



Bulletin

RI District 9800

Volume 59 Number 26

January 22, 2026

Celebrating 58 Years of Service

PRESIDENT

Joan Scott

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SECRETARY

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MEETING

Kew Golf Club

120 Belford Road Kew East

Thursday 12:30 pm

Meeting begins at 1pm

Apologies: **Bob Crozier**

bob_crozier@hotmail.com

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Barbrook814@gmail.com

RI PRESIDENT

Francesco Arezzo.

DISTRICT GOVERNOR

Peter Shephard

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THE FOUR WAY TEST

Is it the truth?

Is it fair to all concerned?

Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

Will it benefit all concerned?

LINKS

[Garden DesignFest](#)

[Facebook Rotary D9800](#)



President's Message



It seems at once a short time and also strangely no time at all since we last met, for the club's Christmas/end of year lunch. Since then I'm aware that many members have been enjoying the summer break, and hope that everyone is well and looking forward to our first meeting on January 29th.

The New Year period has brought much devastation to many areas of the country, from floods to the devastating bushfires in Victoria. All members will have recently received an email from DG Peter, regarding options available to members and clubs to aid in the recovery. Although District 9800 was not directly impacted, there are many ways in which we can help.

Included in this Bulletin are the reflections of members, in memory of much loved and long-standing member Merrilyn Shepherd. Merrilyn died in late December, and her funeral service on January 5th was attended by a number of club members. Merrilyn's contributions to Rotary and our club, over many years, are testament to her commitment to the ideals of Rotary and to the importance she placed on the fellowship she enjoyed with club members. We will all miss her.

Thanks to members who have volunteered to help with club and community projects during the holiday period. – to those who helped out with the first Aquathon 2026, and also all who will be assisting with the Australia Day lunch provision. DG Peter has expressed interest in getting to some Australia Day events, and Barb is liaising with him in regard to this. Thanks to Kim Wen and Barb and their committees, for all their work in supporting and organising these events.

Thanks also to Barb, who will represent the club at the Boroondara Citizenship Ceremony on the morning of Australia Day.

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Dates for Your Diary

Monday 26 January

11.45 -2pm Australia Day Lunch for rooming houses

Thursday 29 January

1pm RCK meeting Kew Golf Club (first meeting for 2026) - Fellowship

5.15pm – 8pm Aquathon Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Monday 2 February

10am RCK Coffee Fellowship - Via Verona

Thursday 5 February

1pm RCK meeting Kew Golf Club Speaker Joel Matthews speaking about his role and possible collaboration

Monday 9 February

10am RCK Coffee Fellowship - Via Verona

Tuesday 10 February

5.30pm RCK Board Meeting – Colin's

Thursday 12 February

1pm RCK meeting Kew Golf Club
Member Behind the Badge Hengameh Amiry
5.15pm – 8pm Aquathon Boroondara Sports Complex (Belmore Road)

Monday 16 February

10am RCK Coffee Fellowship - Via Verona

Thursday 19 February

1pm RCK meeting Kew Golf Club
Speaker Peter Stewart OAM Sumba update

Monday 23 February

10am RCK Coffee Fellowship - Via Verona

Thursday 26 February

1pm RCK meeting Kew Golf Club

Sunday 2 March

Clean Up Australia

Monday 3 March

10am RCK Coffee Fellowship - Via Verona

27 – 29 March 2026

2026 Multi District Conference – Horsham

13- 17 June 2026

Rotary International Conference Taipei City

Thursday 18 June 2026

6.30pm RCK Changeover – Kew Golf Club

Garden DesignFest 2026

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 November 2026

Vale Marilyn Shepherd OAM



Some reflections highlighting Marilyn's time in Rotary and her wonderful personal attributes.

Marilyn Shepherd was a thoroughly good person.

In her introductory talk to the Club some 11 years ago, she spoke of her career as a teacher and administrator at the Box Hill Technical School, and her dedication and decency were immediately apparent.

She enjoyed her membership of our club. She faithfully attended our weekly meetings and contributed to our projects whenever she could. She also thought about club projects and contributed valuable ideas. Her practical skills in textiles and design were given freely in support of club projects on more than one occasion. I particularly remember her leadership of the members' efforts to contribute to the national campaign to knit remembrance poppies at the time of the centenary of ANZAC. I discovered on a recent visit to the Shrine with my granddaughters, that many of the poppies remain on display in the entrance lobby to this day.

