



Rotary

Club of Strathfield



Strathfield Rotary Bulletin 8 June, 2023 District 9675

No meeting Wednesday 7 June due to the
Youth Achievement Awards Thursday 8 June, 2023

Rotary International Convention, Melbourne 2023

Report by Club President-Elect, Nick Hamilton-Kane.

The Rotary International Convention was held this week in Melbourne. Almost 14,000 people attended and it was expected to bring about \$90m cash into the State, which might keep it out of bankruptcy for a day or two.

President Andrew, PP Thaya and myself travelled down for the event to join the hordes of grey nomads and boomers sporting Rotary outfits, some dubiously branded, from all over the world.

It was a great opportunity to exchange ideas with these other Rotarians, to be inspired to imagine what Rotary can achieve to create hope in the world, and to visit the aspirationally named "House of Friendship" (a fair to meet promoters of life-changing projects, to buy Rotary-branded merchandise and to get together with fellow Rotarian alcoholics in the beer, gin and whisky fellowship groups). Hopefully you've seen some of the pictures on the website.

It was interesting to meet some of this eclectic mix of overseas Rotarians. At one lunch I shared a table with, amongst others, a lady from Seattle, another from Montana and a District Governor from the wilds of Finland - all shared exactly the same challenges of growing and running Rotary clubs in a modern world.

Predictably the Mayor of Melbourne and Victorian Minister of Tourism took the usual opportunity to spread misinformation suggesting that Melbourne was the biggest and best City in Australia. I would have liked to have pointed out our alternative delights of Sydney Harbour, the Opera House and Strathfield Golf Club - next time maybe.

Of course, the Convention was the opportunity to listen to the Rotary International top brass talking about Rotary's achievements this year (RI

President Jennifer Jones) and aspirations for next (RI President-elect Gordon McInally). Key priorities this year will be the (hopefully) final push to eradicate polio and mental health, both causes close to Gordon's heart.

There were some truly inspirational speakers. My highlight was hearing Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Laureate and Founder of Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa, talk about her achievements in bringing peace to war-torn Liberia and the empathy shown by her and other women to its traumatised and rejected child soldiers - moving and humbling. Also highly impressive was Hugh Evans, Co-Founder and CEO, Global Citizen who showed how he could motivate and mobilise leaders and influential people in a quest to defeat poverty, demand equity and defend the planet. If that sounds rather millennial, it's because he is, and all the better for it.

Less altruistically, there was also a bit of entertainment in the form of The Tenors, Gaby Moreno and the last surviving BeeGee (I missed that one) to relieve the general atmosphere of worthiness engendered by the presentations.

I would also like to mention that, at the introduction of Thaya, our District had the honour of the presence of Past RI President Ravi Ravindran, the first Sri Lankan to head the organisation, at its Convention dinner. To have the subsequent opportunity of spending some time speaking to Ravi gave an amazing insight into the dedication and inspiration necessary to reach and succeed at the head of the largest service organisation in the world, changing the lives of millions.

The next Convention is in Singapore. I understand that Andrew and Thaya have already registered. Sign up now for the early bird discount and an unforgettable experience. (The food is even better in Singapore than Melbourne).

Nicholas Hamilton-Kane
President-Elect
Strathfield Rotary Club

Date	Event – guest speaker
Thursday 8 June	Youth Achievement Awards
Wednesday 14 June	International Cricket Reporting – Mark Ray
Wednesday 21 June	No meeting
Wednesday 28 June	Transfer to 1 July
Saturday 1 July	Club Changeover function