



FOREST HILL HAPPENINGS

No. 32 President: Bill Marsh

24 April 2024

BILL'S BY-LINE



Life keeps rolling on and there is always something interesting happening.

This week we had Michael Sukkar as our guest speaker. It was very enlightening to hear about life as a politician and the various calls that are made upon you as you balance local, federal and party allegiances. Each has its own unique needs, and your responses need to be tailored accordingly. Michael gave a very interesting presentation without becoming 'political'.

Another highlight was to have Ken Maxfield join us to accept a \$5,000 donation to Camp Getaway in memory of Warwick Stott. It was lovely to have Christine Stott at the meeting for the presentation as Warwick was a long-time advocate for the Camp.

Ken originally joined Rotary at Forest Hill on the same night as Bob Laslett some 47 years ago. A number of members and partners will visit the camp at Axedale next Tuesday.

Kaye Woods from the Blackburn South Ladies Probus Club also joined us for the night. Kaye came along to hand back the club's regalia as, sadly, they have ceased functioning due to lack of numbers. They were one of 11-12 Probus clubs started by Forest Hill through the work of past member Stan Harper. Kaye thanked the club for their support and told us that any funds they have left will be donated to "Cottage By The Sea" at Queenscliff, the local SES Brigade and Eastern Relief.

We received \$5,000 from the WFM this week which has enabled us to fund several more donations to local charities we support. We have just donated \$10,000 to the Hope Katolo Nursery School in Kenya. A long-term project we have supported for many years. It has been most gratifying to watch the development of the school and the changes it has been able to make in its community. While we have supplied the funding the locals have supplied all the materials, manpower and enthusiasm to make it a successful partnership.

A couple of weeks ago I, and several other members and partners, attended the Sikh Volunteers Australia gathering at Bunjil Place, Narre Warren. This was a beautiful event where the Sikh community thanked all the other volunteer organisations around them. Our club was one of the many groups recognised for their work in the community. It is a day I will remember for a long time as the Prime Minister and Premier were also guests. The picture I have of the Prime Minister in a bright orange turban will remain with me forever. As you know whenever there is a 'natural' disaster in the community the Sikhs are always one of the first groups to pitch in to help.

Next week we will enjoy a club dinner with our partners and friends in the restaurant.

Enjoy Your Time In Rotary

Bill

NEXT MEETING

29 April **Bucatini Fellowship night**

COMING UP

6 May **Betty Chetcuti** **Vegan cooking**

11 May **Blackburn Craft Market**

12 May **Whitehorse Community Market**

13 May **DGE Colin Byron** **Rotary in the Future**

*April is
Environmental
Month*

CELEBRATIONS



Congratulations to John McPhee for his birthday on April 26.

It is also time to congratulate Ron and Robbie Brooks for their wedding anniversary on April 28.



Meeting Report

- April 22, 2024

The meeting was opened by chairman Bill healthily back from COVID bout. Members present were Bill, Sue, Glenys, Barbara, Bob and Ron. We had an apology from Stuart tripping around East Gippsland with his Probarians, John B who is having his health problems in his amazingly positive cheerful attitude to life and John Mc recovering from a losing battle with an escalator. We welcomed our two Rotarian guest speakers. Ken Maxfield (RC of North Balwyn, D9800) and Michael Sukkar (RC of Nunawading). We also had Chris S, Robbie and Judy M (who also has recovered well after passing on her COVID to Bill). Kaye Wood from the Blackburn South Ladies Probus Club arrived later while Mary Naylor was a no show. So with 12 attendees we enjoyed lots of predinner chat. Peter and Sam from Bucatini looked after us well.



Ken was there to accept a \$5,000 cheque from the club for “his” Camp Getaway. This camp was dear to Warwick’s heart so we made this donation in his memory. Camp Getaway started 23yrs ago. It was set up for people with disabilities, and special needs and provide rest and respite for their carers who would benefit from a camp experience in a recreational camp designed to provide maximum opportunities for the enjoyment of outdoor environmentally based programmes with room for up to 100 young people. It is operated by D9800 and runs on a self-funding basis overseen by a full time on site manager. It is very accessible for activities involving Youth Exchange, RYPEN, RYLA, MUNA as well as district activities and meetings.



