

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 28 July 2014

Joy's Luck

Our secretary, Joy Gillett, managed to snare the top prize, a car or \$16,000, in the Rotary Lottery, then chipped a tooth, requiring her to get treatment and allowing her to escape the razz she was likely to get when she turned up a winner at the meeting. Congratulations Joy.

Barbecues

Natalie Cowell said she was still looking for volunteers to fill our ranks at the barbecue to assist with the Northcott 'Walk With Me' event on Friday, 12 September. It will be between 10 am and 2 pm.

Meeting of the Presidents

Barry Antees will be stepping out on Friday this week at the Liverpool Catholic Club to host a meeting of presidents of District 9675. President-elect Malcolm Brown will be attending, deputising for President Ron.

Our Guest

Clive Woosnam president of the Dylan Thomas Society of Australia and of the Sydney Welsh Choir, was born in the Rhondda Valley in Wales. He started reading Thomas's poetry at the age of 14, attended University College London and Exeter University before coming to Australia. He took a job with the NSW Department of Education, met his wife-to-be, Helen, then spent three years in Canada and Britain before returning to Australia as a teacher at Sydney's Newington College. But he retained his Welsh connections, joined the Sydney Welsh Choir where he became choir president, led the choir on five visits to Wales and expounded the literary genius of

Thomas at every opportunity. The Dylan Thomas aficionados will be tagging along with the sixth visit by the Sydney Welsh Choir to the British Isles from September 13 to October 6. He provided a touch of colour and culture to our agenda, which so often gets bogged down on issues of commerce and social welfare.



Dylan and All That

Clive asked the assembled at the meeting who had heard of Dylan Thomas. Half put up their hands, which in Clive's schoolmaster's mind gives us barely a pass. But it was enough for him to seek to enlighten us a little more on Thomas, whose birth in on 27 October 1914 will be commemorated this year. There is nothing better than someone who is impassioned about his subject, and Clive was all that. And he was standing up for Thomas, who at the time of his death on 9 November 1953 was regarded as the greatest living poet in the English language. Thomas had suffered bad press ever since, particularly because of the long-standing assertion that he drank himself to death.

Thomas's verse was certainly different from that of other poets, most of whom could be understood at first reading. The complexity and difficulty of his verse turned many off, and in fact that became an issue hotly debated in Australian newspapers in the 1930s. But Thomas has stood the test of time, as many Australian schoolchildren could attest, having studied him at school. His most famous piece is probably the play-for-voices, *Under Milk Wood*, about a mythical seaside town called Llareggib in Wales, populated by dotty eccentrics that might have been taken from the pages of Charles Dickens.

Clive is so fiercely defensive of Thomas that he has written his own play-for-voices, *Good Night Dylan*, with the intention of setting the record straight on the circumstances of Thomas's death (medical malpractice, a la Michael Jackson). The play is to be performed at the NSW Bowlers Club, 99 York Street, in November. But even Clive has to concede that Thomas lives a wild life, not helped by an equally zany

wife, Caitlin, who matched Thomas in drinking, had an inexhaustible sexual appetite and outlived Thomas by more than 40 years.

But dare not challenge Thomas's greatness in Clive's presence. He is scornful of the singer-songwriter Bob Dylan who, being born Robert Zimmerman, changed his name to Dylan after Thomas. When Thomas acquired some notoriety, Dylan tried to distance himself from Thomas, but Clive will have none of that. Great men, such as Canadian singer-songwriter poet Leonard Cohen owe a lot to the influence of Thomas.

And Clive, being such an outgoing, energetic personality that he is, has attracted a large number of followers, who accompany him on pseudo pilgrimages to places in New South Wales, such as Swansea on the central coast, to celebrate Thomas's life. They will follow him faithfully when he leaves, with society members and the Sydney Welsh Choir, to the British Isles on September 13.

Welsh Concert

If anyone wants to hear both the music and the poetry, it might be appropriate to get to one of the last concerts before the tour, at All Saints Anglican Church, Ambrose Street, Hunters Hill at 2 pm on Sunday. Tickets (including chicken & wine afterwards) will cost \$20 (\$15 concession). Contacts are www.swc.org.au. Phone: 9877.0684. There will be another concert at St Finbar's Catholic Church, Glenbrook, at 1.30 pm on August 10.

News from Bernd Eggers, RC of Halberstadt, Germany.

Past President Keith received the email below from Bernd Eggers, RC of Halberstadt, Germany, who visited our Club in June.

Received Fri 25/07/2014 5:15 AM

Hallo Keith, thanks for Your mail. There was nothing like a hangover for me after winning the soccer world final... I was too exhausted and wanted to be for myself an celebrate on my own...

But I`m a little bit sad about the socceros. They played really good, but they weren`t clever enough, I think.

Nice to hear about Your exchange program. Our club will do the same, starting with the young girl to go abroad. And we will get one pupil from out of Europe as an exchange. But now, life goes on, but my time in Australia will never go out of memory... My best journey ever!

In a few weeks its on me, to give my club some informations about the convention and more. I have to sort my more than 1000 pictures and about 80 videos now. It will be a huge challenge, to put all into the range of one meeting...

We and whole Europe is horrified about this shot of a plane over Ukraine. Such thing must never happen!

We are now in summer, but our summer is like a rollercoaster.... sometimes too warm and sometimes too cold and rainy. In the moment it looks like a thunderstorm is to happen. You know, in summer we have a lot of thunderstorms. Not so good then, to be on the golf course...

Let`s stay in touch, Keith!

Plenty regards

Bernd

Dates for Diaries

12 September. Northcott "Walk With Me" Barbecue.

21 September. UN Day of Peace.

12 October. Triathlon Pink Barbecue, Parramatta Park.

18 October. Bunnings Barbecue, North Parramatta.

Malcolm Brown