



Meeting – 5 March 2014

Guest speakers – Sandra Mahlberg and Yvonne Robson from ROMAC

ROTARY OCEANIA MEDICAL AID FOR CHILDREN

ROMAC, an organisation that was founded in Melbourne 26years ago, has an executive body that, with the help of a medical team, makes decisions on individual cases and has helped 400 children from the Pacific area. The children usually require surgical expertise and post-operative care, not available in their home countries. ROMAC brings the children to Australia with their parents and offers hope and improved quality of life. There are about 100 referrals in any year. Sandra, a nurse by profession, became aware that no children had been treated in Canberra and was able to lobby the ACT Department of Health with the help of Professor David Croker. As a result, Katy Gallagher authorised the care of four children each year. This meant that the organisation would not have bills of \$140,000, as happened with the first child. Now each child costs \$5,000 because of visas, travel, and cost of living. There is a wall in The Canberra Hospital with photos of the ROMAC children to give publicity to the wonderful work of the medical teams.

Sandra is always on the lookout for carer families and has herself cared for many families for up to 42 weeks in one year. This involves guiding the visitors through frightening experiences e.g. escalators and language difficulties, as well as organising transport to appointments and to the hospital. Families that take in the children and their parents do their best to give the visitors experiences not available in their home countries, but have to be very careful not to spoil them as settling back into their home situation might become extremely difficult. Sandra and Yvonne are both dedicated in their mission to help the children and their families. Sandra commended the Cooma club for its support of ROMAC.



Thought of the week (Rob)

This week Rob saw echidnas, crimson rosellas, young magpies, kangaroos, black wallabies, bronze leaves on his Virginia creeper – all gave him food for thought.

Future meetings: 12 March – Club Assembly

19 March – Pride of Workmanship

26 March – Medical students

3.



Last Week's meeting:

Attendance – 73.5%

Visiting Rotarians: Neil Russell (Southport)

Guests: Jeannette (John), Katherine Russell (Neil), Jenna Sopniewski (Des), Ruth Salzke, Nadia Morris, Rebecca (club) and club guests from SMCS: Mark Ogilvie, Madoc Cottle, Rhys Sopniewsky, Hayley Morris and Josh Reynolds

Apologies: Geoff, Neil B, Mark C, and Tracey

Leave: Peter A, Tom, David B, Joe, and John V

4.

The contact for making apologies and for notifications of guests for dinner meetings is Les Sutcliffe on 64527442 (B.H.) or leecooma@bigpond.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday 27 March – Fundraiser: movie night “The Monument Men” Tickets \$20. Wine and nibbles at 6.45pm and the film will be shown at 7pm. Tea, coffee and cake after the film. Tickets are available at the Fabric Salon. Come in 40s costume.

BIGhART–workshops to collect stories about Cooma and its history. Information morning tea on Tuesday 18 March at 11am in the Uniting Church Hall.

Don't forget bottles of wine for the wine auction at the nursing home fete. Please get them to Alyson or Leading Edge as soon as possible.

Three Minuter

Three minuter: John K spoke about two of his dogs, Ben a clever dog, and Spike almost useless. Ben hated when John was fencing and once showed his displeasure by disappearing. Ben eventually arrived home late the next morning, by which time John had made many phone calls trying to find him. John felt that Ben had gone just to show just how much he hated fencing. Spike wasn't good at farm work, but likeable, and one day chased a kangaroo up the centre of the main road between the two lanes of traffic. His owner could only stand and barely watch.

Rosters

No three minuter, intro, thanks or thought of the week because of the club assembly.

Attendance: Darrell

Hospitality: Margaret E and Claire

Please notify Katrin or Hass of any matters for the club assembly asap.