



**Rotary**  
Club of Gawler Light

District 9500 | Chartered 10 July 1996

## Bulletin - District Conference Edition, March 2017



District 9500 Conference, The Pier Geelong

March 23—26, 2017

**Welcome to this special Conference edition of the Rotary Club of Gawler Light bulletin. Many thanks to the following members of the club who attended the conference and contributed to this publication:**

*Matthew & Jane Sanders, Rory & Robynne Malone, Rob Eley, Steve & Julie McLachlan, Lynne Podolak, Julie Wallin and Bronwyn Anderson.*

### Conference Keynote Speakers

Day 1—Friday Mar 24 Frank Costa AO—Welcome to Geelong

Rob Pennicott - Positives from Risk Taking

Marion McCall OAM - Sea Change in the Air

Day 2—Sat Mar 25 Tracy Adams - boystown to yourtown

Arman Abrahamzadeh - Victim to Victor

Betty Kitchener - Australian Rotary Health

Dr Maithri Goontilleke - Reimaging Health

Assoc. Prof Jeremy Austin - Ancient DNA and Identification of Australia's War Dead

Day 3—Sun Mar 26 Bernadette Schwerdt - Digital Disruption

Marcus Veerman - Improving the Lives of up to 1 million people with technology

**Opening:** DG John Pohl opened the conference on Friday morning with highlights of the Welcome Function held the previous evening at the Geelong Art Gallery.

#### Welcome to Geelong - Frank Costa AO

Frank Costa AO welcomed everyone to Geelong by providing an insight to the history of Geelong. Frank is the third generation of immigrants whose great grandfather emigrated from Sicily in the 1880s.

Geelong has seen tough times over the years including the collapse of the Pyramid Building Society in the 90s leading to big costs for individuals and Victorian taxpayers. Youth unemployment reached as high as 40% and many turned to crime. With new investment and new opportunities though, Geelong soon turned itself around with a brighter future in its sights. More recently there has been a decline of manufacturing with the loss of Ford but with new building developments Geelong remains positive. Resilience abounds with sport and tourism playing a big part in providing a bright future.

Each AFL home game at Kardinia Park injects around \$4M into the local economy. Local and state government continue to work together for the Greater Geelong Revitalisation plan, development of the new marina at Balmoral Quay and the Kardinia Park stadium redevelopment with the plan to attract Big Bash cricket and A-League soccer.

PO Box 1577, Gawler SA 5118

**Meeting:** Tuesday 6.45pm for 7pm

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## RI President Rep - PDG Malcolm Lindquist

Following a roll call of all clubs, RI President representative PDG Malcolm Lindquist spoke briefly on where we are going as an international organisation, bringing a bigger focus to international projects but not forgetting the positive effects we have on local communities. The World Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia in June this year at which time there will be big celebrations for 100 years of the Rotary Foundation. In 2018, the convention will be in Toronto. Attendance is encouraged.

Things are changing in Rotary and its time we all embraced this change. Rotary has evolved greatly over the years and will continue to do so. The service we give is the rent we pay to occupy our space on earth. Let's invite new people, mentor new members and embrace the change that the future will bring.

*The service we give is the rent we pay to occupy our space on earth. Invite new people, mentor new members, embrace the change that the future will bring!*

## Keynote Speaker: Rob Pennicott

Rob Pennicott, from Tasmania, took the stage in his trademark shorts and t-shirt. As a member of the Rotary Club of Kingston he was keen to share his story with fellow Rotarians.

At the age of 12 he decided he wanted to make some money fishing during the school holidays and selling his catch to locals. When he asked his father to borrow his boat, the answer was no but with an offer of a different kind. His father lent him \$3,000 to buy his own boat but it would need to be paid back within 10 weeks at an interest rate of 10%! If he didn't pay it back, the boat would be repossessed. Rob accepted the challenge and subsequently generated an income of \$6,000 in that 10 weeks.

He moved through school and took a job in banking but it wasn't long before he realised his true passion was in fishing.

