

50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SATURDAY, 29th MAY 2021

The Presentation of the Charter to the Rotary Club of Strathfield was made at a gala dinner held at Macquarie University on 19th April 1971 and to celebrate 50 years of our active and vibrant club a celebration in the form of a formal dinner was held at the Strathfield Event Centre at Strathfield Golf Club on 29th May and attended by over 160 guests - Rotarians, partners and friends. Among the special guests were DG Warwick Richardson, DGE Jeremy Wright, DGN Janice Hall and the IPDG Di North. The Mayor of Strathfield, Antoine Doueihi attended together with several Council members and staff. There were many Rotarians present from our Mother Club, Burwood with PDG Lloyd Roever from Burwood delivering a moving toast to the Rotary Club of Strathfield with several anecdotes of his many happy times with Strathfield Rotary. Twenty-six of Strathfield's Past Presidents were present with apologies received from Past Presidents and Past Members who were unwell or unable to travel.

The Organising Committee met many times over the preceding months to arrange a special program to commemorate this important event and with the diligent and generous time given by the team members, especially PP Raymond McCluskie, we were able to trace and contact many of our past members and PP Rod McDougal, as always, donned many hats, including liaising with the caterers and the preparation and editing of the attractive program booklet printed by the Club's good friends at Select Print. The spectre of COVID was ever present with real concern numbers could be severely affected by restrictions which had been rigidly enforced at times during the previous year. Happily, all was well when the special day arrived with those Rotarians who had special roles to play together with the support of the Rotarians of Strathfield all contributed to the success of the night.

President Usha gave a very warm welcome to all who were present and the MC for the event, PP Rick Vosila kept the evening moving along in his usual breezy way. Four current members regaled life of the Club over the past 50 years in an interesting and entertaining way. PP Roger Vince introduced several people present who were connected to our Charter members and spoke of the early years of the Rotary Club of Strathfield highlighting the great service, fellowship and fun enjoyed in those early days. PP Peter Manenti

spoke of the 1980/1990's - which he named the Gatsby Years - a period of membership development, continuing great fellowship and fundraising. PP Raymond McCluskie put on his Howard Carter hat and dug into the Rotary Club of Strathfield archives of the first ten years of the new century - highlighting the changes, innovations and memorable occasions of this dynasty of Presidents during the first decade of the new millennium. PP Arie Pappas took us up to the current times and PP Rick Vosila gave his thoughts with a management plan for the future. PDG David Croft ended the formal part of the evening with special thanks to all guests, many of whom had come long distances to join in our celebrations.

During the evening musical interludes were presented and performed by our own Rotarian Ying Ho who accompanied two very talented young people - singer Tanisha Ponniah and violinist Justine Zhang. Rotarian Alexey Prokopenko put together a very informative and entertaining visual display of Strathfield Rotarians and events over the decade and Rotarians Bradley Ayres & Steven Argyris generously gave of their time during the evening to capture a great photographic and video record of the night. A very successful raffle arranged and organised by PN Andrew Aravanis with generous prizes donated by members and colleagues, raised a wonderful \$3400 for the Children's Medical Research Foundation.

Special messages were received from RI President, Holger Knaack, DG Warwick Richardson, State and Federal members and the Mayor of Strathfield.

Those who attended enjoyed Strathfield RC's happy birthday party with a fine meal served by Forte Catering of Strathfield Event Centre.

The evening ended with many staying on to enjoy the fellowship and good feel generated by an exceptional event celebrating the first 50 years of the Rotary Club of Strathfield. Events like this encapsulates what Rotary is all about - a celebration of fellowship within the Club and an acknowledgement of the service given to the community and to the world.

Roger Vince

Chair, 50th Anniversary Committee