

Golf Days/Nights

When did Gold Days/Nights begin?



R.O.M.A.C. Brian Doherty once again capably organised the successful Rotary R.O.M.A.C. Corporate Golf Challenge which was held on October 8, 2000 at the Bendigo Golf Course and proudly sponsored by The Salvation Army Employment Plus. The day being a joint venture between the Rotary Clubs of Bendigo and Kangaroo Flat attracted nineteen teams of four players and raised \$7,249.30 for R.O.M.A.C. The players were treated at the trophy presentations, to a remarkably interesting address by the celebrity golfer, Angry Anderson, who has seen first-hand in Papua New Guinea, the children R.O.M.A.C. help. All contestants, who have declared their continued support for next year, enjoyed a great day of golf

ROMAC - (Chairperson: Brian Doherty) The proposed ROMAC Corporate Golf Challenge was, due to a number of circumstances, including the difficulty in arranging the attendance of Mr. Max Walker (Patron of ROMAC) and other celebrities, deferred until the 8th October this year. The success of this proposed golf day will only be achieved with the willing participation of not only committee members but also all members of our club. If this event were run to its full potential, then ROMAC would benefit with considerable funds raised so please support when asked.



Operation Cleft (Glenn Reilly)

With a large influx of new members in my first year with Rotary in 2007 my incentive in bringing back our club's golf days were purely to get other new members involved in Rotary.

Thinking back now it all came together quickly as I remember quite vividly Rotarian John Krakowiak speaking of his amazing experience travelling to Bangladesh with Rotary's Operation Cleft.

The Operation Cleft project was started by the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central and provides the funding and arranges surgical camps in Bangladesh treating children born with cleft palate and severe cleft lip conditions. With a population in excess of 150 million people this condition is not treated as life threatening and subsequently not covered by the governments already struggling health funds. Apart from the severe fascial disfigurement these children are forced to live with in a lot of cases they are literally hidden away in their homes or villages. Malnutrition is a huge factor with their limited ability to swallow milk as a baby to struggling to eat as they grow up.

Through Operation Cleft John Krakowiak explained how for \$200 at the time these children can receive these life changing operations.

That's where this all started, back in 2008 a committee of Brian Figg, Glenn McMahon, Craig Watts, Wayne Cambridge, David Bakes and myself was formed and went about organising our first golf event at the Heathcote Golf Club.

In our first event we had 14 teams take part and raised \$8000 which funded 40 operations.

The following year we held the event at Heathcote once again on a Sunday and raised \$6000, funding 24 operations (cost of operations had increased to \$250).

In 2010 we moved the event to the Bendigo Golf Club and tried to offer something different to the traditional golf day. We utilized the lawn bowls rink at the course to play 12 holes of golf followed by a game of lawn bowls which proved quite popular. We managed to raise \$5500/22 operations.

With golf days being very prominent around Bendigo as fund raisers we continued to look for a point of difference to attract more teams.

In 2011 we introduced the night golf concept which has since grown to be extremely popular. Using glow in the dark golf balls, which light up when struck by the golf club and stays alight for 6 minutes and glow sticks lighting up the golf greens and along the fairways it certainly was a lot of fun for the players.

Playing in a 9 hole Ambrose format we raised \$5500 in 2011, \$8000 in 2015 and moved the event the following year to March 2014 and raised \$10,000. Over those first 3 night golf events we funded 94 operations taking our total for the clubs 6 golf events to 170 operations.

By giving people the opportunity to have some fun chasing a golf ball around a course we have managed to totally change 170 children's lives.

The one constant throughout these 6 golf events has been Glenn Reilly. Glenn has chaired this committee every year and you could say was the driving force behind the innovations introduced.

Glenn Reilly's efforts in supporting Operation Cleft were recognised in 2013 by the presentation of a Paul Harris Fellow from the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central, presented by the Chairman of Operation Cleft, Rotarian Michael Kirk.

From an idea to simply get some newer members 'involved' in Rotary this project has grown to being an important event in our club's calendar and continues to help change lives every year.

