



FOREST HILL HAPPENINGS

No. 22 President: Bob Laslett

17 January 2024

BOB'S BANTER



Welcome to the New Year. I trust the break has refreshed you for Rotary's work is never done. Hope is always needed to be created.

A nice relaxing evening to begin and a big thankyou to Peter Dempsey for a great start.

Members are invited to put their thinking caps on as we progress our plans for the second half of the Rotary year.

The last Conference for D9810 in Warrnambool is coming up fast. Speakers include Law Reform Commissioner Bernadette McSherry, conference favourite Jonathon Usher, Tom Boyd and Greg Ross.

Early bird prices for International Womens Day breakfast close on Friday.

NEXT MEETING

22 January Business meeting

Club roster for 22 January 2024.

Chairperson: Bob Laslett

Greeter: Barbara Searle

Notes for "Happenings" Bill Marsh

Cashier & Recorder: Warwick Stott

COMING UP

29 January No meeting

5 February Positive Ageing Sallenna Skye

12 February Down Memory Lane Eric Panther

*January is
Vocational Service
Month*

CELEBRATIONS



Congrats to Ron Brooks and Warwick Stott who celebrate their birthdays on January 27 and January 30 respectively.



MEETING REPORT January 15, 2024

Our first meeting of the year was held on Monday Jan 15 at 6pm, in the beautiful Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. Attendees were hosted by Peter Dempsey, Secretary to the Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee. Seven members and five partners/ friends attended, with some members still away.



It was a perfect evening to sit outside, enjoying picnic food supplemented by soft drink, tea and coffee provided by the host. Members commented on the natural beauty of the environs, and the cleanliness they noted everywhere, especially the BBQ and toilets - often not found at this time of the year in park areas.

After a delightful evening and meal outside, all adjourned to the renovated Visitors Centre, viewing the rebuilt displays with interest.



Peter gave the Acknowledgement to Country, then explained the history of the area.

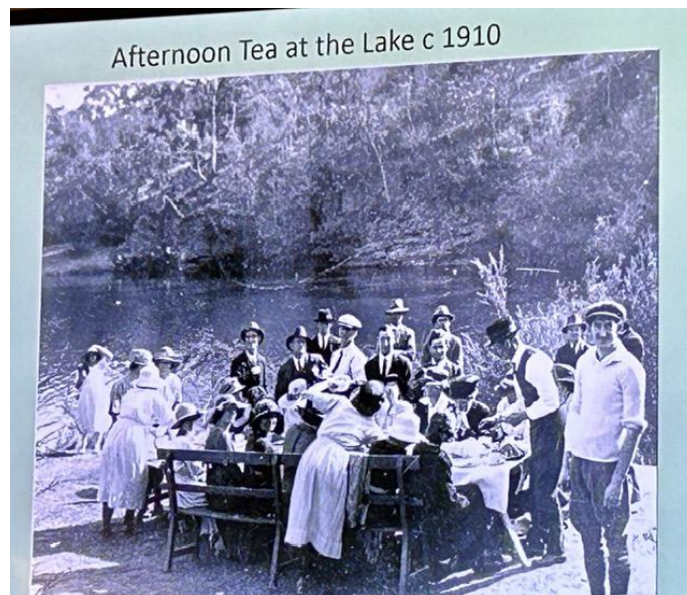
Gardiners Creek (KooyongKoot) is over 30km in length. It originated in Blackburn as a series of small streams and ponds which flooded to become an urban stream and part of the Yarra River Catchment.

The area was undeveloped until 1882, when the railway extended to Blackburn and land developers wanted to attract more residents.

In 1889 Blackburn Lake was man-built to enhance the area and promote activities like boating, afternoon teas, fishing and swimming. The area began to flourish as a picnic park.

In 1893 it was also a home to the Heidelberg artists group. The painting, Bush Idyll, by Frederick McCubbin was painted there. He lived at No 7 Wolsley Crescent.

In 1910 the Blackburn Lake Swimming Club was formed, with a Swimming Carnival in 1912. There are reports that horses swam in a race in the lake about that time.



In 1909 the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society purchased 75 acres, at 21 Pounds an acre, for a home with gender separate dormitories and a flower and vegetable farm. It was opened at the Great Carnival later that year. The flower farm was successful, but some of the commercial growers in the area protested. In World War 1 the wounded soldiers came to recuperate and the many church members in the area nurtured the ill.

In 1961 when there was a threat of land subdivision, Whitehorse Council purchased a small part of the land.

1962: the MMBW proposed the lake be made a flood control retarding basin. Local residents enlisted the help of active conservationist landscape designers Edna Walling and Ellis Stones to ensure the lake was edged and surrounded with wetland plants to achieve this, while keeping the natural environs.

