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"HOW ONE ROTARY CLUB DOUBLED ITS SIZE"

Article by ARC PDG David Anderson

Ten years ago, in the company of then Assistant Governor Gary Fitzgerald, I attended the Changeover Dinner of the **Rotary Club of Seymour**. The tenth oldest Club in **District 9790** and approaching its 50th anniversary, the Changeover was held at the local Chinese restaurant on Emily Street.



The Changeover Dinner duly took place and it was certainly a very public occasion – for all the wrong reasons. Customers collecting their take-away dinners came and went and the few sit down diners at the restaurant that night had to put up with the Club changeover.

Returning to the car, I said to Gary, “they’re in trouble.” A previously strong Club was declining in size and was aging. Pale and stale was an apt description and projects were as they had been for some time. Membership of the Club was not an attractive proposition.

Quite a number of Clubs have actively gone about rebuilding and re-defining themselves and Seymour, in District 9790, is one such Club. Facing possible extinction, they are now the sixth largest Club in the District with 52 active members. As a Club, they are a far cry from where they were in 2008 with 27, less than the average size Club in the District.

Here is what they have done to reinvent itself.

Over the past few years, the Rotary Club of Seymour has had a series of committed and passionate Rotarians as Club Membership Director. No shrinking violets, they had the right personality to engage with their own members and with the community and were able to take both with them. One of those was the current Club Secretary Ruth Byers, who says:

“Our membership growth efforts are the responsibility of each and every one of us. For the club to continue its work, replenishment and rejuvenation of our membership numbers is vital. It was vitally important to keep asking and for every member to join in the conversation.”

As a part of their membership plan, the Club held a tightly run community information night which was open by invitation only. Every member was asked to identify people who would make a good Rotarian. And every member was reminded of the need to come up with names. Every identified person was then invited, in writing, by the Club Membership Director to the information night. With an RSVP date identified, those invited who had not responded were followed up with a phone call or message so that personal contact ensured.

ON THE NIGHT

The whole evening lasts one hour. In an environment and location suitable for the occasion, the evening begins socially with drinks and canapés served. It’s a half hour of meet, greet and mingle. Prospective members attending are provided with an information pack including a brochure on the Rotary Club of Seymour and its activities.

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Then the 'sell' takes place. The formal part of the evening comes in the second half hour. With an effective MC to keep proceedings moving at a pace, no speaker was allowed more than five minutes. When each one spoke, it had to be concise, relevant and engaging. The initial speaker outlined what Rotary International was and its involvement in international projects that made a difference. The second speaker gave a quick overview of the work of the Club within the community whilst the third speaker focused on what Rotary could do for each potential new member and a little on the expectations required of members.

To end, one well-chosen member spoke for two minutes with a personal reflection on the value of being a Rotarian. It has to be able to capture the imagination of everyone.

At the end, invitees were invited to complete a short form which included a question on what areas of Rotary interested them. Later, this could be used in an interview with the prospective new member.

AFTER THE NIGHT

Contacting each invitee after the night within 48 hours is vital so that the line of communication remains open. Using the short form completed and the follow up call, those showing an interest are then invited to attend a weekly meeting of the Club – and the normal process of admitting a new member begins.

Ruth Byers says: "Whatever clubs try, it is important that they keep asking. For every ten people asked you will get one who shows an interest and will say yes. The problem is most people stop asking as they take the NO as a personal rejection of themselves or don't ask at all."

The Rotary Club of Seymour has shown that this approach worked for them.

The Rotary Club of Seymour has now run two Information nights, one in this Rotary year and one last year. They learnt from the first: room size, décor and lighting are all important inputs into the success of the evening. The Club has also seen the value of a high community presence through local media, print and radio, and as Ruth Byers says, "As our profile lifted so did the interest in our club's activities". "Club publicity and membership go hand in hand", she adds.

