



## Conference Report March 23-26, 2017 Geelong



Some 18 months before the Conference I visited Geelong with PDG Marie Dorrington and Ken as guests of Mark Day from Business Events Geelong. Mark took us around the possible venues and accommodation spots in Geelong and the surrounding areas. He saved the best for our last day – The Pier function centre on Cunningham Pier. We were sold! It had everything we were looking for in a Conference venue and then some. Mark offered us a sponsorship package which was both generous and money saving. We booked the venue very quickly upon our return to Adelaide. Most of the Conference committee took a trip to Geelong soon after this and were also extremely impressed with the facilities on offer.

### The Organising Team

Conference Chair, Marie Dorrington; Geof and Chris Irish (Treasurer/Registrations); John and Heather Fischer (Rotary Showcase); Ashleigh and Carolyn Lorraine (Speaker co-ordination); Ken Dorrington (Stage Manager); Ron Rogers (MC/Sponsorship); Allan and Fran Wilson (Accommodation/Travel); Vic Gudiskis (Secretary/Transport); David Byrne (Conference Newsletters and Publications); Graham Fussen (Conference Website); Kay Dowling (Photographer); DG John Pohl.

Regular updates and promotions were distributed throughout the District as well as visits to Clubs by myself and committee members.

### The Conference

MC Ron Rogers kept the Conference to time in a very professional way. Together with Vic Gudiskis who was responsible for delivering the speakers from Melbourne airport to Geelong, the two ensured the proceedings ran smoothly for the 3 days despite some of our paid parking spots on the Pier being wrongfully used by the general public – we had to post guards!

As you may be aware, the Geelong Council was put into the hands of Government Administrators prior our Conference. We were very grateful that the Administration honoured the agreement we had with the Council for us to have a Civic Reception at the Geelong Art Gallery on the Thursday night. It was a spectacular opening and we must thank Mr Peter Dorling, Geelong Administrator, for his support.

I was privileged to open the Conference on Friday morning and introduce Frank Costa, 'Mr Geelong' as our opening speaker. He gave us an in-depth insight into the development of the City of Geelong. The Conference speakers were selected to reflect the theme of the Conference, 'Sea Change with Rotary' They included:

- Rob Pennicott – Positives from risk taking
- Marion McCall AM – Sea Change in the Air
- Tracy Adams – Boystown to yourtown
- Arman Abrahamzadeh – Victim to Victor
- Dr Maithri Goonetilleke – Regaining Health
- Assoc Prof Jeremy Austin – Ancient DNA and more
- Bernadette Schwerdt – Digital Disruption, How to Future Proof Life
- Marcus Veerman – Improving Lives with Technology
- Presentations by Exchange Students were facilitated by Ron Rogers and Ian Howlett
- Rotary International President John Germ was represented by PDG Malcolm Lindquist and partner Antoinette from District 9520. They were hosted by IPDG Doug Layng and Lynne.

## Up there Cazaly

Mike Brady had the attendees rocking with a great performance Sunday morning. He is a very polished entertainer.

## Rotary Speakers

Mary Purbrick – ROMAC

Betty Kitchener OAM – Australian Rotary Health

Marie Dorrington – Interplast

Doug Layng – The Rotary Foundation



## The Gala Dinner

The Gala Dinner on Saturday night a spectacular sight – the glorious sunset over a calm ocean. We were wined, dined and entertained in a magic venue. Elliot Goblet kept the audience laughing with his one-liners delivered with his trademark deadpan demeanour.

The fun and dancing continued until late with entertainment provided by “The Baker Boys”. They had the guests on the dancefloor until after 11.00 pm.

## District Awards Presented

- Club Performance - RC of Adelaide, President D’Arcy Walsh
- Rotary Foundation - RC of Walkerville, President Susan Paltridge
- ARH Perpetual District Trophy RC of Adelaide, President D’Arcy Walsh
- Conservation Award - RC of Walkerville, President Susan Paltridge
- Youth Activities - RC of Modbury, President Keith Rendell
- Club History - RC of Gawler, President Patsy Johnson
- World Community (Int.)Service - RC of Kidman Park, President Tom Bunnik
- Community Service - RC of West Lakes, President Neil Butler  
Joint winner - RC of Northern Yorke Peninsula, President Rick Lampre
- Interact Club Performance – RC of Port Pirie, President Dannielle Camporeale

## The Finale

On the Sunday, a Remembrance Ceremony was held to acknowledge those Rotarians who had passed on to higher service. In addition, a presentation was made by the DGEs for next year’s joint District Conference in the Barossa.

The Conference was attended by over 210 Rotarians and friends and was rated a great success by those who came and it ran at a profit, albeit tiny!

Thanks to all who helped make this a very enjoyable District Conference; to our Conference Chair and the Conference Team for their tireless efforts and to all Rotarians and friends who made the long journey – well done!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Pohl".

John Pohl  
District Governor 2016-2017

