



Community Networker

Rotary Club of Parramatta City, District 9675 | Meeting 8 September 2014



Above: Dr Reg Mitchell with President Ron

Our Guests

President Ron welcomed guest Dr Reg Mitchell, retired academic, Coralie Wilson, a psychologist from the University of Wollongong, and Ann Badger, an Australian Rotary Health PhD scholarship holder whom Coralie is supervising.

Reg, introduced by Malcolm Brown, began his working life as a mathematics teacher but four years later he went into teacher training in the Alexander Mackie College in Sydney. Following that he joined what was then the NSW College of Paramedic al Studies as a lecturer and remained with the college, which became the Cumberland College of Health Sciences, for the rest of his career. He retired in 2000. A father of two, and grandfather of four, he is a long-serving member of the congregation of St Philips Anglican Church, Eastwood.



Above: Dr Coralie Wilson (left) with Ann Badger and President Ron

Ann Badger, 22 is studying depression in young people, in particular university students, and mechanisms for early intervention. Coralie described Ann as a rising star and she hopes that through Ann's study a "gold standard" will be set for early intervention in Australia.

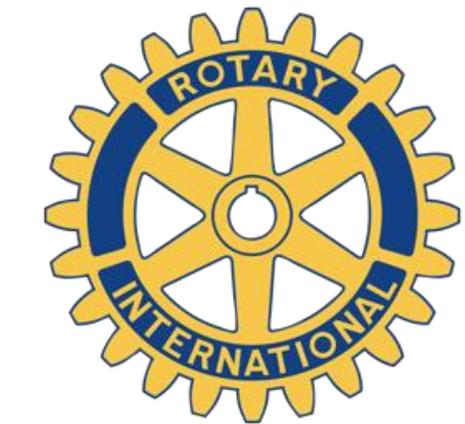
Christina Davies, 52 this week, mother of four, including twin girls aged 10 months, was welcomed to the club as guest of Malcolm Brown. Christina, who has worked in administration at Westmead Hospital and is presently on maternity leave, is going through an acrimonious divorce and is in difficult circumstances. She got a big lift from attending the meeting and hopes to be able to attend some more, given that Monday is a respite day when her babies are in care for some hours at Westmead.

Attendance

President Ron announced apologies for Bob Rosengreen, whose wife is undergoing medical treatment, and Alwyn Robinson, who is going to be out of town.

Our Toast

On Malcolm Brown's suggestion, we toasted the Rotary Club of Tikrit in embattled Iraq. The city is now in the hands of the fanatical Islamic State. If a club does not exist there, we toasted it anyway.



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:

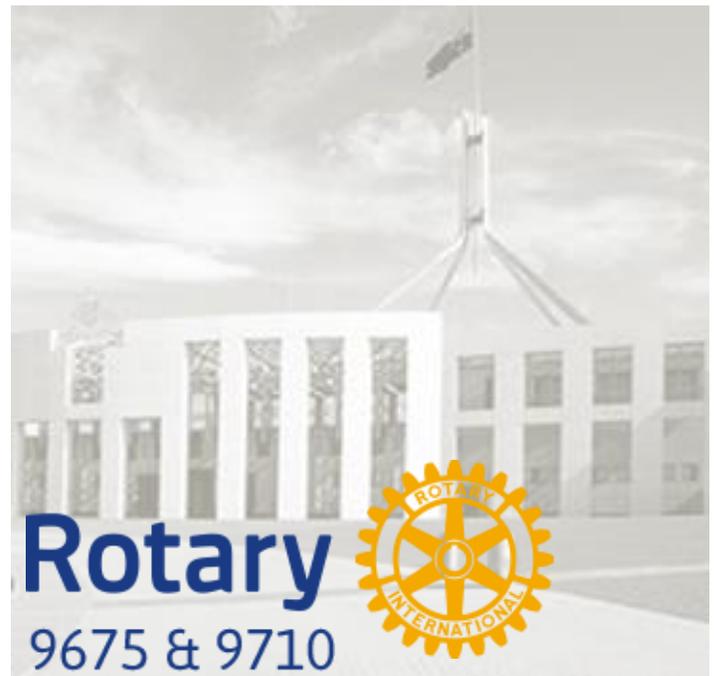
- 1 Is it the **TRUTH**?
- 2 Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
- 3 Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
- 4 Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

