



FOREST HILL HAPPENINGS

No. 20 President: Bob Laslett

6 December 2023

BOB'S BANTER



Greetings from Philip Island.

I understand the meeting and AGM went well. Thanks Bill and welcome back.

Last call for Hamper donations through Uniting Care East Burwood.

Special meeting this week with stallholders and a Christmas message from Rev Rod Brown. Honorary members and friends, please let Stuart know if you are coming.

Book for Conference.

Remember the Convention in Singapore.

NEXT WEEK

11 December	Rev Rod Brown	Christmas Meeting
Chairperson:	Bob Laslett	
Greeter:	Sue Ballard	
Notes for "Happenings"	Bill Marsh	
Thanks	Stuart Williams	

COMING UP

9 December	Blackburn Craft Market
10 December	Whitehorse Farmers Market
15 January	BBQ at Blackburn Lake

December is
Disease Treatment & Prevention
Month

CELEBRATIONS



Congrats to Judy Laslett and Sue Ballard for their respective birthdays on December 9 and 11 December.



MEETING REPORT December 4, 2023

The meeting was opened by chairman Bill freshly back from his holidays in Vietnam and Cambodia (a potential speaker's topic). We had the usual welcome to country plus toasts to Australia and RI. Members present were Bill, Warwick, Sue, John B, Glenys, John Mc, Barbara, Stuart and Ron. We had an apology from newly appointed president Bob and we welcomed our guest speaker Gavan McIntyre (RC of Wandin) together with his wife Diane and Merlin Sykes (RC of Maroondah). Gavan is the Chairman of ROMAC in D9810, Diane is the secretary, and Merlin is a newly appointed committee person and ROMAC presenter. As her vocation is Celebrant she should sail through the job. Nicholas Brooks also came along. He was a guest speaker a couple of months ago and was newly arrived from Dubai. So, with 13 attendees we comfortably fitted into the front room of Bucatini. It was good to see Ivan put in an appearance.

The presentation facilities while excellent posed a few problems as nobody at Bucatini knew how to operate the system. Luckily, Nicholas managed to get it all going.

We had our annual AGM which will be reported separately. There were no contentious issues and we are financial so it was completed quickly and efficiently by Pres Bill.

There were few items of business. Warwick mentioned the need for three volunteers at the Sunday Whitehorse Farmers market. Bill reported that our BBQ trailer had been borrowed and used very successfully for which our club was recompensed and if/when we get it back for this Saturday we will also be able to use it.

We were reminded that with Christmas cards filling our letterboxes we should trim off the stamps with a 2 mm border and give them to Ron. Please do not tear off or peel off stamps. If you are unable to use scissors give Ron the stamps still on the envelope.

Our next club meeting will be the last for the year with guest speaker Rev Rod Brown organized by Bob Laslett. We also will have 9 stall holders coming along as our invited guests so please make them extra welcome. They are the source of a great deal of our club's fund raising.

Our guest speaker Gavan then gave us a ROMAC (Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children) update. It is an humanitarian project run and funded by Rotary clubs in Zone 8 ie clubs in Australia and New Zealand. It has been running for 35 years, since 1988. During this time, 537 children have been brought to Australia and NZ to provide life giving and/or dignity restoring surgery by our surgeons who give their time freely. These operations are ones that cannot be carried out overseas. It is 100% run by volunteers with no paid staff and no leased offices so every dollar donated goes to patient care. Patients need to be transported from their home country usually with a carer, often a parent, provided with accommodation, taken to appointments and hospital, their personal and hospital bills paid for. A straightforward heart valve, hole in the heart operation may cost \$20,000 but one patient with multiple operations over many years costs over \$600,000.



Childrens hospital used to provide a small number of free beds but since the backlog of Australian children needing care built up by COVID this has stopped. This has happened at a number of other hospitals. Luckily, due to the hard work of ROMAC staff some hospitals in NZ and country Victoria offer limited reduced cost beds. Patients are all under 15 yrs old. They come from PNG, Solomons, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Timor Leste. The target fund raising for 2022/23 is \$260,000 which this year has come from 13% of Zone 8 clubs. There are presently 50 children on the waiting list, 14 of whom have been accepted, 2 for the Southern Region. The 2024 target is 30. We were then shown an excellent video explaining all about ROMAC. Our club has been a long-time supporter of ROMAC and have looked after a number of patients. To find out more visit www.romac.org.au

The raffle raised \$39. 1st prize (white wine) went to John McPhee, 2nd prize (red wine) to Ron, and 3rd Prize (chocolates) to Bill. The meeting was closed but discussion about ROMAC continued for some time.