Should any reader wishes to receive a copy of the invitations, reply forms etc. as used by the Rotary Club of Seymour, contact the writer ando.in.yea@bigpond.com

" THE CHANGING VOLUNTEERING LANDSCAPE: ARE WE READY? "

Article by RC PDG Jessie Harman

In its report 'State of Volunteering in Australia 2012', Volunteering Australia notes that the nature of volunteering is changing; volunteers want more meaningful roles, and greater flexibility in how and when they volunteer. In short, Australians are asking for more and different ways to volunteer.



According to the report, episodic volunteering, online volunteering, skilled volunteering and volunteering through the workplace, are just a few examples of the changing landscape. Much of the demand for more flexible volunteering is being driven by changing lifestyles and our dynamic population base.

The changing nature of volunteering raises interesting questions for Rotary, not the least of which is 'how are we responding to these changing needs?'

Recent initiatives from the world of Rotary should give us hope. New club structures like eClubs and Satellite clubs offer meaningful alternatives for younger people, and busy, mobile employees. Corporate membership enables us to engage more effectively with workplace volunteers, while our recent emphasis on engagement, rather than attendance, seems more responsive to modern lifestyles. But it's not just about the new initiatives - some of the original pillars of Rotary also stand us in good stead. For example, our focus on vocational service provides a ready vehicle for volunteers who wish to contribute using their existing skills and knowledge, while our diverse suite of local and international service offerings ensures that volunteers can dip in and out of service as their interests and needs evolve.

So, amidst this changing landscape, there are signs that Rotary is well positioned to be the volunteering organisation of choice for future Australians. Yet we cannot afford to be complacent; it behoves us all to ensure our clubs are responding to the changing needs of our communities, and providing meaningful opportunity and flexibility for all our current and future volunteers.

To read the full Volunteering Australia report, go to:

http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377045635VANSVI2011.pdf

"TREATING YOUR CLUB LIKE A START-UP BUSINESS"

From Rotary Voices, 25 Sept 2014

By PDG Elaine Lytle, member of the Rotary Club of Como-Jannali, NSW and member of the Rotarians On the Internet (ROTI)



As a small Rotary club, we were on the road to extinction when we decided to hold a series of meetings as a whole club. We reviewed the usual list of strengths and weaknesses, action plans, and brainstorming ideas that we have done in the past with no real follow up.

But what really made a difference was when we looked in depth at the new means of communication and technologies available to us. One of our members is a financial consultant and another an accountant and we had them lead a session on approaching our club like it was a start-up business.

What is our product? How do we get clients, advertise, set budgets, measure customer satisfaction? Combining this with our previous data, we drafted an action plan with completion dates allocating tasks to small teams. We looked at what type of members we wanted to attract using the classifications system and focused on those areas. We avoided thinking of membership as a numbers game.

There are a number of small clubs like ours nearby, so we began planning joint meetings so we can present an image of size and confidence to people we wish to attract, rather than that of a small desperate group. We never call them membership nights, but combine these meetings with Pride of Workmanship awards or a beneficiaries night.

If it is interesting, they will come

Whenever we do events in the community, we set up a display with information including leaflets about club activities. At our main fundraiser, a collectables fair, we put out leaflets on coffee tables near the stage in the community center, and run a slideshow in the background focusing on images of club members doing things.

We are somewhat flexible with attendance as we feel it is more important for people to help us with our many activities than have dinner every week. Very few of the clubs in our area are strict about attendance. We find that if our meetings are interesting, people come. We try not to have all our speakers from people needing help or money. We have had people speak on everything from diets to underwater photography. We've had an Australian champion boxer, an Olympic medalist, and even a fortune teller.

We do not focus on age so much as the value of a member. We found information nights on our overseas projects were very popular and we sometimes show a short presentation on these at our special nights. Our last two presidents have been in their 40s, the one before that was in his 60s and the one before that was 32. Not all our efforts have worked out as we expected, but we were able to change as we go to suit new circumstances.