He established Bruny Island Tours, against many others' advice but was motivated enough to do it anyway. Lost \$40k in the first year. Trying to get bums on seats was hard - he would chase rental cars down to convince people to come on the tour.

Ultimately established Pennicott Wilderness Journeys and has since won multiple awards including the prestigious Australian Tourism Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism in 2012, 2013 & 2014.

In 2011, after being told he was mad and the fact that the "loss of 2 crazy Tasmanian fisherman may not be so bad



*If you go for anything there is creativity and fear. Don't let the fear win. Push it aside.*

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anyway", he circumnavigated Australia in 5.4m inflatable dinghy, raising \$300,000 for conservation and to assist Rotary's efforts to eradicate polio from the world. Rob many laughs with some of his stories along the journey.

Pennicott Wilderness Journeys has now contributed \$160,000 towards coastal conservation projects in Tasmania. Following an eradication of feral cats 50,000 breeding seabirds are being saved each year. In 2016, the Pennicott Foundation gave \$60,000 to kick-start the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife service project to eradicate rats from Big Green Island.

[www.pennicottjourneys.com.au](http://www.pennicottjourneys.com.au)

## Mary Purbrick, Rotary Club of Salisbury on ROMAC

Working with hospitals and doctors in Oceania, Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children (ROMAC) provides surgical treatment in Australia/New Zealand for children with serious medical issues from developing countries in the Pacific Region.

Mary Purbrick along with her husband Graham, of the Rotary Club of Salisbury, have supported several children in recent times who have undergone surgery in Adelaide.

Ways to help include volunteering to be a driver, hospital visitor and/or a tour guide. ROMAC continues to need support through raising much needed funds for people to access services that we are so lucky to be able to have easily.

Events like the Wear Red Dinner Dance held in February 17 raised \$10,000 but more support is needed.

[www.romac.org.au/](http://www.romac.org.au/)

## Key note Speaker:

### Marion McCall OAM - The Bishop's Pilot

Marion McCall provided an entertaining, engaging and very funny presentation about being the wife of an Anglican priest and now bishop. As the Bishop of Willochra in SA, David



had to visit various parishes resulting in many hours of driving. Marion came up with the idea that she could learn to fly and fly David to the various places but realised that with only \$38 in the bank, flying might be a bigger task than first thought. Discussing her concept with friends at a dinner one night, it was suggested that she encourage people to invest in her at a cost of \$10 each. There were times when she thought of giving up and returning the money but at a rate of \$7.50 per person.

Eventually word spread and through various community groups, soon raised \$10,000 and flying lessons began. Marion was then issued a restricted flying licence that allowed her to fly within 10 miles of the airport - not exactly far enough to visit various parishes in the Diocese of Willochra which covers a huge amount of SA!

Marion went on to fly 1700 hours, has won four International Flying Competitions, the latest in 2014. Marion has also won the Nancy Bird Trophy and awarded an OAM for service to aviation and the Australian Women Pilots' Association in 2011.



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## Tracy Adams - boystown to yourtown

Tracy Adams linked her presentation to the Seachange theme through the transformational change of boystown to yourtown.

Boystown had reached a point where what got them to that point was no longer relevant and so, in July 2014 they asked the questions:

- *What do people know about boystown?*
- *What do people know about the concept of who they are.*

They spoke to various stakeholders including prize home ticket buyers, the government, staff, and so forth. They soon discovered that the knowledge of specific services offered was LOW.

It is valuable to know what your organisation means to others. It's time we, as a service club, ask ourselves:

- *What do we want to be known for?*
- *How relevant are we?*

The journey of explanation began with a letter Tracy penned to the board of boystown which included recommendations on a new name, a new strategy, a new conversation and a new chapter.

### ***Communities make a difference.***

The board endorsed the recommendations and included themselves in the focus groups. They were informed at each step of the way. Transparency plays a big part in transformation.

If we have a story, then let's be in control of it and not let others determine what that story is.

In moving through a transformational change, the following is key:

- Know what you want to achieve - what opportunity (ies) are you seeking?
- Be relevant to today AND tomorrow.

