the Marina Hotel (supplied courtesy of their President) and travel to the Scout Camp at Nyroca - our home for the next week.



Such a bleak scene of total devastation

The following several days were spent clearing damaged fencing and buildings, constructing new fencing on a number of properties, and the refurbishment of the Wangarry post office (a twenty-foot container!) all of which was greatly appreciated by the devastated communities.

Highlights included working in a sand storm that reduced visibility to 20 metres, the forging of an enduring partnership with the Rotary Club of Pt .Lincoln, and attending the official visit of the District Governor to Pt. Lincoln – a meeting that was moved to the Nyroca Scout Camp so that we could attend.



Part of the seven kilometres of fencing built



One of the teams on site with a post-hole digger, just before the dust storm arrived: Rotarians Benallack, Cheney, Mollison, Hibbert, Selbrig and Francis. Working elsewhere were Rotarians Richardson, Smith and Cleary.

Later that year, and following a request for Christmas decorations to be distributed to families who had lost their homes, fifteen large cartons of decorations were sourced from and donated by “Santa’s Place”, Moorooduc Highway on the Mornington Peninsula. David and Jan Cheney personally delivered a sample box to the Pt Lincoln Club.

A wonderful community project and demonstration of “Celebrating Rotary”.

Grampians Bushfire Relief Project 2006

Bushfires ravaged the Grampians area of Victoria in early 2006 on two separate occasions affecting the communities of Stawell and surrounding Shires, including Halls Gap and Pomonal.

Following these events, the Rotary Club of Pt. Lincoln contacted our Club, and offered to send a group of members to take part in a joint project to assist with reconstruction work in the area.

Between 14th and 22nd May 2006, a combined team of approximately 30 Rotarians from the two Clubs gathered at Camp Acacia in Halls Gap and worked under a local relief co-ordinator on such tasks as clearing damaged fences and buildings, reconstructing fences, burning debris and clearing and re-establishing a commercial nursery at Pomonal.

The project provided another opportunity to expand the relationship between the two Clubs and to strengthen the friendships between members. It also provided an opportunity for relationships to be forged with the Rotary Club of Stawell and again proved that Rotarians are prepared to offer hands-on assistance benefiting communities ravaged by natural disasters, wherever there occur.



Clearing what was once a native plant nursery

Participants: Rotarians R Benallack, D Cheney, Cleary, P Fitz, G Griffiths, G Haddy, R Head, T Keyhoe, M McKay, G Matthews, J Mollison, M Muntwyler, B Oakley, N Ramsay, G Selkrig, J Studebaker, and B Timbs.

Gippsland Flood Relief Project 2007

Following the extensive bushfires which occurred in central and eastern Victoria in early 2007, the Gippsland area was devastated by widespread flooding, resulting in horrific damage to the Sale, Maffra and Heyfield regions.

In an endeavour to assist with the rehabilitation of communities in the area, President Ian Adams invited P Peter Cleary to muster a team to help with the clearing debris off fences, re-building fences, and clearing of timber and building-debris from flooded areas.

A total of 16 members worked in shifts over a two week period, accommodated in the Heyfield Scout Hall and co-ordinated by the Shire of Wellington. Our members were supported by the Rotary Club of Heyfield's eight members who were outnumbered at their meeting when our volunteers attended for a makeup.

Again, our members were engaged in an important Community Service Project, and demonstrated that "Rotary Shares".

In recognition of the contribution made by our members, the Club received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Shire of Wellington Council.



*Jim Studebaker clearing flood covered fences, and
Tony Wells with fish found 2 kms from nearest creek.*

Participants: Rotarians B Adams, D Ansell, P Cleary, D Curby, P Francis, T Gretton, T Keyhoe, M McKay, G Matthews, J Mollison, M Muntwyler, M Pauli, L Pegg, J Studebaker, B Timbs and T Wells

Upper Plenty Bush Fire Relief

On Saturday 7th February 2009, Victoria experienced the most intense and devastating bushfires in the State's history on a day that brought temperatures in the mid 40's following a week of excessive temperatures and unprecedented winds.

