

Before President Tom began his implementation of his plans for the year, Tom knew the most important ingredient to a good lunchtime Rotary meeting is members being satisfied with their meals! Having supervised the digitisation of club records of our first 80 years, one constant issue has always been member's displeasure over the quality of our meals. President Tom tackled this problem head-on in his first month and spoke to the venue ('firmly' in Tom's words) and member's satisfaction improved dramatically when more healthy meals were served!



Having satisfied the army of Rotarians with their meals, President Tom then set about, with the assistance of Larrie Winzar and Libby Hughes, using the data they had collected from a Club Survey. For example, members skills in certain areas could not only help with finding them a role within the club, but it could also be used to partner or assist other members in their roles within Rotary. For example, if a member wanted to undertake a role within Rotary, they had no background in, another member (with knowledge in the area) could mentor them in the role. Hence, a win-win for both members, and most importantly for the club.

I have often told young people if you can discover what you are truly passionate about, you will never work a day in your life. Likewise, if you can undertake a role in Rotary you really enjoy, you will no doubt love being a member of Rotary.



The survey had an immediate positive impact. For instance, a Craft Group was formed which has become an invaluable asset to the work of the Club. In President Tom's year, with the leadership of Libby, the group created:

- Items for a Leprosy Clinic in Nepal the club had developed a working relationship with.
- Knitted dolls for the children attending the clinic.
- Detailed wooden toys built by Barry Penna. And,
- 15 blankets to the Uniting Care Emergency Crisis Centre in Bendigo.

A sample of some of the other huge successes during the year were:

- An Art Show record of \$424,000 gross value of artwork on display (a smidgen under \$60,000 in sales).
- A member, Phil West, not only being a member of a GSE team, but also leading the team to Germany.
- The most teams ever being involved in Operation Cleft.
- A Facebook page being created with the assistance of Tabitha Abbot.
- A program was developed where police uniforms (which had recently been changed) were recycled to be used in Timor-Leste.



During the year, \$67,940 was distributed. Major recipients were:

The Nepal Health Project, Operation Cleft, CFCV/Sidney Myer Haven, Bendigo Special Development School, The Rotary Foundation, Disaster Aid and Cambodia Appeal.



Reflections of the year by, Tom Seddon

Looking back on my year prompts a round of thank-yous: to my board and committee chairs for their work over the year, to the new members we inducted for seeing what the club could offer them as members of the community and in turn what they could contribute back to that community via the club, to the folks at Jimmy Possum whose help behind the curtain makes the Art Show possible. To the Samoa team in my year who agreed to take along a coachbuilding apprentice from Bendigo Tramways; the experience widened his horizons and opened his eyes to the satisfaction that can come from helping others. To our guest speakers, always interesting and often inspirational. There are many others to thank as well but I'll end with the RCB members, who welcomed me into the club only a few years earlier and in ways large and small made our years in Bendigo feel like home. Just one example: after more than 20 years together Robert Niemann and I were married in San Francisco in the early days of my presidential year. The response of the club to this was moving, unexpected and hugely appreciated.

I greatly enjoyed my year as president and was quite sorry when events transpired that saw me leave Bendigo and the club only a few months after my year ended.