## yourtown Rebrand

new name.  
same purpose,  
same passion



- Engage the right experts - inside and outside the organisation
- Do your research - far / wide / diverse. Who uses our services? Speak with as many people as possible.
- TAKE CONTROL of the process. Be the "story teller. Have a compelling story or opportunities may be lost.
- Create internal energy. Encourage people to be excited.
- Get over the fact that whatever you decide some won't like it (internal and external). Invest in those who are on board with the transformation process.
- Keep momentum, keep focus and maintain drive.
- Develop key messages by audience and by medium. Test, refine, test.
- Be excited - if you're not then nobody else will be.
- A good story keeps people engaged, wanting more.

Leadership is the process of bringing a new and generally unwelcome reality to an individual, group, organisation and helping them successfully adapt to it.

[www.yourtown.com.au/](http://www.yourtown.com.au/)

***Keep the passion. Maintain your purpose.***



*This year's District conference was held at the stunning location of The Pier, Geelong. Located in the heart of Geelong's vibrant and modern waterfront precinct.*

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## Arman Abrahamzadeh :: Victim to Victor

Arman arrived in Australia in September 1997 with his mum and dad and his older sister. Two days after arriving, his younger sister was born (talk about timing!). He grew up in a household where violence and abuse was a normal part of life. Zialloh (Dad) was violent and often threatened Arman's mother (Zahra) and sometimes, the kids too.

He recalls a time when Dad threatened to lock everyone in the house and burn it down. It was time something changed. With his mother and his two sisters, bags were packed and they fled their home. They were homeless but fortunately had a car so there was a roof over their heads.

They lived in isolation as the community viewed them as dysfunctional but always left Dad and violence out of the equation in passing judgement.

The harassment continued. Arman and his family moved houses 4 times as Dad kept tracking them down.

Fast forward to March 21, 2010. It's Mum's birthday and the Persian New Year. Mum decided she would go out.

She was sick of hiding in the house. She and Arman had a joking conversation, unaware that it would be their last. It was that night that Zahra was killed by Zialloh in front of 300 horrified bystanders at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

Following this, Arman dropped out of his Masters degree to work full time and support his family.

The media constantly referred to them as victims but victims they were not. Arman clearly stated that they faced their fear, they looked their father in the eyes while he was in court. Thinking about the happy memories with their mother is what helped.

It was time for change and awareness. How would the media now portray the family? Arman...a Muslim, a middle eastern man, advocating for social change. Arman stood up and spoke of domestic violence. He kept going back to the quote:

*"A man is either guarded by his soul or driven by his ego. It was my dad's ego that killed my mum and forced him to make that mistake. I learnt from his mistake".*

The victim label started to disappear. Marred by



violence but not defined by it. There is a lot more to Arman and his family.

Arman is an ambassador for White Ribbon Australia and in 2015 formed the Zahra Foundation in memory of his mother. The foundation now provides financial literacy programs and empowers women.

*Give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a day. Teach a man how to fish and you'll feed him for a lifetime.*

Change starts with you, regardless of who you are or what you do. Your actions and conversations count. No matter how big or small they are, they have a big impact. They change lives. They save lives.



[www.whiteribbon.org.au/](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/)



[zahrafoundation.org.au/](http://zahrafoundation.org.au/)

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## Betty Kitchener - Mental Health & Australian Rotary Health

Mental illness is a major health issue that disrupts the person's ability to work, to carry out daily activities and engage in satisfying relationships. 1 in 5 Australians suffer from some form of mental illness in any one year:

Anxiety Disorder = 14%

Depression Disorder = 6%

Substance Use Disorder = 5%

Any common mental illness = 20%

Some people die because of mental illness which often begins when the person is young and can impact across the person's life. Mental illness is ranked as the 3rd most disabling illness. Mental illness contributes to 14.6% of disease burden but gets only 8.6% of the NHMRC funding.



[hatday.com.au/](http://hatday.com.au/)

Stand up to stigma! Many people don't get treatment or delay getting treatment but the solution requires the help of the whole community.