We have found that no one thing helped revive our club, but a combination of many little things, all driven by having the right focus. It is my hope some of our experience will be of help to your club.

Find [membership tools to strengthen your club](#)

"DID YOU KNOW?"

From Rotary leader Sept 2014

Shoot a brief video of your Rotary Day event, and your club or district could earn a special recognition from RI President Gary C.K. Huang. Upload your video (less than 3 minutes) to YouTube by 31 March and send a link with a description to rotary.service@rotary.org. President Huang will select a winning video and present a plaque to the club or district. The winning video also may be featured on Rotary.org and at the 2015 convention.

The [World's Biggest Commercial](#) has received recognition from Guinness World Records as the largest photo awareness campaign. Rotary collected more than 100,000 messages of support from celebrities, world leaders, and average people, all of whom added their names and photos to the public service announcement. The campaign officially drew to a close on 30 June.

"DEVELOPING STRONG LEADERS"

Creating a positive environment is critical to bringing out the best in others.

Article from *Rotary Leader* Sept 2014

One of the best things you can do as a district leader is coach others to improve their leadership skills. Developing strong leaders can make the difference between a district that has active, vibrant clubs and one that's just struggling to survive.

So, how do you instill leadership in others?

Lee Phares believes it's done by being positive.

A PDG from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA, Phares has spent years studying leadership development and using her findings to help others. She holds a PhD in educational leadership from Florida Atlantic University and has served as a Rotary International training leader, a Rotary Leadership Institute discussion leader, and a presidents-elect training seminar leader.



Lee Phares

Phares says establishing a positive environment is important, and encourages others to step forward into leadership roles. "This can be accomplished by beginning every meeting, activity, or conversation with some positive thoughts or examples. No matter how major or minor, discuss something good that is happening within the Rotary club or district," she says.

When reviewing a completed project or activity, Phares recommends discussing the following: What went well? What can we do differently next time? Setting a positive tone maintains the enthusiasm and forward momentum of Rotary members and their projects and keeps morale high.

Phares says many Rotary members are self-directed learners. They know how to take the initiative and often seek ways to pursue their interests and passions by meeting both local and global community needs. Therefore, your role as a mentor or coach becomes one of identifying opportunities for them to network with others, share their ideas, and take action.

More tips from Phares for nurturing others to reach their full potential as Leaders:

- Ø Acknowledge achievements
- Ø Provide a variety of opportunities for members to get involved
- Ø Encourage networking
- Ø Serve as a mentor and help Rotarians to act on their interests and passions
- Ø Demonstrate a caring attitude
- Ø Develop and participate in leadership skills training programs.

For more on leadership:

- Ø Download the [District Leadership Seminar Guide](#) on how to hold a one-day seminar in your district
- Ø Download [Leadership Development: Your Guide to Starting a Program](#)
- Ø Encourage your club presidents to use [Be a Vibrant Club: Your Club Leadership Plan](#), now available in regional versions
- Ø [Watch a video](#) on Rotary members discuss the attributes of leadership.

"JOHN GERM SELECTED AS 2016-17 ROTARY PRESIDENT"



John F. Germ, a member of the [Rotary Club of Chattanooga](#), Tennessee, USA, a Rotary member since 1976, and chair of the International PolioPlus Committee, is the selection of the Nominating Committee for President of RI in 2016-17. He will become the president-nominee on 1 October if there are no challenging candidates.

For Rotary to thrive, Germ says, members must face current and future challenges and opportunities with "passion, enthusiasm, perseverance, and above all, integrity."

"Rotary will adapt to a rapidly changing world by embracing innovation within the guidelines of our tradition and values," says Germ. "By aggressively embracing new technologies, social media, and new opportunities, individuals and businesses will see that Rotary helps promote a good civic and public image while adding credibility to their people."