Kaye Wood then handed over the regalia from the Ladies Probus club of Blackburn South. We presented this to them when Stan Harper formed the club on 15th Aug 1989. Kaye said there were still many members, but nobody would volunteer to take the positions of responsibility.

Our guest speaker Michael Sukkar, MP Federal Member for Deakin then addressed us. He is a local growing up in Ringwood with two brothers and two sisters. His father came from Lebanon when he was 18 and met his Aussie wife who has Norwegian ancestry. He tended to be sporty not academic at school but did end up doing Law/Commerce at university. Neither he nor his wife were particularly politically motivated. He had met his future wife Anna while they both had part time jobs at Myer. He worked at a large law firm after graduating then at 26 had a cardiac arrest while playing basketball, a genetic problem. After recovery he started doing charity and pro bono work and thought he should work to help the community and thought politics may be the way to achieve that. He applied to the Liberal party and against the odds he was preselected in 2012. Our club's first contact with him was when he asked for a site at the Blackburn Market to spruik his message. He then stood against the sitting Labor candidate and in 2013 won. He told us he has three main drivers. He first and foremost wants to represent the interests of the 150,000 people in his electorate. He would get about 150 of them contacting his office daily with problems big and small. But he stresses to his helpers that to that individual their problem is big. Secondly, he needs to think about how his work impacts the rest of Australians. This particularly since he became shadow minister for Social Service (40% of the Australian budget), shadow minister for NDIS, and Housing. Thirdly, the party is important. After 3 yrs he was elected assistant treasurer and housing minister. He realizes that it is with the party backing that he gets elected. These three drivers at times conflict with each other. When he was in government, he spent his waking hours thinking about how to improve the lives of the average worker and now he is in opposition it is his job to criticize what the government is doing. He thinks everyone who works hard deserves a home. The one advantage in opposition is he has more time to spend at home with Anna and his 5- and 7-year-old children who he wants to grow up in the safe welcoming society that he and his parents had. A decent place.



He then addressed a number of questions that had been put to him prior to the meeting. He demonstrated a caring and thoughtful attitude to these questions which mainly resonated well with the thinking of his audience. The topics covered included Aged Care, Youth Crime, Police Resources, Drugs, Home Break-in's, Sentence Leniency, and Injection Rooms.

Bill thanked him for his open style of presentation. He in reply offered our undecided members a home at the RC of Nunawading when the club hands back its charter at the end of June.

Ron passed on the thanks of the Rotarians against Malaria district committee for the \$2,000 we donated to add to the \$500 we donated at Christmas.

The raffle raised \$55. 1st prize (chocolates) went to waiter Peter who chose them so he could split his prize amongst the other staff, 2nd prize (red wine) to Ken, and 3rd Prize (white wine) to Judy M. Ken invited our club to tour the Camp Getaway facilities on Tues 30th April. The meeting was closed but discussion about ROMAC continued for some time.

Meeting report: Ron Brooks

Multicultural Inclusion Day

RC Glen Waverley is holding a fun multicultural inclusion day on Sunday 12 May from 10am-3pm.

The venue is Mount Waverley Youth Centre 45 Miller Crescent. It is free!! Food, fun, stalls and dance.

RCFH BLACKBURN STATION CRAFT MARKET – TRADER OF THE MONTH

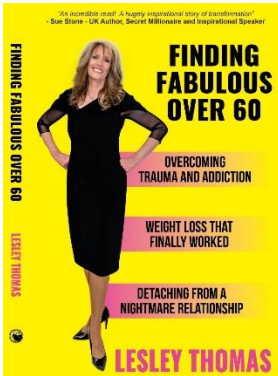
Every month for the last 10 years or so we have heard the sometimes lively and sometimes plaintive sounds of jazz drifting down over the stalls at the Blackburn Craft Market. The **Skidaddle** group give their time freely to entertain us while clearly having fun (or is it that they would play anywhere 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 want to hire them please contact: rode.evans@macrodynamics.com.au



THE SKIDADDLE GROUP

SOME OF OUR BLACKBURN MARKET STALLHOLDERS



Come and frequent the Market next month—May 11

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