*How can you help?*

The second Friday in October each year is Hat Day, the national fundraising and awareness day where you wear a

hat and make a donation to help shine a light on mental illness in Australia - 100% of money raised on the day goes to research into helping those affected by depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and many other illnesses. This year's hat day is October 10, 2017. For more information visit: [www.hatday.com.au](http://www.hatday.com.au).

Complete a Mental Health First Aid course - training follows the convention of the standard First Aid Courses. For more information visit: [www.mhfa.com.au](http://www.mhfa.com.au)



[mhfa.com.au/](http://mhfa.com.au/)

## Dr Maithri Goonetilleke - Reimagining Health

Founder of the NGO Possible Dreams International (PDI) Dr Goonetilleke has spent the best part of the last 10 years working in rural parts of Swaziland, in southern Africa. He says there is more to health than medicine.

Possible Dreams International was created from the despair and suffering he witnessed and is made of local people, run and managed and supported by the community.

### What does PDI do?

- They build homes. They provide clear fresh running water for individuals in their home and for the community. They develop income generating projects that locals run and manage.
- They empower families and individuals living with extreme poverty, malnutrition and endemic disease.

Dr Goonetilleke tells us that he has gained so much more from Swaziland than he has ever given.

"When you dedicate your life to the service of others, it is you who is blessed, it is you who enriched".



"When you dedicate your life to the service of others, it is you who is blessed, it is you who enriched".



POSSIBLE DREAMS  
INTERNATIONAL  
*We Can.*

[www.possibledreams.org/](http://www.possibledreams.org/)

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## Dr Jeremy Austin - Ancient DNA and Identification of Australia's War Dead

Dr Austin provided a fascinating and insightful presentation into DNA and his research of genetics and evolution. He fell into forensics about 10 years ago when he was contacted by the navy to identify an unknown sailor from HMAS Sydney and has now gone on to assist with the identification of various missing persons including Daniel Morcombe in Queensland and child Khandalyce Pearce, whose remains were found in a suitcase on the side of a South Australian highway.

Forensics and the extraction of remains is a sophisticated and complex process of recovery. It's not like the crime shows on TV. There are challenges such as dismemberment, comingling, decapitation, small parts and DNA decay. Contamination is a big issue too. For example, the Phantom of Heillbronn where a supposed serial killer's DNA was found in six murder cases and across 40 different crime scenes in Austria, France and Germany from 1993 to 2009. The only connection was DNA. In late 2009, investigators concluded that the Phantom criminal did not exist but was tracked to the DNA of a worker in a factory that developed the cotton swabs used at crime scenes.

Dr Austin spoke of mitochondrial DNA analysis which is used for identifying ancient remains such as Richard III,



whose remains were found under a carpark in Leicester. In the case of the unknown sailor of HMAS Sydney, teeth were found but unfortunately at that time the dental records of sailors were carried on the ship they were on, hence the identity couldn't be confirmed as the ship was lost! Eventually through analysis they were able to determine that the sailor had red hair, blue eyes and pale skin. The mitochondrial DNA analysis means that family links can be traced through the female line of the family tree.

Further cases of DNA analysis were the recovered remains from the Beachhead Battle (1942-43) and the Kokoda Track. The difficulty came in determining where remains had come from as they wanted to be able to avoid the repatriation of remains to the wrong country!

For more information on DNA analysis and Dr Austin's work visit [www.adelaide.edu.au/acad](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/acad).

## Interplast - PDG Marie Dorrington

PDG Marie Dorrington shared her story of a recent visit to Tonga to witness the work of Interplast, which works to repair bodies and rebuild lives in the Asia Pacific region.

The team involved included two plastic surgeons, two anaesthetists, two nurses and one physiotherapist. They consulted over 100 people on the first day and began procedures as soon as possible.

There was apprehension on the parents' faces but relief when they're told their child could have life changing surgery. Marie was there from the beginning through to watching the surgeon perform the operation and there in the recovery room when the child returned.

Know this - Rotarians contribute more than money. Lives are changed. Moments of joy are brought. Individuals are empowered and there is an optimistic future for many who thought it may never happen.