1965: the first Committee of Management was formed, and Blackburn Lake was officially declared a Sanctuary, so after many previous attempts to preserve the area, it, along with its fauna and flora, birds and fish, was finally protected.

1975: The Adult Deaf Society sold most of its land to the City of Nunawading.

In 1979, only four years later, land adjoining the Sanctuary belonging to Camberwell Grammar went on sale. Once again, the ecology of the area was threatened until huge public lobbying occurred and a combined consortium of Council, State and Federal Governments, along with some local residents, purchased that land and integrated it into the protected woodland. A final area of eight housing blocks was purchased in 2006. That area is now named McCubbin Park.

1985: the Friends of the Lake Education Program began, totally staffed by volunteers. A form of environmental education has existed from that time on. Today two staff are employed, and the Whitehorse Council and volunteers support the ever-growing program, which is only limited by staff time and funding.

1991: The original Visitors Centre (VC) was expanded, then in 2018 and 2021 further extensions and upgrades were completed. Now the VC is in constant demand and the Sanctuary is used continually by visitors, who marvel at the preservation of its natural beauty.

Continual surveillance of the area is necessary to report any issues, like vandalism or maintenance. This is done by the BLS Advisory Committee (all volunteers). One of the current projects is sign updating. They have recently surveyed Sanctuary visitors who agreed there is a need for new signs. The committee presented a submission for funding to Whitehorse Council and some signs are agreed and in progress.

Volunteers have always supported the Sanctuary. Through the Advisory Committee regular activities are run, including monthly working bees, bird surveys, the environment education program, regular water testing. EPA alerts, various environmental or anti-pollution projects, CUAD and manning the visitor centre each Sunday afternoon when it is open to the public. etc.



Rotary has helped with progress. Three clubs have contributed by attending working bees, funding large building renovations and extensions to the VC, giving grants to fund new educational equipment, the Yarning Circle and Juby's Garden.

Peter finished by mentioning the numerous acts of pollution and damage the Lake Sanctuary has had to survive – and which the BLS Advisory Committee and Council have to manage.

He also told us about upcoming events we may like to attend and possibly help support. ***They are listed below.***

Peter was thanked by President Bob Laslett for his talk and for making us feel so welcome.

It was a most enjoyable way to start the Rotary year.

Glenys Grant

Blackburn Lake Activities you can support:

Working bees are each month.

- February 8, Thursday, 6 - 8pm ~ Twilight Working Bee.

Join us after for refreshments and a “getting to know you/catch-up” chat.

- March 16, Saturday, 9.30 - 11.30 planting preparation starts now!

CUAD –

Sunday March 3 9.45 – 12 noon

Clean Up “Blackburn Lake & it’s catchment” Day & Litter Reduction ideas!

Stay on for **Jazz at the Lake** at 2pm! BYO rubbish-free picnic lunch, perhaps....

Visitor Centre Opening. Blackburn Lake Visitors Centre is open to the public each Sunday from 2-4pm.

Volunteer supervisors are required to meet and greet the Public. It’s easy to do.

Major event.

Blackburn Lake Clean Waterways Expo. 24 Feb.

BLS is the venue for a number of water facilities raising awareness of **HOW**, together, we can prevent pollution and litter from entering our beautiful lake and local waterways, and **WHY** we need to! It will be an interesting event and also fun to attend, EPA response vehicle, talks, and information, kids story time and activities, raingardens, Gardens for Wildlife, water bugs, and Roberto the Connie with his collectable Fauna swap-cards.

Spread the word, add it to your calendar, so you and yours don’t miss out!