The aftermath of that day revealed that fires had devastated communities in the Eaglehawk and Redesdale areas around Bendigo, in Gippsland, and closer to Melbourne from Kilmore in the west to Marysville in the east, just to the north of the metropolitan area, totally destroying communities in the Upper Plenty, Flowerdale, Kinglake, Strath Creek, Toolangi, Buxton and Marysville districts with over 2000 properties razed to the ground, 10,000 km of fencing destroyed, and 173 lives lost.

Soon after the fires, the club was again contacted by our friends from the Rotary Club of Pt. Lincoln with an offer to arrange a team of their members to travel to Victoria to join in a joint project with our members to "Lend a Hand" to those whose lives had been devastated by the fires.



Rebuilt fencing amidst kilometres of burnt-out bush

Arrangements were made through a volunteer coordinating organisation, Blazeaid, for our group of 26 members, 4 members from the Rotary Club of Pt. Lincoln, and 32 members of the Oxygens Group of the Rotary Club of Richmond to work on fence and debris clearing and fence reconstruction in the Upper Plenty area.

The Upper Plenty Conference Centre, one of the few buildings in the area that survived the fires, accommodated our volunteers from 5th to 24th May, enabling us to contribute 165 man/days of labour to the Upper Plenty Community.



Admiring their work, Marcel Muntwyler and Peter Cleary, together with Port Lincoln Rotarians.

In addition to this project, Club Members have been involved with the Rotary Club of Alexandra assisting in that area and there is an ongoing involvement in the Kinglake and Marysville areas that is expected to last for at least 2 years.

Club Participants: - Rotarians R Benallack, G Bird, J Butler, D Cheney, P Cleary, F Cornell, P Elliott, P Francis, G Griffiths, A Kerr, T Keyhoe, S McDonald, G Matthews, M McKay, J McBride, J Mollison, M Muntwyler, B Oakley, T Schipano, B Smith, N Sofra, B Sofra, A Stokes, G Symington, B Timbs, and T Wells.

"Don't leave me", shot backpacker pleaded.

Following the June 18, 2007 triple shooting at the corner of Flinders Lane and William Street, in which there was one fatality, seriously wounded Dutch backpacker Paul de Waard, 25, pleaded with Werribee heroine Donna McGowan not to leave his side. Donna McGowan saw it all happen. She was on level one, 45 William Street and rushed to the aid of Paul de Waard who was lying on his side with his backpack still on. Donna talked to and comforted Paul, keeping him conscious until the paramedics arrived.

Paul noticed a necklace with a purple stone Donna was wearing and they talked about it as a distraction from his discomfort. Donna later gave the necklace to Paul telling him to look at it if he ever feels sad. Paul wore the necklace back to Holland.

On September 13, 2007 Simon Overland, Deputy Commissioner (later Chief Commissioner), Victoria Police and Head of the Purana Task Force was the Guest Speaker at our Club's weekly meeting. Donna McGowan was also invited to the meeting as a special guest where she was presented with a Rotary Citation by Simon Overland, a new replacement necklace, donated by former club member, Maurie Rubenstein, and a \$500 shopping voucher.

Through AAP (Australian Associated Press), the Rotary Club of North Balwyn put out a media release on September 10, 2007, targeting essentially, but not exclusively, all Melbourne major print, TV and radio outlets.

Three Melbourne TV stations attended the Club's meeting and all three included the story in their news services either that evening or the following morning. Radio stations mentioned the presentations that evening and through the Fairfax group, an extensive article appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald.

Media reports, and, in particular, television contained strong visuals of Rotary signage, a copy of which was sent to David Alexander, Manager, Public Relations at Evanston.

John Robson (Program chairman) initiated the attendance of both Simon Overland and Donna McGowan and arranged for the presentations.

Camp Getaway

Like many great projects in Rotary, the idea for Rotary Camp Getaway at Axedale, Victoria, sprang from one person. – our own Rotarian Ken Maxfield.