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

DGs Rowley and Barry Antees 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 members and DG - Barry Antees



Ethics in Medical Research

Reg said medical research ethics had become a live topic after World War 11 when the horrors were revealed of medical experiments carried out by Nazis on concentration camp inmates. But it had been slow to take hold. When Reg had first gone into tertiary education, the group he was with had not heard of an ethics committee. "I would like to think now that every university has an ethics committee," he said. "But it was not until people got into some difficulty that people thought it might be a good idea to set up an ethics committee."

Ethics, he said, took in all aspects of research, including conscientious behaviour of the participants themselves to ensure the data they provided was authentic and accurate. When he was at the School of Paramedical Studies, someone decided that the physiotherapy students - 98 percent of whom were female - would be a good subject group for a study of

behaviour during the menstrual cycle. The girls were told to keep diaries, including what they ate. He then discovered that the girls had not kept diaries and towards the end of the study period, when they were due to get paid for participated; they had colluded to make entries as to what they would have eaten had they participated properly. That was an ethical problem, and unfortunately any study that involved human volunteers had that problem.

It was important that people who would be subjects of the study were informed what it was about and gave their approval. In 2000, at the time of the Sydney Paralympics, a researcher decided the wheelchair basket-ballers would be a good subject for consent on the quality of their sex lives. The researcher started asking questions but had not gained consent from the basket-ballers or the Paralympics Committee. Sydney University was told to withdraw the researcher or there would be court action.

Ethics also dictated that even when

informed consent was given, the most efficient and convenient methods of research should be adopted, so as to minimise suffering and inconvenience. That was important in a study Reg became aware of when a researcher wanted to find which method of sexual intercourse was least stressful. That followed findings that men tended to have heart attacks during or immediately after intercourse and if they recovered were unwilling to participate in that activity again.

The girls in the study had no difficulty finding volunteers. Their boyfriends or their boyfriends' friends were happy to participate but had to put up with having wires attached to them at the time or up to 24 hours afterwards to measure the performance of their heart. It turned out that the girls had not referred their proposed test to a supervisor for approval and that a much easier way would have been to have done urine tests to measure a drug, noradrenalin. "I assume everyone enjoyed themselves but what a headache," Reg said. "There was no informed consent, none whatsoever."

The proper procedures in gaining consent and maintaining the highest levels of professionalism paid dividends in an area where critics were all too willing to seize upon breaches of human rights. At a geriatric hospital in Sydney, consent had been obtained from the patients or, when that was not possible, from their relatives or guardians, for their eyes to be removed after death for study of macular degeneration. The hospital had a bank of eyes which allowed valuable research.

A disgruntled former employee had contacted Channel 10 saying the eyes were being removed without consent and Channel 10 turned up thinking it had a scandal on its hands, only to be shown the record of formal consent, at which point the reporters withdrew with "their tale (sic) between their legs".

Coralie Wilson, having inwardly digested all of what Reg said, said she had sat on an ethics committee and that "five or six times" the committee had refused to allow unethical projects to proceed.

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 10am – 2pm.

21 SEPTEMBER.

UN Day of Peace.

10 OCTOBER

"Meet Frederick Dinner!"

Peroni's, Harris Park (tbc)

12 OCTOBER.

Triathlon Pink Barbecue,
Parramatta Park.

18 OCTOBER.

Bunnings Barbecue, North
Parramatta.

14-16 NOVEMBER.

Joint District Conference Canberra