



## Peace Through Service

Guest Speaker: Peter D - PNG Presentation

Intro: Chris A

Thanks: Steve S

Our guest speaker this week was Peter Davis - Cooma Rotarian, Papua New Guinea project organiser and worker. He wished to share with us his latest adventure in PNG.

He said the club set about raising some money and headed off to do some water works in New Guinea. There was a team of 5, Gary Prosser, Dave Holgate, Darrell Gaukroger, Oscar - Dave's grandson and himself and they achieved some pretty amazing things. He said it was a pleasure to work with the team as they put their hearts into the work in the hot tropical environment. The work took place on the Sogeri Plateau about 1200 feet above sea level and some 40 km's north of Port Moresby, it is significantly cooler than in Port Moresby. They travelled up the Snake Road, it is bitumen so that makes it a major road in PNG, through the Ranu valley to the accommodation and it was the first sight most of the guys had had of New Guinea and it is a beautiful place. They went past the Ranu waterfall which provided quite a welcome to the area, they stopped to have a good look at the area, it is very wild but picturesque. There was a strong wind blowing which blew spray back up the gorge.

Once they arrived they set about completing three water projects. The first was at Bisiatabu School which is in a tiny little village on the Sogeri Road which leads up to the start of the Kokoda. The buildings are quite dilapidated which is the case with many buildings in PNG, they were good up until about 1974 - 75 when they gained independence. There is a great pidgin word to describe what has happened - they say it's gone "bugger up" and you can guess what that means. The buildings are falling apart and the concrete is breaking up so most of the rooms have dirt floors and there are over 100 kids in the school supported by some very dedicated teachers. These buildings have tin roofs and the temperature gets to about 38 degrees by about 10am so you can imagine how hot it gets inside. The issue for this school was there was no water when the few tanks scattered around town ran dry. So to access water the kids had to walk down the gorge to get a drink or not come to school. So to supply water they put a gutter along the front of the building but the building had no fascia boards so they needed to put up some boards along with some guttering and some downpipes. The team only had six days in the country so time was short. To combat this they split the team into 2, Dave took charge of half the troop, along with the vehicle and one of Peter's trusted friends, and they set about making a waterscape.

Oscar became great friends with the little kids and between work he found time to entertain the kids. The PNG people are very shy as a rule but a great way to break the ice is to get to know the kids, who are very open once you get to know them - Oscar had a great time with the kids.

They had their challenges, one of the pictures shows a clay road and they had had heavy rain the night before the team arrived so they chose to park at the top of a very slippery hill, (and if they had chosen to go any further they would probably still be stuck up there). In another picture there is a man wearing a blue shirt working with a shovel - this is the Principal of the school. Stopping where they did involved them in a bit of walking and carrying of supplies but that is the way it is up there. The project involved putting up guttering to get the rainwater to flow into a tank, which they installed, the water would then run through a pipe down to a tap so the kids would have easy access to fresh water. Each project costs around 5000 kina which is about AU\$2500.

Peter commented that he has heard around town that Rotary International only raises money for international projects so that any money raised around town goes overseas - for the record the whole project cost the Cooma Rotary Club \$26, all the rest, that is the material, equipment hire and vehicles was covered by donations particularly by one major sponsor, the Kokoda Track Foundation and the volunteer team paid their own way.

At the conclusion of each project Peter likes to get the smallest child to come and have the first drink of fresh water from what the team have built. The issue is that to get a drink the tank needs water, the project took 2 days to complete and on the third day there was rain - quite well organised really. Unfortunately the tap had been left on but there was enough water left for the child to take a drink and for them to get a photo of the event. One successful

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## PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

project completed in a very short time. It was great fun and definitely a big deal for all the villagers as they are isolated from any help from Government and really appreciate any help from outside and recognition that they exist. The second project was to put water on to the Sogeri Medical Centre. This village is significantly larger than where the previous project had taken place. The village consisted of a number of clans with various dialects spoken, the village houses about 2000 people and is also on the road to the Kokoda track. The project took place in very different circumstances to the first one. To get this job done they had to deal with political issues. Even though the medical centre is the only medical facility within 40 km's and the only one servicing this village the high school people had turned off the water supply to it and the Police Station roughly 2 years ago and were demanding a 6000 kina payment, you could call it a bribe, to turn the water on again. Peter was under pressure to make the payment but he was thinking what is there to stop them turning it off again and demanding more. So he thought forget that as he is not into politics, so his solution was to look for an alternative water supply. While Peter was in Orange (NSW) he was still involved in water projects in PNG and one he had done was in the same vicinity so he knew the lay of the land in the area and he knew there was a spring on the top of the hill. The water supply was about 800 meters away and the fixtures were quite old. The current hole in the dam wall was not large enough for the poly-pipe that the team were to use. Connections that Peter had made on a previous job made this one go more smoothly than it could have. They laid the pipe out and then used a hammer and a piece of steel to enlarge the hole in the wall, which was through concrete so it took quite a few hours and a fair number of volunteers some who retired with tennis elbow or bashed fingers but the job got done. It is important to make the flow as simple as possible because the locals have no concept of how to fix technical issues so once it goes "bugger up" they just pull it apart and use the materials for other things. (The picture of the Police station is a perfect example).