"VITAL CLUB"

Summary of an address given by 2013-14 P George W. Grant, Rotary Club of Kew,
to a District 9800 Seminar Saturday 30 August 2014

Article received from ARC IPDG Tim Moore, DG 2013-14 D9820

17 months ago the [Rotary Club of Kew](#) had 29 active members. Now, we have 55 active members, an increase of 26. And, the average attendance has been consistently above 80%. Also, recently, we have been talking with another 3 or 4 potential members who are likely to be inducted soon. One a Bank manager, one a Managing Director of the Australian branch of an American company, and one a Professor of one of our Melbourne Universities.



How did we increase our numbers?

If there is only one answer, it is CLUB VITALITY. A Club is ready to receive and retain new members to the extent to which it is enthusiastic and alive.

We don't want to have the image of the Rotary Club which meets 'down the hill between the ice works and the cemetery'.

A vital club is well run and well attended by members who are proud to be Rotarians and enthusiastic, (even excited) about Rotary's local, District and International programs. Such members are always ready to gossip the joys of Rotary to all within their circle of friends. Members who have been missing for one or two weeks without apologies are carefully followed up.

The Rotary Motto *Service Above Self* is not just a motto but a way of life. A way that leads to us making things happen in the world and to fulfillment at a personal level.

At Kew, we place much importance on our *Coffee Shop conversations* (never interviews) with potential members and two or three of our Rotarians. This provides the precious opportunity to get to know each other, and for the potential Rotarians to be informed about the essentials of Rotary, such as attendance the Motto, the Four Way Test. We also highlight the privileges and responsibility of Rotary membership.

We attempt to make Inductions a real event in the life of the Inductee and the Club with members of the Inductee's family present and privileges and responsibilities strongly mentioned. The Rotary Right Hand of Fellowship warmly offered by the President and all Rotarians present.

SCOTT FIELD - 2004 INAUGURAL PEACE FELLOW - AN OBITUARY

By PDG Euan Miller

Scott Field the 2004 inaugural Peace Fellow for D9520 was recently killed in a fall in a hiking accident in the French Alps.

As the first Peace Fellow, Scott was presented to the Governor at a ceremony at Government House Adelaide before taking up his fellowship to undertake a Masters in Peace and Reconciliation at the University of California, Berkeley. The Rotary Club of Burnside was his mentoring club. Since the completion of his fellowship Scott remained overseas working in both the USA and the Middle East. He returned briefly to Adelaide in 2007 as a keynote speaker at the District 9520 conference.



Scott Field

I well remember Scott's practicum in Israel and Palestine in 2005. He was there when the war broke out with Hezbollah in Lebanon and was ordered by RI to return to the USA for safety. He refused to return arguing that he had only two more weeks of his practicum to go, he was in the midst of important negotiations between Fattah and the Israelis and was currently in Jerusalem which at that time was out of the range of Hezbollah rockets! He eventually returned unscathed to Berkeley. Since then Scott continued to focus on the Middle East.

He had just been appointed in August to the United Nations office of the Special Envoy to Syria and was based in Damascus. He was never a person who was not committed to peace, no matter what the risks might be.

Other roles he held were Middle East Manager for Skoll Global Threats Fund, Conflict Analyst for Vibrant Data, Technology Advisor, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and he also lectured in National Security Affairs to the Naval post graduate School in the USA and retained a visiting scholar role at Berkeley from the completion of his studies.

A life cut short but so much accomplished. We extend our sympathy to his family and friends.

"WHY SOCIAL MEDIA CAN'T BE LEFT TO YOUR PR DIRECTOR"

Social media is every club member's responsibility

Rotary Voices, 22 Sept 2014

By Kate McKenzie, secretary of the Rotary Club of Randwick, NSW, conference chair for District 9675 and is a member of the Rotarians on Social Networks Fellowship



I have often met Rotary leaders who have nodded thoughtfully when I have explained the benefits of social media and then said "I will get my PR director to do that." Although it is important to have division of labor and leaders with the right skills concentrating on the right tasks, social media doesn't work if it is the sole responsibility of one person alone.