I expect Marilyn was a committed member of the Uniting Church all her life. Certainly, during the time we knew her, she had dedicated herself to a leadership role in her church. It was a difficult economic time for the church and Marilyn was, along with all the usual leadership issues, called on to grapple with complex structural, legal and moral issues going to the very survival of her own church's community. Occasionally she would calmly tell me about her worries, but with an air of conviction that the 'right thing' would be done. But it was loving her neighbour that really motivated her. She served those near and dear to her, she served the community of her church, and she served the wider community. She supported any enterprise that might help those less fortunate than herself. And it was the service aspect of Rotary in the community and beyond that most attracted her to the club.

It's true that Rotarians enjoy formal dinners, and our club is no exception. And despite the non-sectarian rules in our constitution, we like to start our dinners with a grace or 'invocation' as we sometimes call it. This is usually delivered by a member of the clergy in the club, but in the absence of such a member following the death of George Grant, the organisers naturally turned to Marilyn. She rose to the challenge. Her graces were – in the best traditions - preceded by a short story, perhaps of unselfishness, or perhaps a

Vale Marilyn Shepherd OAM

gentle reminder of injustices remaining to be addressed.

In recent years as Marilyn's mobility diminished we sometimes offered to take the microphone to her table rather than have her make her way to the lectern. She would always decline the offer, no matter the pain and discomfort she might have had to endure making her way to the front. She saw it as an important opportunity to contribute to the club she valued, and she did it willingly until she could go on no longer. And we loved her graces. They were always just right, thoughtful, uplifting, classy. They set the right tone for the evening ahead. They enriched the life of the club. And if she secularised them a bit in a nod to the club rules, there was never any mistaking that they were inspired by her deep conviction and her love of God. Marilyn Shepherd was a thoroughly good person

Murray Chessell

I first met Marilyn Shepherd at EKUC, as you can all imagine she was always welcoming, and interested in what I had been doing during the week. It wasn't long before I joined in her craft group, Fabric Feelings and learnt how to knit and sew squares together.

We went off together to a variety of events, yearly we went to the Chaplains Dinner at Kew High School. She encouraged me to become involved in Rotary, which I did eventually join. Once again, she encouraged me to become involved with her project which was Youth. Together we interviewed two young ladies from Ruyton, we couldn't choose a winner so between us we managed to convince the Rotary Board to support them both to go to NYSF (National Youth Science Forum) We we're very pleased with ourselves when they agreed! She was the one who encouraged me to take on the Youth Directorship and was always there encouraging me.

Thelma and Louise (Marilyn and Jennie) on a memorable road trip!

Each year, Rotary holds a conference; in 2018, it took place in Warrnambool, which is Marilyn's birthplace and hometown. We set out on a hot March Day down the Great Ocean Road. Stopping at every memorable sight! We didn't arrive, into Port Campbell until 7.30pm, so we went off to the local pub! Marilyn liked this as she could have her Sauv. Blanc wine. We were walking back and saw the name of the accommodation, Flash Packers, we both burst into Gales of laughter! The Rotary District 9800 Conference took place during the weekend of March 17th and 18th, 2018.

From the moment we arrived, the conditions were confronting. The heat was extreme, and the intense winds never really let up over the conference weekend

Vale Marilyn Shepherd OAM

(March 17–18). A total fire ban was in place, this didn't worry Marilyn, who knew the country well.

She was thrilled to show me the house where she had grown up and the schools, and the Technical College she attend. We had a lovely time walking around Warrnambool.

We later met and were able to pet the Maremma Sheepdogs. On Middle Island in Warrnambool, these specially trained dogs serve as "penguin protectors." They use their guarding instincts—such as their presence and barking—to keep predators like foxes away from Little Penguins.

By Saturday evening the major fires had ignited. While we continued with the conference as best we could, the gravity of what was happening around us was never far from our minds.

Despite the unfolding emergency, the conference dinner went ahead on Saturday night, where we all had to wear something Green, we all had a fabulous time. For some of the senior Rotarians who stayed updated about the bushfire, the event took on new significance as they quietly made preparations to assist in any way possible. I understand many Rotarians turned their attention from conference sessions to supporting the community. On the Sunday, they helped pivot resources toward the firefighting effort, including preparing and supplying 100 packed lunches for firefighters. It was a small but tangible way to back the people on the front line while the fires were active. Although we were aware of the fire danger it wasn't until the Sunday morning, we realised the immediate danger we were in. I told Marilyn we were **Getting Out**, she wanted to show me more of her

'Warrnambool World, which we did in a hurry. I was aware I had Marilyn Shepherd's life in my hands and knew I needed to persuade her to trust me to get her home safely, I put her in charge of the iPad! She tried extremely hard to guide us home, but she eventually became very frustrated with the silly technology! We arrived back much quicker via the inland route we took compared to the great ocean road we had taken a couple of days earlier, safe and sound.