Peter mentioned the different issues when working in a small village compared to working in a larger one. In the small village they have wantoc system, this is where the village has a very strong social system with a chief, a council and they all speak the same language and if they decide to do something they hold a meeting and if they decide to go head everyone pitches in to get the job done. In Sogeri it is different because they have a number of different language groups which have their own wantoc's so they didn't work together as a cohesive group, like in the remote villages. So nobody really cared, there was litter all over the ground and there were many who were drunk and spent the day gambling. One group were sitting right where the team needed to lay pipe and it created a bit of a challenge but they managed to get the job done.

It turned out that the pipeline to the medical centre was running right past the Police Station, which also had no water for the past 2 years and the local police had been banned by their higher-up from using the cells. This made it difficult to detain people, so if anyone was taken into custody they had to be taken to Port Moresby, which wasn't likely as there usually wasn't enough petrol to get there and back, not to mention the fact the Police had no vehicle. For the team taking a slight detour, a small monetary outlay and a bit of physical effort to lay pipe to the Police Station was not an issue and made it usable again. The Police officers also got involved in the physical aspect of laying the pipe which meant they were invested in looking after it so there was less chance of anyone interfering with the line. To take this a step further any private landholders were supplied with their own tap on their land which meant they were invested in the project also. There was also a connection made to the local high school to ensure the kids had fresh water on hand, fortunately they already had a water tank installed. The job wasn't finished with laying on the water it turned out the team also needed to fix the septic system which they undertook with the joy that was present on the rest of the job as what was the point of having fresh water if the waste was going no where. The village suffered a cholera outbreak last year so the river cannot be used for drinking water. End result was another job well done.

A little bit of sightseeing was done on their only day off, this included a trip to an Australian War cemetery, a visit to the start of the Kokoda track and encountering the PNG Parliament house in Port Moresby. The team also went to the hospital at Port Moresby and donated some crutches that Shriro had collected from the Cooma hospital. The visit to Port Moresby general hospital was quite an eye opener as it is nothing like our hospitals in Australia.

The end result was 3 water schemes in 5 days, clean water supplied to 400 kids in 2 schools, 10 houses, a hospital, a police station and the local gaol, plus 5 happy Rotary workers.

For Peter the joy comes from sharing time and experience with his fellow Rotarians and putting your trust in someone else to organise things is something really special. He also finds pleasure in supplying basic necessities to so many kids and so many people with such a small effort on their parts. Supplying clean water to cholera infected areas means so much and will continue for a long time to come.

The final thing Peter did was read out a letter of thanks from the local principal for the supply of water, a tank and some books to the school the kindness was much appreciated.

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PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

PNG Trip Photo Gallery



Access to the work site



Beautiful countryside



A very windy viewing point at the waterfall



1st Project Bisiatabu School



Oscar and the Kids



Time to stop



Principal at work



First drink from the new water supply



School Handover



Hospital Ward



Gaol cell gone "bugger up"



The water supply

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PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

PNG Trip Photo Gallery



Waiting to roll out the pipe



Rolling out the pipe



New connection



Digging while onlooker gamble & drink



Trench to the Police Station



One of the police station loo's



Maybe the best place for him!



After a hard day's work



Medical Centre handover



First drink at Sogeri High School



PNG Parliament House



Handing over the crutches

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PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

Christmas Party Photo Gallery



Alyson H-J receiving her Paul Harris Fellow Award



Rotarians and guest anticipating dinner



Table decorations & our Barman



Part of the Crowd

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PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

Christmas Party Photo Gallery



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## PEACE THROUGH SERVICE

WE MEET WEDNESDAYS 6.00PM FOR 6.30PM  
AT DODDS HOTEL, COMMISSIONER ST. COOMA

Theme of the Month for Cooma Rotary:  
Family

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

Joe V presented President Richard with a banner from the Rotary Club of Waikiki.

Kevin D made a presentation on behalf of the St Pat's school staff of \$430.00 to be used for the PNG water projects.

The 5 cents challenge is going well we are up to \$90 but please keep bringing those spare 5 cents.