Ken's dream of a special camp for special people became a reality, thanks to the power of Rotary and its hundreds of dedicated volunteers. The camp became a project of all Rotary clubs in Rotary District 9800.

Camp Getaway involves redevelopment of the former Rotary Axedale Youth Camp into a modern camp facility focused on needs of young people including those with special needs.

Located near Bendigo, it was established as an initiative of the Rotary Club of Bendigo, Victoria in 1947. During its history of more than 50 years, the camp played host to tens of thousands of children and groups from throughout Victoria and beyond.

The camp's original focus was to provide recreational facilities for children whose families were affected by ravages of WW2.

Thousands of voluntary hours went into redeveloping the site from basic army huts to the self-contained units with full facilities for people with disabilities and a modern dormitory.



Camp-Get-Away working party



And the Ladies did their share, too!

In a coup for a Rotary project, Rotary Camp Getaway has achieved acknowledgement by the Australian Tax Office as a public benevolent institution and thus donations from companies and individuals are tax deductible.

Stage One of re-development of Rotary Camp Getaway was officially opened by District 9800 Governor, Judy Nettleton, at Axedale on February 19, 2005, and was a fitting celebration during Rotary's Centenary Year.

'The project has been greatly assisted by donations of money and time from the many clubs throughout District 9800. Our club continues to be actively involved in periodic working bees to assist in the ongoing construction and maintenance required under the watchful eye of Ken Maxfield.

Fun in Retirement Expo (FIRE)

This Expo was aimed at attracting the 50+ sector of the public, and presenting them with a range of the goods, services and associations available to keep them active and involved members of the community. FIRE also provided the opportunity for businesses, agencies and community organisations to present their wares to the fastest growing age demographic in our area.

We established FIRE principally as a community service activity. Because we do all the work on a volunteer basis the costs for presenters are much less than in a commercial expo, as is the cost for public admission. Because of this we attract a range of community and not-for-profit presenters who would not be able to afford to be at a commercial Expo.



We aimed to cover the costs of FIRE from the charges made to exhibitors, and to donate all the income from public admissions to nominated charities. In addition, if we received sponsorship and help with the costs we would make a surplus which would contribute to the Club's service program.

Our first FIRE was run in July 2008 and attracted over 2000 visitors to see the 72 exhibitors present. Club members and partners and friends put in over 160 work shifts over the week end.

The second FIRE Expo was held in September 2009 with an even greater number of exhibitors. It also featured panels of speakers on a number of subjects including a football panel of Sergio Silvagni, David Parkin, Peter Hudson and moderator, Robert Shaw.

Despite an enormous amount of effort put in by members such as Terry Keyhoe, Bob Bromley and Bill Oakley, and considerable advertising support from the Progress Leader, the general public failed to turn up in the numbers expected.



Ian Mollison of Jetset North Balwyn

In spite of this, the event provides one of the few opportunities for the Club to have a significant, visible presence in our local community, and provides a valuable community service for our ageing population.



Manning the Rotary Information booth – Peter Elliott and Bob Bomley

Marwal Avenue Working Bees

For many years, the club has had a regular working bee at the Marwal Centre in North Balwyn. This has consisted of anything from a complete outside repaint of the building to a makeover of the gardens. This has usually involved a lunch-time BBQ, commenced only after all the work has been finished. Our work in part repays the Centre for its generosity in loaning us their bus for Grand Prix ferrying, and for letting us use their hall for various social evenings.



Ann Kerr in a rare moment of inactivity

NBTT

“What’s my line” came in a new interview format when Matthew Pauli interviewed Ann Kerr.

Riveting television it was not! After establishing that Ann worked in Accounts Payable at Camberwell Grammar School, Matthew followed up with a further searching question along the lines of: “What do you like about working in Accounts Payable?” and “How long have you been working in Accounts Payable?”

Eventually, to the relief of all, Matthew terminated his slumber-inducing interview by saying “Well, as this is not “What’s My Passion”, I won’t ask Ann about Graeme”.

This brought a protest from Mike McKay, who said: “That’s the one thing we did want to hear. How Ann became Bird’s bird?”