Apon returning, we learnt the Rotary District 9800 Conference in Warrnambool, was right in the middle of some of Victoria's most severe bushfires of the season – the St Patrick's Day fires.

Looking back, that conference stands out to me not just for the program or the speakers, but for how Rotarians responded under pressure—with flexibility, compassion, and a strong determination to support a community in crisis.

In the weeks and months that followed, Rotary's commitment to the affected communities continued. Rotary District 9800 and local clubs together contributed around \$16,000 to support immediate

Vale Marilyn Shepherd OAM

recovery needs. This funding helped with practical rebuilding efforts such as fencing and livestock support—critical steps in helping local families begin to restore their properties and livelihoods.

Marilyn Shepherd has always been both a mentor and a friend to me, and I will deeply miss her, but always carry her laugh and smile in my heart.

Jennie Gale

Marilyn was recognized in the Australian Honours on Australia Day 2003. Her citation read “For service to the community, particularly as an advocate for people with intellectual disabilities.”

There is a write up by Andrew on Merriyn in the Bulletin from 19 September 2024 when her time at RCK was celebrated.

Almoner

Das continues to have regular contact with our members, and we thank him most sincerely for his continual care.

Please let Das know if you are not well or having surgery or if you become aware of other members not well.

President's Report con'd

We have much to look forward to as we resume our weekly meetings; our first lunch meeting on January 29th will have a focus on Fellowship, as we catch up with each other after the break. On February 5th our Guest Speaker will be Joel Mathews, YMCA Community Activation Manager, who has offered to speak about his role and Rotary involvement. On February 12 Hengameh Amiry will speak as our “member behind the badge”, and on February 19th member Peter Stewart will report on his visit to Sumba last year and expand on future expectations.

There's a lot happening – and our regular Monday coffee fellowship will also resume on Monday February 2nd.

I look forward to seeing everyone next Thursday!

Joan Scott

Aquathons 2026

We have had the first (15 January) Aquathon. Thank you Russel Pam and Barb. Thank you Kim also for coordinating



RCK operated the BBQ drinks and raffle and provided the medals with the Y.

Each event has short and long course options, including individual and family events

Short Course (Junior 12 – 16 years) and Short Course (Open)

- This course consists of a 1km run, 150m swim and 1km run.

Long Course (Open) and Long Course (Family / Team – maximum three members)

- This course consists of three 1km runs and three 250m swims.
- As a team, this can be split between team members as long as the above distances are completed as a team

All donations supported the Y charity – the Open Door Foundation

Further dates are

Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre 29 January.

Boroondara Sports Complex 12 February,

Please let Kim or Barb know if you can assist for these late afternoon events,



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Meeting Duty Roster

Date	Chair	Host	Meeting Equipment	Cashier-1	Cashier-2	Thought
29-Jan-26	Scott J	Stewart P	Brown D	Wen K	Garling W	Gale J
05-Feb-26	Scott J	Burns C	Crozier B	Amiry H	Verginis G	Hoath R
12-Feb-26	TBA	Stillwell M	Payne F	Levin R	Turner-Atkins M	Burns C
19-Feb-26	TBA	Maddock G	Tan MH	Burns C	Perks E	Dias C
26-Feb-26	TBA	Crawford J	Cohen J	Dias C	Stewart P	Crozier B

Other Club Activities



Brighton Classic Car Show 2026
Sunday 22 March
Firbank Grammar, 51 Outer Crescent, Brighton

For all makes, 25 years or older
Display Cars Entry 8am to 10am (\$25) - Public Entry 10am to 2:30pm

120 Classic Cars on Display
Additional Entertainment
Fun for the whole family

Adult Entry @ \$10
Juniors under 14 free
Food & Beverages available

Register your car:
trybooking.com/DFLNB

Enquiries:
Rob Pinchbeck 0411 729 569

Website:
brightonclassiccarshow.org.au

A Rotary Club of Brighton Charity Fundraiser