## Bernadette Schwerdt — Digital Disruption, How to Future Proof Rotary

Bernadette opened her presentation with the concept that CRAZY IDEAS are good and they should be trusted as some of them actually succeed! What a concept!

Are they crazy or visionary? There is about 13 years difference between the two. For example...

- Donald Trump - once said he'd be president of the US...13 years later, he is! Crazy or visionary?
- SpaceX - let's send humans to Mars. 13 years later, it's possible (one way of course). Crazy or visionary?
- Jodie Fox - Shoes of Prey. Design your own shoes online and thanks to 3D printing, they become a reality!

Crazy ideas are being brought to the market very fast.

Bernadette went on to talk about 4 areas of digital disruption including the Cloud which has reduced the cost of web services, Big Data that collects your habits (did you hear the one about Coles finding out a young woman was pregnant before her parents knew??), social media which is free and provides unfettered messaging and finally the ability to be mobile. We are untethered from the desk. We can do things instantly and accessibility has become unlimited. These are major disruptors of the globe.

Start thinking deep into the distance. What happens if we DON'T look ahead? If you aren't seen to have depth of vision, people will leave you!

Take the example of Sexpo - they offered free VR headsets to all attendees. They were cardboard boxes that you put your phone into and the user watches an app



that they've downloaded. It's cheap but plenty of people went to the event!

Want to know how to sell out any Rotary / event? Use these three words:

### IF NUDITY OFFENDS...

In disrupting the digital world think about what problem is yet to solve. What's the biggest problem? Who do you ask? What do you ask?

What's your CRAZY idea? Start with the words...Wouldn't it be great if...?



Bernadette Schwerdt

SPEAKER | AUTHOR | CONSULTANT



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## Marcus Veerman - Improving the lives of up to 1 million people with technology

Marcus joined us to spread the word of Playground Ideas, a non-profit organisation that supports anyone, anywhere to build a stimulating space for play using only local materials, tools and skills.



Significant research into how play affects the development of a child has shown access to early play experiences boosts life outcomes substantially -42% raise in yearly earnings, 44% increase in high school graduations, and 17% increase in bachelor degrees.

90% of children now attend school but 60% in the developing world are failing. This is a problem!

Playgrounds were built in various developing countries but with the help of technology and the launch of a new website, awareness and help significantly increased. 410 playgrounds in 85 countries were built in 2016. Over the last decade that is 1,455 projects with an estimated 700,000 children impacted.

Playground ideas helps by sharing—they offer the easiest to use manual (5 steps) for FREE; they provide on site

custom design / building support; and they train by supporting Global Play Alliance members.

To get your project up and running, a starter kit is provided, and support provided to help you work with the community in consultation.

Major projects are underway in Vietnam - a whole city block is Da Nang, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. In India, Playground Ideas is working with local Global Play Alliance partners to build 50 playground across the country with low cost and recycled materials. 25,000 children are impacted by the projects in India.

What could you do? Help bring the gift of play to a disadvantaged school. It may only cost a few \$thousand. For more information visit [www.playgroundideas.org](http://www.playgroundideas.org).



DISTRICTS 9500 & 9520 CONFERENCE - 2018  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## 2018 District Conference - JOINING ROTARY

*In 2018, Districts 9500 and 9520 will come together for a joint conference in the Barossa Valley highlighting the theme of Rotary: Making a Difference. To be held in March 2018 at the Barossa Arts / Convention Centre in Tanunda with speakers including Christopher Pyne (Federal Member for Sturt), Dr Tim Cooper (Coopers) and Sophie Thomson (Gardening Australia). For more information visit <http://barossa2018.org.au/>*

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*Rotary Youth Exchange Students took the stage to introduce themselves to all the delegates—students have come from Belgium, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, and France.*



*Members of the Rotary Club of Gawler Light enjoyed the conference weekend including the gala dinner on Saturday night. From left clockwise: Steven & Julie McLachlan with Youth Exchange Julie Wallin (Finland); Matthew & Jane Sanders with Julie Wallin; Rory & Robynne Malone with Julie Wallin; and Lynne Podolak, Rob Eley & Bron Anderson with Julie Wallin.*



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