



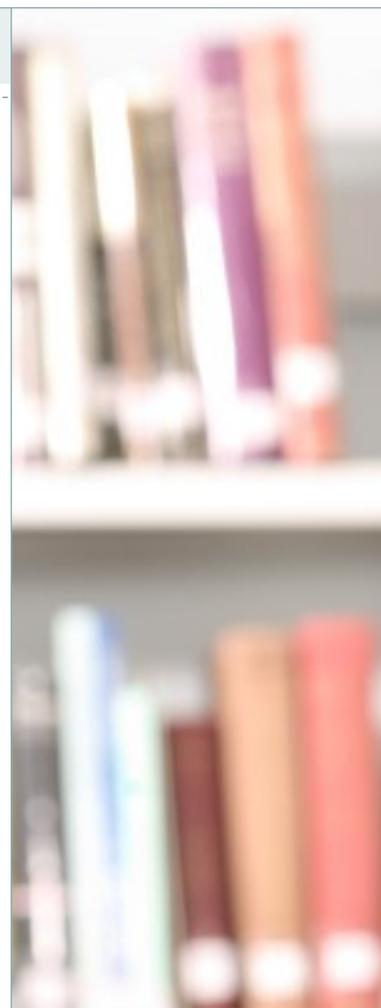
We have had a number of excellent speakers over the past month, but this coming Monday I thought we can have a bit of fun and celebrate on May 4th Star Wars with “May the 4th be with you”

Can everyone bring a story about Star Wars, it may be the first time you went yourself or took your children. Someone may have meet some of the actors or been to a Star wars Expo. Also dust out the cupboards and find a Star Wars outfit or you may have a light sabre you would like to show us or wear.

I hope to see you at the Monday week’s meeting and if you missed any of our previous speakers they are on the Clubs Youtube channel, search under the club’s name or [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClv8\\_YX8Tu9KosEkob6MyVA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClv8_YX8Tu9KosEkob6MyVA)

As well I encourage to use our facebook page, like it and subscribe to our Youtube channel as well

President Barry Antees



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Notes meeting.....2-4
- Next Weeks Speaker ..... 5

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Notes from meeting

# MEETING NOTES-MALCOLM BROWN

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

The club once again met on-line, with guests Ian Goldthorpe, president of the Rotary Club of Parramatta Daybreak, Silvana Martignago, CEO of Probus for the South Pacific, and the Federal Labor MP for Parramatta, Julie Owens.

## **Julie Owens**

Julie, who is an honorary member of our club, was introduced by our president, Barry Antees, who said she had a long relationship with the club and most Rotarians around Sydney. Julie Supplied the district each week with the list of government grants available, some of which had been taken up by clubs. Julie was born in Rockhampton but was now “a passionate Parramattarian”.

## **The Coronavirus and Parramatta**

Julie said the virus which had crated such havoc through the world was one of a class of viruses which included the common cold and SARS, most of which did not have vaccines. There was a common impression that a vaccine for this virus, called Covid 19, would be available soon, but there was so much we did not know about it. For example, whether a person who had had the illness and recovered would thereafter be immune to it. We did not know how many people were carrying it. Some countries said it was being carried by 60 percent of the population, others 30 percent. We did not know wheth-



er a person was contagious before the symptoms appeared. We did not know how many people were “out there” with the disease but not showing symptoms. We did know that the virus could hang around in the air three hours and could last for days on hard surfaces. We did not know whether there would be a vaccine or not. But Australia, which had “closed down” early in the pandemic, was learning from the mistakes of other countries. We were watching to see what happened in other countries such as New Zealand, where restrictions were being relaxed.

Julie said she was not assuming that this virus would go away soon. She did not know whether her office would be open in five or six months. She did not know whether the entire economy could reopen. She could continue to function in her office without opening her doors but others could not. There was talk that we could kill the virus in Australia, but to make that effective, we would have to close our borders indefinitely. There was talk of “waiting for immunity” which might never come. In the meantime, in some other countries, anyone wanting to get into the country who was over 60 years of age would be told to go away.

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# MEETING NOTES-MALCOLM BROWN

And within the countries, nobody could get into a hospital who had an illness other than Covid 19. Even if a country felt it had eliminated the virus, there was also the example of “Patient 31” in South Korea. That country had reduced its number of ill to 30 and the problem was thought to be over. Then another person contracted the disease and before her test results came back, she went to various places, including a large church gathering and a hotel, and as a result of that 2,300 people were diagnosed with the illness in 10 days. The number who could be infected from such a small base was exponential.

Julie said that though closing down was an obvious measure, and a lot of things could be done on-line, there were problems with that which had to be tackled. Some people could not shop on-line and IGA was now taking telephone orders. Community drivers were delivering goods to people. A number of community organisations were pitching in to help those who were at a disadvantage, including Meals on Wheels. People who had money were able to cope. But what about people who had no money? The Government had had introduced programs like Job Keeper to keep people in work but there were still gaps where needs were not met. Council workers were not covered. There were non-residents who did not fit the criteria, and that was especially so in Parramatta where there would not be a single café that did not have a worker on a visa. And even when a person did fit the criteria, there was some delay in the benefits being paid. Payments to business did not start till May. There was however a growing number of people ready to step in and fill these gaps.

But when this was all over, whenever that was, we would have changed our habits. People would not be going to restaurants so often. “We have seen kids move home again,” she said. “We will have housing issues” She was not sure whether the economy would “snap back” to what it was, as had been suggested. Some people would find it more efficient to work from home. In some ways this pandemic had accelerated trends that were already starting to emerge. We had already seen how many transactions could be done on-line. People were doing things in different ways. We did not know where we would be in six months’ time. Julie said she had no difficulty in working from home but others might find this confronting. Already, there were mental issues for being isolated, as well as the pressure so negotiating such things as rent agreements and mortgages. People who did not have rental security had nowhere to go.

Julie said we had been lucky in this country, with so few serious problems, but now we were confronting with some real issues. We lived in a society where medical experts had told us for a long time that we were safe. This virus was a nasty one but it would not be the last one. Asked whether another approach might be to “let [the virus] rip” and rely on the community to develop immunity naturally, she said she would not subscribe to that because she had just put her own dad into hospital. Those who succumbed to the virus were not just the old and unfit. Young people could die too. If we were not to do anything about the virus, it would reach a stage where if you were over 60, you would not be allowed into a hospital. The Federal Opposition, she was, was working with the Government to deal with the problem, putting ideological differences aside and trying to find a solution.

# MEETING NOTES-MALCOLM BROWN

## Poignant Pictures



## Virtual club meetings

Each week we will have an interesting speaker

Monday May 4th 2020 at 1.00pm

Celebrations of Star Wars

Everyone is to bring a story of Star Wars and if possible wear a Stars Outfit.



We now have a permanent GOTO details which I will repeat but for those who want to make this a permanent in your calendars

RC Parramatta City Monday Lunch Meetings

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