



EXCERPTS OF PRESIDENT JO COWLING'S CHANGEOVER CELEBRATION SPEECH 2010-2011

The Rotary International Theme for 2010-2011 'Building Communities and Bridging Continents'

This theme reflects the Rotary Club of Richmond's commitment to our local and international community. In the year ahead we will continue to welcome and **build** the relationship we have with the City of Yarra, with our sponsors and with local business and **community** groups. The Rotary Club of Richmond has a strong history in the City of Yarra having been chartered 46 years ago on the 24th August 1964 in what was then the old City of Richmond. We will celebrate this anniversary again in August. The Club has always had an active role in the community and we wish to remain a relevant and vibrant force through our many projects. I warmly welcome to our Changeover tonight Yarra Councillor, Amanda Stone.

In the coming year the Club will provide ongoing support to our very successful **Community Service Projects, New Generations and Vocational Projects**. These include the **Rotary Youth Arts Project (RYAP)** and **Next Step Program** aimed at providing disadvantaged youth with skills to assist them in achieving their goals. We also focus on our education projects including the **Mock Job Interview Program** held at Melbourne Girls College, Richmond; the **Yarra Primary School Kitchen Garden Project, the Slade Literary Award, the Ainger Public Speaking Awards and the Victoria Police Mentoring Program**. We will also achieve success through **Rotary Programs** which encourage student participation in the Mock United Nations Assembly, Rotary Youth Personal Enrichment program; National Science Awards to name but a few. We continue to look at projects which will engage the **OXYgens** (Our XY Generations) through meaningful and relevant community projects. I would like to thank them for their response to the Bush Fires Fence Building Project carried out following the fires last year. The Club will look at ways in which we can support the indigenous people living in the City of Yarra through the **Indigenous Diabetes Health project**, with additional support from our Heritage Cluster Rotary Clubs. This year the Heritage Cluster will expand to include the Rotary Club of North Melbourne and the newest Club, the Rotary Club of Melbourne Park. Our **Community support** will continue with our involvement at the **Abbotsford Convent, the annual Clean Up Australia Day participation and the Ambulance Victoria initiative: 4 Steps For Life – CPR Program**.

Internationally we will **bridge the continents** through our **International project, the Kindy Box project in East Timor**, ensuring kindergarten teachers and students continue to benefit from this unique Club-driven initiative. We will support children who require medical aid through **ROMAC - Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children**. The Club will continue to proudly support **Australian Rotary Health** whose primary mission is to fund medical research by Australians for Australians. This past year ARH endowed 10 pilot research studies under the initiative '*Mental Health of Young Australians*'. A strong Club Services Committee will ensure that our Club is administered successfully and we continue to have an interesting and stimulating program, fun in fellowship and ensuring that our **Friends of Richmond Rotary (FoRR)** remains a vital part of our Club.

We will be kept informed through a weekly edition of the prize-winning bulletin, **The Tiger Rag**, along with an engaging and informative **Club website**. We also need to recognise the achievements of the past and will collate and maintain an archive of the Club's history and records.

The **Rotary Foundation** is the charitable arm of Rotary and we will continue to support the Foundation through program participation and financial contributions. Richmond Rotary will also participate in the **Future Vision** pilot which will help to refine the Foundation's new grant structure. Past President Trevor Pang will be a representative on this District committee.

The Club's Leadership Team will help us to achieve our goals and achieve a healthy and wealthy Club. My vision for 2010-2011 is to involve all Members of the Club and so in this year I have appointed the Committee Chairs to oversee the Club's projects and programs, and have allocated each Member of the Club to a committee. By embracing this team-approach involving all members, we can share the load and achieve our goal of a vibrant, growing and successful Rotary club. We will hold Club Forums throughout the year which will allow Committee Chairs to report and update Members and Friends on the status of the Club's projects and programs. I will welcome Member's suggestions, concerns and commendations and encourage an inclusive, communicative approach. Communication will be a high priority for me personally and I will endeavour to keep you informed of Rotary activity at Club, District and International levels - particularly in areas which directly affect the Club.

Like all service clubs today we face many challenges and these include the recruitment of new members; raising the funds to continue our successful programs both in our local community and internationally. In the year ahead I will focus the Club to pay particular attention to membership, marketing and public relations and to raising the necessary funds for our very worthy projects through the Fundraising Committee. To achieve success we will need the support of our Members, Friends, sponsors, supporters and family to help us achieve these important goals. Tonight I am very fortunate to have many of my family and friends here. I encourage you all to bring along your friends and family to our meetings and fellowship activities throughout this Rotary year. I believe that the message of Rotary is a very powerful and one we should be proud to spread through-out our networks. I encourage you to wear the Rotary pins and badges with pride and be able to respond when asked '*what is Rotary?*'. I am passionate about what Rotary does and my focus will be on making sure more and more people hear the good news stories of our Club and of Rotary, supported by all our Marketing and Public Relations committee, our Club website and our bulletin team.

I would like to finish tonight with a powerful statement –

'We are ordinary people brought together through Rotary to accomplish extraordinary things'.

Thank you to our sponsors and for your attendance tonight at the Club's Changeover Dinner. I would also like to thank the staff here at the Riversdale Golf Club for their attentiveness and service. To the Rotary Members who have provided me with assistance, encouragement and guidance - I say 'thank you'. I will look forward with passion and enthusiasm to a successful and fabulous year ahead. And most importantly, along the way we must remember to enjoy **FUN, FELLOWSHIP and FRIENDSHIP through Rotary**.

I extend a warm welcome to all visitors at our Club Meetings.

Jo Cowling
President 2010-2011
Rotary Club of Richmond