Elaine S called for volunteers for the Cooma Car Club breakfast event on 26 January 2013.

Also she told us at the market last week some of Santa's elves were busy, Darrell with his piano accordion, Claire and Santa Peter giving out lollies, they had a very good day - many thanks for your efforts.

Finally she mentioned the Christmas Lunch which will be held at the Uniting Church Hall, they will be feeding about 60 people & if you would like to assist she can give the details to contact Karen Snowdon.

Steve S is seeking information, stories and pictures with names, from the past 60 years of Rotary in Cooma to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Club in December 2013. Thanks to Peter D and Wolfgang for your contribution.

David B was pleased to announce there were 3 outstanding applicants who wished to attend the RYLA program in 2013. They are Tom Shirvington, John Sutcliff and Brad Constance. We know that these young men will gain much and totally enjoy themselves at this event.

It was a special night for Alyson H-J when she was presented with her Paul Harris Fellow Award. Congratulations Alyson it is a well deserved honour. (Photos in the Gallery).

**This Weeks Attendance:** 37 out of 39 - 95%

**Visiting Rotarians:** Michael & Julia Pedler

**Guests:** Lea (Club), Sonia Vucic (John V), Marilyn Gaukroger, Gary & Nichai Prosser (Darrell G), Helen French (Graham F), Dean Lulham & Jackson Neal (Claire N), Justine (Peter A), Irene & Tom Shirvington (Steve S), Narelle & Ian Davis (Peter D), Veronica Burgess (Joe V), Maree Dunne (Kevin D), Lainie Lawson (Richard L), Rosemary King (John K), Kim Adams (Chris A), Jeanette Bailey (John C), Christine Laub (Wolfgang L), Jan Sutcliff (Les S), Cathy Byrne (David B), Denise Green (Steve S), Georgie Constance (Ashley C), Robbyn Crooks, Richard & Jess Warner

**Apologies:** Matt T, Neil B, Lou M, Ken D, Dave L, Dugald M, Ken P, Tony S.

**Leave:** None

**We Also Missed:** None

**Make-ups:** Joe V - Waikiki

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| ROSTERS    | January  | February  |
|------------|--|---|
| Attendance | Lou<br>Patrick   | John V<br>Dugald  |
| Property   | Tom<br>Elaine M  | Brian J<br>Hass   |
| Fellowship | Margaret E<br>Clair N  | Margaret E<br>Clair N   |
| Markets    | David H - Co-ord<br>Alyson H-J - PA<br>Tony S - MR<br>Wolfgang - V<br>Mark C<br>Joe V<br>Richard L<br>Claire N | David H - Co-ord<br>Alyson H-J - PA<br>Jim H - MR<br>Dave L - V<br>Geoff B<br>Ashley C<br>Brenda<br>Peter D |

## SOME SIMPLE RULES ABOUT ROSTERS

## GENERAL

Members rostered on and not able to attend are to make arrangements with another member to take their place.

## MARKETS

Those nominated to tow the caravan or chuck wagon are to be at the Rotary shed no later than 8am. Ensure you get the key to the shed from David Holgate PRIOR TO THE EVENT so the equipment can be set up early. If you are unable to tow the van or chuck wagon PLEASE ASK SOMEONE WHO CAN, or advise David Holgate before the event. Others nominated should be at the park by 8.30am.

| Next Meeting Program   | Three Minuter  | Thought of the Week |
|--|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Marney Stewart - Plans for<br/>Community Chest<br/>Intro - Elaine S<br/>Thanks - Katrin H</b> | <b>Kevin D</b> | <b>Geoff B</b>      |

## MEMBER HAPPENINGS

| ANNIVERSARIES   | BIRTHDAYS                                      | YEARS OF SERVICE                   |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Mark and Janine John-Natley -<br>15 years on 14 December      | Les S - 4 December                             | Matt T - 2 years on 1 December     |
| Tony and Carol Slater -<br>43 years on 20 December            | Mark J-N - 9 December                          | Richard L - 14 years on 7 December |
| Chris and Kim Adams -<br>12 years on 24 December              | John C - 10 December                           | Elaine M - 8 years on 16 December  |
| Brian and Alyson Hulley-Jeffries -<br>38 years on 28 December | Judy Trute wife of Des - 5 December            |                                    |
| Darrell and Marilyn Gaukroger -<br>12 years on 30 December    | Jeannette Clarke wife of John -<br>8 December  |                                    |
| Lou and Elaine Moore -<br>5 years on 31 December              | Elaine Moore wife of Lou -<br>18 December      |                                    |
|   | Carol Slater wife of Tony -<br>21 December     |                                    |
|   | Lainie Lawson wife of Richard -<br>30 December |                                    |

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