Ron Brooks

HAMPERS

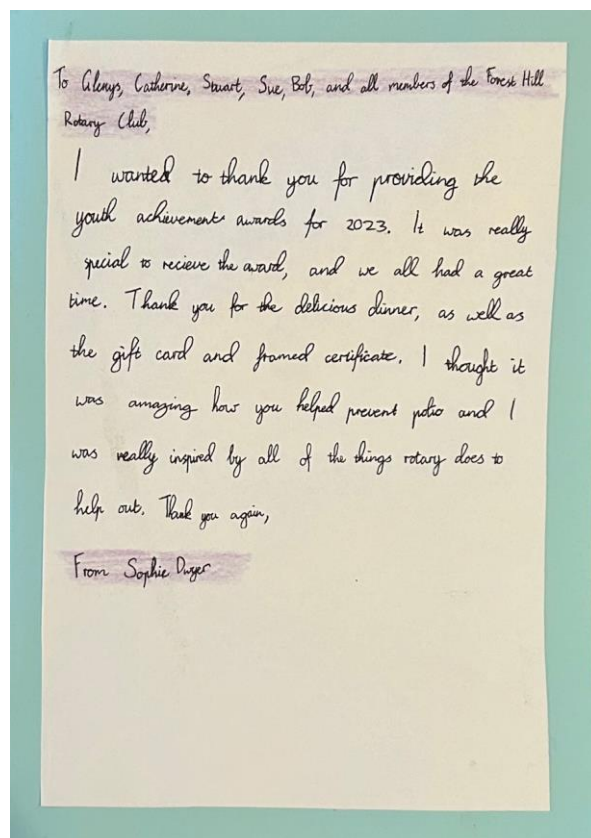
It is that time of year when we especially think of the needy. Items such as toys, Christmas, shortbread/biscuits, custard, long life milk, canned ham/salmon/vegetables, soft drinks, fruit juice, chocolate/sweets, coffee/tea, pasta and pasta sauce, and family toiletries are always very useful. Bring them to our December meetings.

Dementia Café visit

On Tuesday Glenys, Barbara and I went to the Umbrella Cafe Christmas party. We mingled with members and volunteers, joining in with the Christmas celebrations including enjoying the guest singer, party games and a visit from Santa who was delayed by the preschoolers he visited on the way to our party.

THANK YOU

A sample of the many messages we have received saying thanks



RCFH BLACKBURN STATION CRAFT MARKET – TRADER OF THE MONTH

Jeremy & Mary Ann Furness are locals from Croydon. They sell children's books, oil paintings on gum leaves, and knitted toys in markets at Nunawading, Yarra Junction and of course the Rotary Blackburn station markets. Jeremy started writing and illustrating his Barry the Bike series of children's books over 10 years ago. It is one of the very few children's books that feature classic motorcycles, cars, and trucks. Go to Barry the Bike on Facebook to see all the books in the series.

Mary Ann started **oil paintings on gum leaves** as a 15-year-old inspired by paintings by her grandparents. Her grandfather was William Beckwith McInnes who won the Archibald Prize seven times. These gum leaf oil paintings are as unique as they are beautiful. She paints on specially prepared Tasmanian Blue Gum Eucalyptus leaves which when painted are sealed to ensure a long life. She has been a professional illustrator for the last 40 years working for some of the world's leading publishing houses but now Mary Ann runs Wattle Gum Studios nestled in the Croydon Hills.

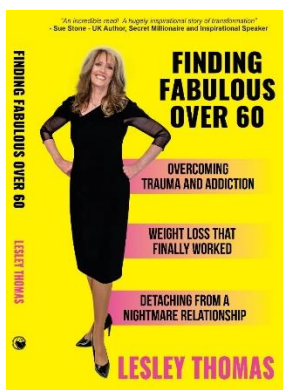
Mary Ann started **knitting toys** as a girl and now has turned that pastime into a commercial venture with her beautiful, cute range of animals, fish and birds.

Jeremy and Mary Ann can be contacted on 0403 310 032 or mafurness@bigpond.com or via Instagram [mafurness_arts](https://www.instagram.com/mafurness_arts). But better still, come and talk to them at one of their regular markets to see the full range of their talents.



SOME OF OUR BLACKBURN MARKET STALLHOLDERS





Come and frequent the Market this month- December 9
 Disclaimer: Articles and reports do not necessarily reflect Rotary Club of Forest Hill opinions.