In order for something to be social, more than one person has to participate. Of course, not everyone has the confidence to be the main content creator and it is important that the person responsible for managing the club or district pages is able to create the right tone and use their creativity to attract the public's attention. It can be a very lonely task, however, if that creativity goes unnoticed and unsupported by fellow club members.

Social media works as a PR tool because likes, shares, and comments spread the original message beyond the creator's own immediate network and into the networks of friend's friends. If I have 100 friends, and 20 friends like, share, comment on, or retweet my post, that will have a greater impact than if only two friends did the same.



Stone Skipping

I often use the analogy of stone skipping or stone skipping, where the stone is a post or update and the Web is the pond. If a post doesn't receive any likes, comments, retweets, and shares, then it drops straight to the bottom of the Web never to be seen again. Each like, comment, retweet, and share helps the post to travel just that little bit further and each splash can attract the attention of new people as it makes it's way across the Internet.

Rotary clubs and districts can make the most of the talents of their enthusiastic and creative marketing/PR directors by empowering them to be the key content creator, while also ensuring that it is the responsibility of all members to be content sharers.

A social media post is like a stone skipping across a pond. Each comment or retweet makes new ripples

Another example is events. Have you ever walked past an empty restaurant and decided not to go in? The same thing happens for Facebook events — people don't join events that look empty. If you receive an invitation from your club or district, respond to it. If you can't attend, invite your other friends before you decline but also leave a short note expressing your regrets and encouraging others to join the fun.

To build your confidence in sharing content, log into the system and observe what other people do. Ask questions in the [Rotarians on Social Networks Fellowship](#) member groups (it's free to join). Keep your comments positive and always apply The Four Way Test. Set yourself a goal of logging in and responding to event invites and sharing club news at least once a week. Or invest in a smartphone so you can do it on the move.

Your PR director will be much happier, but more importantly your network is likely to become more aware of and engaged in your Rotary activities and over the medium to long term this will convert to new members, funds, and support.

"GETTING THE WORD OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA"

Rotary Membership Minute, Oct 2014

To celebrate Membership Month in August, we asked Rotary members around the world to show their Rotary pride by changing their Twitter and Facebook profile pictures to the [I'm a Proud Member](#) graphic. And they did just that: The graphic reached 844,288 people and received 42,563 individual likes, comments, and shares.



PROUD MEMBER GRAPHIC

To increase Rotary's visibility, we encouraged all Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Interactors to let everyone in their social network know that they are proud to be part of the family of Rotary by changing their Twitter and Facebook profile pictures to a graphic created by Rotary's design team that says:

Item 1: I'm a Proud Member - Item 2: I'm a Proud Rotaractor - or Item 3: I'm a Proud Interactor.

"UNDER 40s ROTARY CLUB"

By President Nicole Lake

Article received from ARC IPDG Tim Moore, DG 2013-14 D9820

The [Rotary Club of Melbourne Park](#) is Melbourne's only 'young' Rotary Club. We represent a unique sector of the Rotary world as all of our members are aged under 40s. This means we need to use a different approach for membership recruitment compared to most Rotary clubs.

The first step is to understand your target audience

It is important to understand your target market to know how to best attract them. For example, our target age group (40s and under):

- Utilise the internet as their preferred route of communication,
- Value a product by its appearance online,
- And are not likely to recognise the Rotary brand, or if they do, they associate it with a 'more experienced' age range.

Therefore we have styled our membership approach around these key characteristics.

Thinking about how we sell our club

We cannot use Rotary as a leading pitch for new members, as they often do not recognise it or think it applies to them.



Rotary Club of
Melbourne Park

Therefore we use our volunteering opportunities, and speaker program, to promote interest in our club towards getting people to a meeting. Then after they visit the club, we can then tell them about Rotary International and what membership with our club involves.

