



FOREST HILL HAPPENINGS

No. 21

President: Bill Marsh

23 November 2022

BILL'S BY-LINE



Monday's meeting was a lively affair! How could it not be as we had AG Catherine Elfick and Emma Clark as visitors from 'up in the hills'! (I think there must be something in the water!) Always a pleasure to welcome Catherine to our meetings. Emma gave us an update on the Canberra Conference. We already have about 35% of our members attending plus two partners. Another member is trying to organise their life to allow them to attend. This meant Emma was preaching to the converted but it was still interesting to be brought up-to-date. We thank Emma and Catherine for taking the time to venture down to the 'low lands' to bring us the good news.

Our guest speaker was Rhonda McKenzie speaking about her Cambodian Project. Rhonda is passionate about her long-term involvement with a school in Cambodia and now her enthusiasm has been picked up by her club and they are going from strength to strength. (A full report later.)

On Wednesday, Sue, Barb, Gary Davis and I attended the Apprentice Awards at the Box Hill Institute. It was a well-organized evening and it was great to see the apprentices being rewarded for their dedication and hard work..



Gary Davis, Jessica Jolley (GT award), Jeremy Calf (FD award) and Alvin Assangi (FD award)

On the 27th February 2023 we will host the two Ford Davis(FD) and the Graham Taylor(GT) recipients at our meeting. This will give all of our members a chance to meet these young people and hear their stories. Roger, Gary & Cobie Davis will be joining us on the night.

Members have been notified of the change to the Board structure and the feedback on the change has all been positive.

At this stage we look like we will have 2-3 members sharing the role of President in 2024-25. I haven't heard back from all members yet so I cannot pass names on to District at this stage. If you haven't replied please do so as soon as possible.

I will be talking to the organisers at the Forest Hill Hub in the next few days and we hope to be able to have a display and a meeting point where we can talk to interested people about the work of Rotary.

Have a great week.

Bill

*November is
Rotary Foundation
Month*

MEETING REPORT

Monday 21 November; attendance 13

The meeting was in the capable hands of Ron Brooks. He was delighted to welcome our guest speaker Rhonda McKenzie and her husband Phil, and AG Catherine and Emma from Emerald. Catherine and Bill duelled over the pasta choice much to the amusement of the others on the table. Ron led toasts for Australia and Rotary International.

Emma led an entertaining segment on the upcoming district conference with Catherine performing on the side. There was a lively video. It was followed by highlights including such features as a Continental brunch at the National gallery, a hop-on-hop -off bus on the Friday. Saturday's theme was diversity, the gala dinner is in the Great Hall in Parliament House and some great speakers. On Sunday there will be the in Memoriam and concluding with a boxed lunch.

Weekly reports

Bill mentioned the raffle for the goodies donated by Michael Sukkar.

International- Ron B volunteered to listen online to special Foundation seminar with future world President Stephanie and Ian Riseley as Bob L could not attend.

Community- East Burwood Uniting requires cash for hampers this year rather than the usual goods- contact Bob L for details.

Vocational- Sue is arranging speaker for Box Hill Institute presentations in 2023

Program- Ron told us of upcoming speakers and topic. He also told of another 60kg batch of coins for UNICEF (total 600 kg) and more market interviews.

Meeting

We were treated to an inspirational evening as Rhonda (aided by Phil) showed how their passion expanded through their Mt Waverley club to transform a Cambodian village. The village is 25min from Siam Reap. The project has been going for 14 years.

The McKenzies treat the orphans as family and have seen them develop from primary school students to successful careers.

Phil told the tale of their chicken lunch in a private home in the village- quite different from here. During COVID 60000 protein-rich meals were provided over a 3-month period.



A lot of attention has been given to a disadvantaged rural school where a classroom has been completed, a mozzie-rich hole has been filled in and converted to a soccer ground, and a library instigated. A playground has been built.



An informative evening with many parallels to our Hope Katolo project. Good news -Rhonda has kindly agreed to take our unwanted spectacles. President Bill closed the meeting after unwrapping the raffle winners AG Catherine, Sue B and Warwick. The raffle raised \$52.

Bob Laslett

NEXT MEETING

28 November – Thomas White – RYLA

Chairperson:	Sue Ballard
Greeter:	Bob Laslett
Notes for “Happenings”	Glenys Grant
Thanks	Bob Williams

COMING UP

2 December	Film night	
5 December	Jackie Gleeson	RAM Update
10 December	Blackburn Market	
11 December	Whitehorse Farmers' Market	
12 December	Rev Tina Lyndon Ng	Weird & wonderful travel stories

CELEBRATIONS



Barbara Searle celebrates becoming a Rotary member on 24 November six years ago!

Congrats too to Glenys Coates as her birthday is 23 November!



SPROUTINGS

Gardiners Creek or **KooyongKoot**, which is its original name, is a waterway in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It is part of the Yarra River catchment and is about 30km in length.

The creek originates in the beautiful suburb of Blackburn, where many small creeks and gullies converge around Blackburn Lake. It then flows through at least eight suburbs before finally flowing into the Yarra River at Hawthorn. The majority of this creek has now become heavily urbanised and degraded.