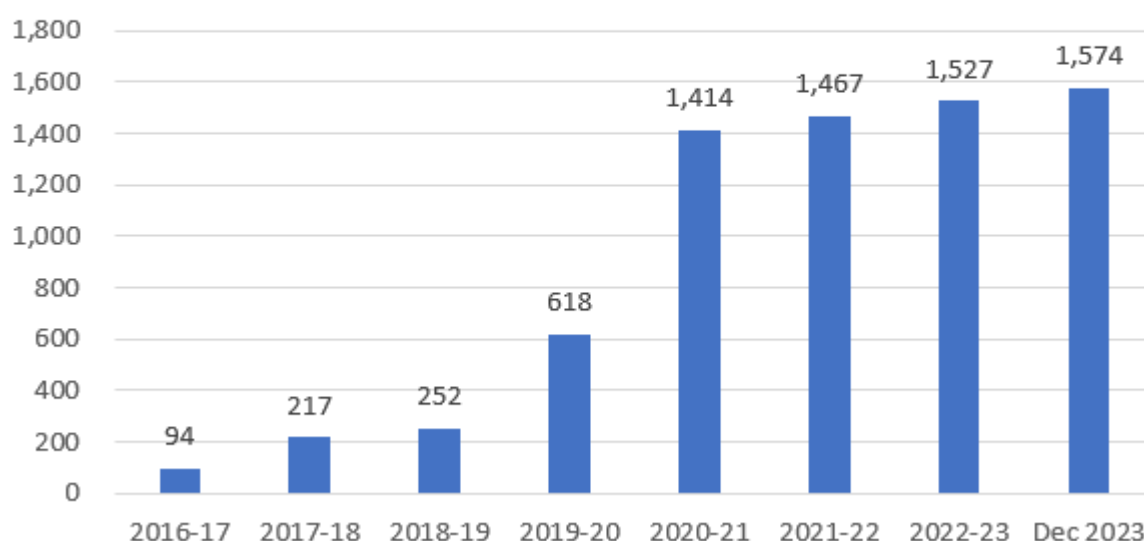
SPROUTINGS

ESRAG information:

Together, we inspire and empower the Rotary Family and non-Rotarian friends to implement sustainable and impactful environmental projects -- by sharing our extensive expertise, networks, education, and best practices.

ESRAG was founded as a U.S. non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and our membership has been growing since the beginning. We are connecting and inspiring our members to engage, exchange ideas, collaborate and take action for local and international projects.

ESRAG Active Paid
Members 2016 - 2023



With your support, we will begin to hire professional staff and dramatically increase our capacity to mitigate the climate crisis, create a sustainable environment, and *leave a better planet to our children and grandchildren.*

ESRAG's accomplishments in the recent years:

- Advocated to make Environment as the 7th Area of Focus of Rotary
- Organized 13 ESRAG Regional Chapters around the world.
- Built an online 'Airline Travel Carbon Offset Calculator' and donation process.
- Signed a Memo of Understanding with Project Drawdown
- Assembled project teams on Carbon Offsets, Club Calculators
- Organized webinars on Green Transportation, Biodiversity, climate solutions and the feedback loops
- Created ESRAG & UNEP Handbook: A Handbook for Rotary Clubs
- Created Green Events Handbook: How to Run Sustainable Rotary Events
- Formed Task Forces for the Climate Solutions, Renewable Energy, Plastics Solutions, Plant-Rich Diet, Food Waste, Clean Cooking and Pollinators
- Established the Climate Roadmap Workgroup to strategize long-term action plans in addition to the projects.
- Engaging with the Rotary International senior leadership to discuss Net-Zero emissions goal by 2040.
- Having booths at the Rotary International conventions, Zones, and District conferences, and President_Elect training seminars
- Organizing weekly project seminars to share environmental projects.
- Active in social media - Facebook: 2,400 Instagram: 1,707 LinkedIn: 3,000 Twitter: 366
- Monthly newsletters shared with 4,406 subscribers.

RCFH BLACKBURN STATION CRAFT MARKET – TRADER OF THE MONTH

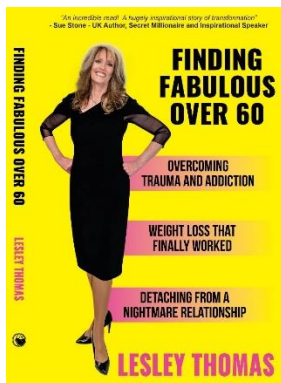
Every month for the last 10 years or so we have heard the sometimes lively and sometimes plaintive sounds of jazz drifting down over the stalls at the Blackburn Craft Market. The Skidaddle group give their time freely to entertain us while clearly having fun (or is it that they would play anywhere for a free sausage at the end of the morning?). If you haven't met them, they are Richard Desmond (cornet), Dave O'Sullivan (drums), Jim Badger (banjo), Ezra Kawadlo (trombone), Simon Gilbert (guitar), Tony Lee (clarinet), and Rod Evans (double bass). Richard and others also sing. So next time you are at the craft market, go up, say hello, smile, tap your feet, sing along - they'll love you for it. Rod is their low-profile leader and told me they are available for parties, and for gigs particularly their 16-piece big band that plays swing music mostly from the 30's and 40's. You may have seen and heard some of the other bands they play in which include the Dandenong Ranges Hot Jazz Orchestra, South Dereel City Stompers, U3A Big Band, and the Diamond Valley Big Band, too many to list. Many in the band will be playing at the Port Fairy Jazz Festival in February 2024. As I was listening to them play, I heard one say let's change the key to ..., I didn't realise it but all these guys read music as well..... and there was me thinking they just play it all by ear.

So if you what to hire them please contact: rode.evans@macrodynamics.com.au



THE SKIDADDLE GROUP

SOME OF OUR BLACKBURN MARKET STALLHOLDERS



Come and frequent the Market – February 10

Disclaimer: Articles and reports do not necessarily reflect Rotary Club of Forest Hill opinions.