



Community Networker

Rotary Club of Parramatta City, District 9675

www.parramattacityrotary.org.au

Meeting 28, 12 October 2015

Parramatta City Rotary Club

Presidential Address

12th October 2015

It is nice to be back. We welcome Kaheba Honda, who returned from Liberia on Wednesday and leaves for a new assignment in Africa on Monday next week.

We have Tony from Mind Dog, which as I understand it uses canine connections to help people suffering from mental illness. I can readily testify to that. My family took in a stray Border Collie in Dubbo in 1966 and during the next 11 years, which saw terrible hardship and trauma, the Border Collie, Joey, was there to help us all the way. I am quite sure the family, if it survived at all, would not have been in good shape at all had Joey not been there. I see a dog as a permanent child, full of energy, innocence and spontaneity, almost as if our souls were freed from the restraints of being in us and allowed to roam free.

I welcome our deputy DG, Pip Lovely, here today. We also need to issue an invitation to our DG, Graham Wilson, and I will take that up with the board.

The Rotary Four Way Test

The Four-Way Test challenges Rotarians, in everything they do, to ask of themselves:

Of the things we say or do:

- 1 Is it the **TRUTH**?
- 2 Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
- 3 Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
- 4 Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?



I must report on a wonderful trip PP Keith and I took to the Philippines to attend the presidential changeover at our sister club, the Rotary Club of Ramon Magsaysay in Quezon City, Metro Manila. It was an extraordinary visit, Keith and I were treated like royalty. It was a vast ocean of people. I am not sure how many people are there. One figure for Metro Manila is 12 million, another 25 million. There are certainly a lot of people and the hundreds of thousands of motor vehicles means that traffic is reduced to a crawl. There is certainly poverty. Keith and I saw vast stretches of slums. There were also



indications of violence. Armed guards were everywhere, even in coffee shops. People had to be frisked going into supermarkets and everywhere there were signs asking patrons going into a business premises not to bring their guns. But there was another side to it, a vigorous, enterprising strata of the society, with education and ambition and it was this group Keith and I encountered in our visit to Rotary. The night of the installation of Leo Vedan as president in a luxury hotel, with music and dancing

dancing and food laid on, was absolute treat. They were a very good bunch of people. One of those inducted into membership on the night was a general practitioner and I was pulled up for a chat with another member, a gastroenterologist. The club had ambitious and worthy projects which they took us to. One was the Divine Mission Mobile Centre, where an inspired lady, Celeste Sanchez, showed how she used music as therapy for disabled children. We went to a session where a number of the children were severely disabled and she showed how their participation in music really worked. Another project was in the Province of Pangasinan where we distributed text books to five schools and two preschools. This shows the real benefits of Rotary in the Third World, where the service clubs show the way and fill the gaps where the state lags behind.



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Our hosts provided a tour for Keith and myself, and as delegation from a Malaysian rotary Club, Indera Mahkota, where is also a sister club of Ramon Mag-saysay. That included a visit to Baguio City in the highlands, a summer retreat for Philipinos and site of the Mansion, a retreat for presidents. Going though Burnham Park Baguio and seeing a throng of pushbike riders and people on paddle boats in the lake, you might be excused for thinking you were in Hyde Park in London. Of course you are not, and when you get to Manila and find yourself besieged by children begging on the streets you realise you have a long way to go.

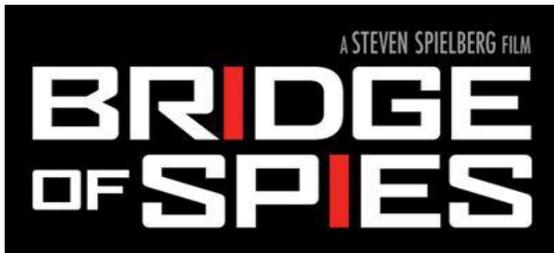
It is a country of extremes, with the bed of a huge river empty of water since a volcanic eruption in 1991, and reports of a thousand people evacuated from a town in Mindanao in the southern Philippines because of Muslim militancy. There are 26 active volcanoes on the archipelago. There are also typhoons. While Keith and I were in the Philippines there was a typhoon in the north and more than 50 fishermen were missing. But such calamitous events do not attract the same concern as they would in Australia. The Philippines has had a violent and troubled history, including the Japanese occupation for three years in World War 11. The Manila Cathedral was first built in 1571 and during its history has been knocked down five times by earthquakes and flattened again by Allied bombing in 1945. But it is up and running again and the church services in a country whose population is 90 percent Catholic are packed.

It is a great education for any of our club members to go there and I only wish there was something I could suggest as president of our own club that would allow us to reciprocate.

Going through our list of events, we had a successful barbecue at Bunnings yesterday and we have the Pink Triathlon barbecue at Parramatta Park next Sunday. John Stanmboulie has been battling to get numbers up. It is a 6 am start but if that is too early for some, then John will accept attendance at 8 am.



