

ROTARY CLUB OF PARRAMATTA CITY Inc. DISTRICT 9675

www.parramattacityrotary.org.au

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?

Meeting 11th April 2016

Our Toast

Bob Rosengreen proposed a toast to the Rotary Club of Panama, where the canal was built at enormous human cost, mainly due to the predations of malaria and yellow fever. Leaving the colour yellow to one side, the canal did have a colourful history, infused with politics and cost blowouts, culminating in 1977 with US President Jimmy Carter's act in handing the canal back to Panama.

Our Guest

President Malcolm introduced Father Martin Maunsell, Parish priest at St Kevin's, Eastwood, and also president of the Parramatta Daybreak Rotary Club, which is experiencing a membership crisis. He thought Martin might be able to give us some insights of his own.

Bowel Care

Natalie Cowell said that the bowel care kits had all been delivered to chemists and would be picked up in the first week in June,

PETS

President-elect Phil Brophy said he had attended a PETS meeting and what had come out to him were matters relating to membership. He said that one of the points DGE Stephen Humphreys had made was that as Rotarians we should "get the meetings right". If we had a good meeting, people would come back.

RYPEN

Don Thomson said Nick Polites had enjoyed the weekend from 1 to 3 April and wanted him to come to the club to talk about his experiences.

The Pink Triathlon

PDG Barry expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Rotarians at the Pink Triathlon at Parramatta Park on 3 April who had made the barbecue a success. PP Keith said the day had produced a profit of \$2,348.

Don's Progress

Don Thomson announced that he had resigned from Northcott and was going to be a cabinet maker. But he intended to remain with Rotary. Don said he had been told by Northcott to come to Rotary and had joined with "mixed feelings" but had now become enthusiastic.

Membership

Secretary Joy brought up the issue that had brought us together in a club assembly: the decline in membership. She said that club had lost six or seven members in the last 12 months and that if it continued at that rate the club would be "out of business in a year or two". She thought the club should continue but that some practical measures should be taken to increase membership. The club had not addressed this issue for five or six years. PP Keith agreed and said that we needed a strategic plan.

PDG Barry said one of the problems was that Rotary today did not have the same profile it had had in the past, where Rotary was responsible for getting parks and swimming pools for the community. Since the late 1970s these things had been taken over by local government and Rotary had put its emphasis on overseas and humanitarian projects.

Barry thought could embark on some community projects which would improve the profile of Rotary. A lot of people were now concerned with the environment and that was a field in which Rotary could lead projects. He was looking at the involvement of council and of a local MP. Rotary would be "a connector" and people would say: "Rotary must be doing something here."

Rotary should be connecting more with business, he said. The time had passed when managing directors became Rotarians but there was scope for employees becoming Rotarians. There was scope for business to raise its own profiles by funding worthy projects such as financing a team to go to Vanuatu.

John Stamboulie said that barbecues were projecting the wrong image for Rotary. Our club was a lunch club, primary for business people, and that was not conveyed by "standing in front of Bunnings on a Saturday morning". That was for "mum and dad soccer clubs" and our club should be looking for bigger events that might generate \$8,000 or \$10,000.

Martin Maunsell said that in his club numbers had dropped so alarmingly that there was to be a crisis meeting within the club and that at the end of his presidential year the club might fold up. There were 10 members present on a good day but on an ordinary day it was down to eight. It was particularly disappointing for Martin, who belonged the Silverwater Rotary Club that folded eight years ago. He did note, however, that all but one of those Rotarians joined other clubs.

"There are some organisations that have a used-by date," he said. "But out of the ashes something else could grow." The club's support for Rotaractors at Western Sydney University had potential to create Rotarians of the future. He also said that for people who do attend a meeting there should be special attention to them. If a new member left, someone should sit down with them and ask why they did not want to come any more.

PDG Ray said that a lot of the ideas he had just heard expressed were not new. He said there had been a cultural shift. In the past there had been status associated with being a Rotarian. Prospective

employers would ask job applicants what service clubs they belonged to and what they did for the community. But that was gone and the job now was to find out what people in their forties, fifties or even sixties expected from a Rotary club if they joined it.

Ray said we had to be honest with people who joined, and tell them from day one that they were expected to do something other than just attending meetings. Each new member should have a mentor.

Bob Rosengreen said that Parramatta was poised to undergo enormous change and development. People would be coming there from everywhere. The Rotary clubs were poised to capitalise on that. PP Keith said the district Membership Director Stephen Knightly should be invited to address a future club meeting.

For Your Diaries

17 April - Concert by the Sydney Welsh Choir In support of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children.

18 April. Regular club meeting. The guest speaker will be Dr Michael Chamberlain who will speak on the issues involving caring for the incapacitated.

22 April. Charter night for the Rotaract Club of Western Sydney University This will be at the Liverpool Catholic Club.

2 May Club Meeting Natalie Poschl – Rebound Exchange student ‘My year of living in Germany’

7 May. District Assembly at Greystanes High School. All incoming Board members

17 May. Board meeting of the Parramatta City Rotary Club.