Utilising online tools to reach potential new members

Given that our target audience uses the internet daily, we utilise online tools to promote our club, and our upcoming speaker and volunteering events. For example see our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/rcmelpark) which functions like a club bulletin, and our Meetup page (www.meetup.com/The-Young-Rotary-Club-of-Melbourne-Park) which advertises upcoming events specifically. These platforms reach beyond our own networks too, and are often how they first hear about our club. Given that our target audience values a product by its appearance online, we also need to have professional club website that embodies the energy of the club and is updated regularly (www.rcmelpark.com).

Being deliberate about the language we use to describe our club

We are also mindful of the language that we use to describe our club to the target audience. For example words like 'service' or 'fellowship' are not well recognised words among under 40s, therefore we would use words like 'volunteering' and 'friendship' to capture their attention more effectively.

Retaining interest and new members

Once you get a potential member along to the club, the meeting atmosphere and experience is pivotal to retaining their interest and membership. We make the traditions of Rotary relevant for our target age group, and while we love our sergeant's session, we do not sing the anthem, say a toast or grace, and do not have a top table. We also keep the costs associated with membership as affordable as possible.

We have experienced wonderful membership growth by taking these strategic approaches. Hopefully this provides some food for thought about how to ensure your approach for recruitment is as effective as possible. Good luck!

SHARE YOUR CLUB OR DISTRICT SERVICE PROJECT AND MEMBERSHIP BEST PRACTICES.

We would like to hear from Clubs or Districts telling us what they have done. Please include a summary, contact details, and a couple of photos, and email to [Issa Shalhoub](#), this Newsletter's editor.

We also would like readers to share their experiences and stories on Best Practices in their Clubs and what has worked for their Clubs in gaining new members and also what has helped in keeping members.

"WHO'S YOUR TOMMY?"

Rotary Voices, Posted on August 11, 2014
By William D. Pollard, Jr., **Rotary Club of Churchland, Portsmouth, Virginia, USA**



I joined Rotary in 1988 at the age of 25. Whenever I think of why we should invite someone to join Rotary, I think of Tommy.

Two years after starting a banking career in Richmond, Virginia, I was asked to work in my hometown of Petersburg. One of the first people to visit me was Tommy Adkins, a retired banker, who asked me to attend a Rotary club meeting. Tommy lived on the same street as my family when I was growing up, and I even delivered his newspaper.

I had no idea what Rotary was, but I accepted Tommy's kind invitation to visit the Rotary Club of Petersburg. Tommy passed away several years ago and he probably never realized the impact he had on my professional and personal life.

- § Because of Tommy, I have made so many wonderful friendships with Rotarians throughout the world.
- § Because of Tommy, I have participated in many service projects helping others.
- § Because of Tommy, I have lived my life more ethically as I look to **The Four Way Test**.
- § Because of Tommy, I have had the satisfaction of financially **supporting the life-changing work of The Rotary Foundation**.
- § Because of Tommy, my mother is a Rotarian.
- § Because of Tommy, I have enhanced my leadership skills serving as a club president, district governor, district Foundation chair, and in many other club and district roles.
- § Because of Tommy, I am helping **Light Up Rotary** this year.

So my three questions to you are:

- Who is your Tommy?
- What impact has Rotary had on your life?
- Have you been or will you be a Tommy to someone else?

"PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE"

From RI President GARY C.K. HUANG October 2014 Message

We are on track to achieve full eradication by 2018 – if we can keep up the momentum that has brought us this far.

When we eradicate polio – and we will – we'll have brought the world into a better future, and Rotary into a better future as well. We will have proved ourselves, as an organization, capable of great things. And we will have given our children and grandchildren a gift that will endure forever: a polio-free world.

All past editions of the "Rotary on the Move" Newsletter can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#)

If you wish to receive an electronic copy of this Newsletter, or you know of someone who would like to receive one, please email the editor; Issa Shalhoub shalhoubissa@shoal.net.au

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Zone 8; Australia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and Nauru.

Zone 7B; New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Vanuatu, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Tonga and Samoa.

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