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On October 21 we have a pre-screening of Bridge of Spies at the Events Cinemas at Westfield Parramatta, starting at 7 pm, at \$20 a head, in aid of World Polio Day. In his last message on October 7 John Surian said he needed numbers urgently.

Holroyd Rotary Club is hosting a Hatters Garden Party on Saturday 24th October 2015 to be held at Wentworthville Community Garden, 73 Fullager Road, Wentworthville. It is from 3 to 6 pm and the entry fee is \$10. You are asked to bring your own goodies but tea and coffee are provided. Our deputy governor Pip Lovely has made an appeal for a chartered accountant to help the club. Anyone who knows a chartered accountant who is handy, please let her know.

The following day, on October 25, the Rotary Club of Padstow will be hosting a charity fun run, staged with the assistance of the Western District Joggers Club and supported by the Torch newspaper. It is intended to raise funds for the combat of domestic violence.

Stephen Britten has reminded us that on November 27 the Rotary District 9675 has its Annual General Meeting, at which members of a Committee of Association will be selected from each of the three regions within our district. If anyone would like to become a member of the Committee of Association or knows of someone suitable, contact our assistant governor, Pip Lovely. Nominations must be in by the end of October.

Clement Kaweda Honda

Has spent the last 3 months in Monrovia where his role was to work with local health facilities post-Ebola, providing training, clinical & non-clinical, in 3 countries. Clement works in the hospitals & with government agencies in an advisory and teaching role. In Liberia medical care is totally private funded leaving the poor to their own resources or reliant on aid. Infection control is very weak, with a low standard of compliance from the Ministry of Health.

The WHO try to create protocols for hygiene using the mantra 'keep safe, keep saving' in an effort to make personal hygiene paramount for health workers. Part of the problem is the low level of basic education to start with. It is surprising to need to convince Doctors to wear gowns, whenever they are treating patient and the lack of simple procedures and protocols.

Sometimes Ebola can reoccur in 'survivors' up to 6 months after remission and can transfer through unprotected sex up to 12 months later.

Next – transferring new models to Guinea Basal?

- Training nurses in Triage – simple procedures. Fortunately the language of most Africans is English

Keith Henning had news from the DG that St Peters, Uganda DG has received approval for funding. Leaving RCPC a need to raise the additional \$4,000.

GUEST SPEAKER - Tony Edwards 'Mind Dog AND Mental Health'

Tony introduced himself as, both, a promoter of and client of Mind Dog Australia. He also introduced his Mind Dog, Buddy, to us.

He noted that Rotary Clubs have been great supporters of Mental Health projects generally. A sobering statistic - 1/5 Australians have mental health issues – 20%

At any one time.

The Stigma stops many people from seeking help and manifests in a variety of ways. Mental conditions are gender neutral.

Tony's Mental Health journey begins with being diagnosed with depression at 13, becoming more serious by 15 being classed as 'manic depression' or 'schizo disorders'. With 'soul destroying' voices in his head.

- 1st diagnosis – Depression remains a big player
- Manifests as 'acute natal depression' 13/11/14 – or talk to GP
- 'Places' don't like talking to GP about personal issues
- Can lead to suicide attempts
- 'Buddy'
- 7 deaths/hour in Australia – possibly 200/day. At least 100 people think about it
- These days there seems to be a suicide epidemic with Men representing 3x the number of women who commit suicide.
- Anxiety disorder is a medical condition – defined as being unable to take pleasure out of life and is often accompanied by depression. Sometimes, also, accompanied by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Arachnophobia, fear of heights etc. Symptoms include a pounding heart, sweating, closing down!
- WHAT CAN BE DONE?
- Mind Dog's are psychiatric service dogs. Tony told the story of Kath, who realised that she was able to cope better when she had a well trained dog as a companion.
- With help of her psychiatrist Kath set up an ID card for her dog, Buddy to enable it to use public transport.
- On principle, the owner does the training of their dog only being provided with assistance by Mind Dogs.
- Greyhounds, actually, make up the largest number but all breeds are good in their own way.

According to the Johns Hopkins Medical Centre there are 6 ways that a dog can assist you. No 2 Mind Dogs perform the same tasks. Buddy (Tony's Dog) has a 'checkered past' leading him Windsor Pound where Tony found him - 4 days from 'death row'! Tony started with 'checklist' of requirements but Buddy threw that out'.

Buddy stood out with his 'noble air' and temperament He just stayed by his side, he must have know that he was only 4 days from euthanasia. It took all of 5 minutes to decide - this is the one! Buddy enables Tony to leave the house. So far he has stopped at least 6 suicide attempts: The latest being only yesterday.

Depression has kept Tony in bed for days, sometimes weeks. But, Buddy gives him a responsibility that he can't avoid and a reason for survival. Other Mind Dogs have to remind their owners to take medication, keep active, cope with Alzheimers etc. Each dog is trained for owner's specific their needs.

Points of Etiquette in regard to Mind Dogs – please don't pat without permission of the handler. Look, always, at the handler. And, never, ever, ask the handler why they need an assistance dog.