



# Community Networker

Rotary Club of Parramatta City, District 9675 | Meeting 25 August 2014

## A Letter from our Sister Club

Past-president Keith has passed on a letter he received from Mina Bonita, Immediate Past President of our sister club, the Rotary Club of Ramon Magsaysay, Manila.

*Hello, Keith,*

*Thanks for updating us in your club activities. On the 29th we will be having a joint meeting with other clubs in our district with our special guest speaker will be Dra La Rainne Sarmiento an active environmentalist and a lecturer in different universities and colleges. She will tackle the importance of preserving rare tortoise and her advocacy to reforestation.. I feel this is a good project for our club since not all know the importance of preserving endangered species and reforestation in our country.*

## Our Guests

The club welcomed Michael Osborne, executive director of a financial advice and management company newly established in Parramatta, Gravity Wealth. We also welcomed Danielle Poschl, mother of 15-year-old Natalie Poschl, of Mary Mackillop High School, Wakely, near Fairfield, who will be leaving in January to represent our club as a Rotary exchange student in Germany.

We extended a further welcome to our speaker, Neil Thacker, who has been an English teacher in Vietnam. His first visit to Vietnam was as an Australian soldier, in a tour of duty in 1968-69. Neil's working career was devoted to supporting large and small computer systems and as "a technical guy in management". He is now committed to welfare in developing companies. He invited president-elect Malcolm Brown to accompany him to Danang, Vietnam's third largest city, the place where the first American troops arrived in March, 1965, for a teaching gig in February this year.

## President Ron

And a welcome back to our president, Ron Edgar, who joined 4,500 others in a conference on "responsible architecture" in Durban, South Africa, and concluded after his visit that stories of serious personal risk in South Africa might be a little exaggerated. He had walked through some supposed "no-go" areas after dark and had felt as safe as he would in Sydney.

## Our exchange student

Natalie Cowell tells us that Frederik Andersen, 16, has settled well to life in Parramatta High. He is, she says, very obliging.

## Have you registered for Rotary Multi District Conference in Canberra 2014?

DGs Rowley and Barry would like to warmly welcome you to the combined 9675 & 9710 District Conference. Please join us at the National Convention Centre, Canberra from 14-16 November 2014.

To register go to the following website <http://www.rotaryd9710.org.au/2014-district-conference.html>

We all need to attend to support our fellow club member and DG

## Club Updates

### The Rotary Four-Way Test

The Four-Way Test challenges Rotarians, in everything they do, to ask 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?

# Neil Thacker's Teaching in Vietnam

- Barry Antees

Neil said he had learned something about the Vietnamese language and, given his obligation to five formal training in English, more than a little about his own. "There are 12 tenses in the English language," he said. "Stuff I learned when I was 11 or 12 had to be relearned." Neil showed us a training video on English, which left some of the club members shaking their heads. A 'gerund' for example is a verb that can be used as a noun. Hence, I am building a house and the result will be a building. That was enough even to impress our august DG, Barry Antees.

Neil's Vietnamese students were as bright as buttons but kept some of their speaking habits when learning the new language. One habit they had, which could produce complications, was their disinclination to articulate the final consonant. When he headed off to answer a call of nature, one of his students called out: "Way! Way! Way!" What she was trying to tell him was to "wait", and there was a little awkwardness as a result.

When he tried to speak the Vietnamese language, there were more complications. The word "ma" had six different meanings, depending on the precise sound. "If you are not careful you will be calling your mother a 'horse' or a 'ghost'," he said.

There was not much mention of "the war" which the Vietnamese had decidedly won. But Neil had received invitations from his students to be their "second father". "They want to know what it is like to have a father who fought on the other side," he said. There was another comment he picked up when he asked why all the toilets were called "WC". In English it was



Neil with his Vietnamese students



Most important to let his students practise English...

obvious what "WC" stood for, but not in Vietnamese. The reply he got was that "WC" meant "Washington City", and the reason for

that was that "we like to shit on the Americans".

Neil had come to greatly admire the Vietnamese, in particular their ingenuity, a trait that had helped them during their long



... and to check out more esoteric aspects of its cuisine in this case roasted dog.

and brutal wars with China, France and the United States.

## Upcoming speakers:

### 1 SEPTEMBER:

Patrick Milligan, brother of Spike, who has carved out his own artistic niche and is now a repository of history.

## Dates for Diaries

### 10 SEPTEMBER.

Paint Parramatta REaD morning from 10am until 11:30am outside St. John's Church, Parramatta

### 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.

### 14-16 NOVEMBER.

District Conference Canberra