I reported in this column some time ago about the history of the creek and the formation, twenty months ago, of a small group of concerned environmentalists who wanted to preserve the creek if possible. Here is an update for you, from one of my recent articles. It's a great tale of the power of the people ...

[Dawn of a bright future for the KooyongKoot](#)

KooyongKoot (Gardiners Creek) and its surrounds has for many years been neglected.



Not so now. The formation of the KooyongKoot Alliance (KKA) over the past 20 months has been very exciting.

It is now a group of well **over 20 Friends groups**, and is an important part of a broader Regional Collaboration involving five Councils, Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, Deakin University and numerous other stakeholder groups including sporting groups.

They collectively are making commitment to, and working strongly towards, improving the health and increasing the biodiversity of the KooyongKoot catchment through a strategic plan for the whole of the Gardiners Creek Catchment.

The Catchment has been identified as a system in need of urgent care and a key biodiversity corridor. Tree canopy, understory and biodiversity loss are critical to the quality of life in our suburbs.

The sharp loss of these is of great concern, as these areas are still an important refuge for a number of keystone species including the powerful owl, rakali (native otter), numerous skinks and lizards and many, many native birds, including the now endangered Gang Gang Cockatoo.

In October the KKA held their AGM with guest speaker Tim Entwisle, Director, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, who, after speaking of his botanical passions, then congratulated the group on their endeavours.

Here are some of the achievements so far:

They have:

- Become an incorporated body
- Successfully applied this year alone for nearly \$200,000 in Federal and State grants as well as receiving an initial and important seed funding grant from Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society.
- The Projects proposed will engage the community and help build and strengthen Friends groups include planting over 6,000 trees and understory shrubs along the KooyongKoot catchment.
- State funding will be used help fund a part time role for the KKA to assist in developing a strategy for the catchment, a masterplan for long term care and protection for the creek.
- Established a private Facebook page for members to share ideas, with a website being developed.
- Through their network they are supporting and encouraging new and emerging groups looking to care for the creek and its surrounds, such as the young dynamic group, the Urban Guerrillas
- Formed a close alliance with the Yarra Riverkeeper Association and the Concerned Waterways Alliance, to collectively act as a strong, influential voice for the Creek and beyond.



L-R

Tim Entwisle, Director and CEO, Royal Botanic Gardens,
Pam Welsford KKA Secretary, Graham Ross
KKA Convenor.

Tim Entwisle has recently published his memoir entitled 'Evergreen: The Botanic Life of a Plant Punk' – a fascinating book.

The latest achievement is that the KooyongKoot Alliance has received funding of \$20,000 from the Australian Government as part of the ***Planting Trees for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Program***.

Seven commemorative trees have already been planted at Markham Reserve in the Jubilee year, one for each decade of the Her Majesty, The Queen's reign. The KooyongKoot Alliance has received funding to plant a further 3,000 plants in 2023. This will be undertaken with the help of the local community.

Congratulations to this forward-thinking group. Keep an eye on them and support them - they are active and represent many environment minded community members and groups.

For more information on the group please contact their Convenor, Graham Ross 0407046 358 Email address:

Kooyongkootalliance@gmail.com

That's all for this week.. Glenys

RCFH BLACKBURN STATION CRAFT MARKET – TRADER OF THE MONTH

EARTHFIVE LEATHERWORKS

The **Earthfive** leatherworks stall is operated by Peter Davies who has been a leatherworker since 1969, with a few years in between as a graphic designer.

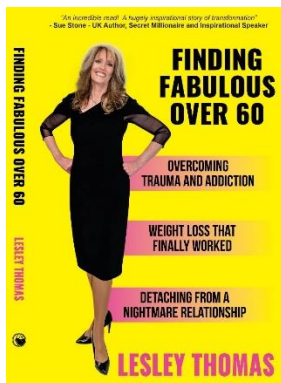
Peter was telling me, between making made to measure belts for three different customers, that he started his leather journey when he made himself a bag from a goatskin in Kabul in 1969. He was travelling overland from the UK to Australia and wanted to replace the shoulder bag he had. So, he made one! He then made a few more for friends. When he arrived back in Melbourne an old friend heard about his bag making in Kabul and handed him a couple of hides he no longer needed and suddenly this became EARTH Leatherworks in Glenferrie road, Earth II in London when he started travelling again and Earth Three in New York when he moved there. Returning to Australia he had a big workshop employing 10 staff. Now he is on **Earthfive**.

He has been coming to our Blackburn market for more than 4 years. Peter makes shoes, sandals, handbags, purses, wallets, wrist warmers, glasses cases, three legged stools, you name it. He has made leather thigh length boots and helmets for films and the theatre. He will quote on any repairs. He takes credit cards and you can use PayPal. Come and see him at the Blackburn Market or Cockatoo, Mulgrave, or Belgrave markets.

Contact him via his website www.earthfive.com.au by email peter@earthfive.com.au or 0425 713 889



SOME OF OUR BLACKBURN MARKET STALLHOLDERS



Come to the Market next month- December 10