



## My Life



### Member Speaker – Helen Duncan

I turned 50 this year, so it is a good time to look back over my shoulder at where I have come from before I keep moving forward, but I didn't think I would be sharing with a room full of people- Thanks Graham!

My mother always says that I am the luckiest person alive because I always get what I wanted in life, and to be honest, she is probably right.

I was born in 1972 in West Wyalong the first of 5 children. My mother and father were very young and not well off. We lived in a caravan attached to a tiny shack on my Grandfather's farm in Weethalle. My father worked on the mines at Gibsonvale, later driving scrappers to build roads in Canberra and Sydney, before building a house in the township of Weethalle, when he began farming.

I lived opposite the primary school and next door to the two teachers from the school. That is when I decided that I wanted to be a teacher- I was 7! The reason for being a teacher was very simple- they drove nice cars and went on great holidays!

I was the school Captain at Primary School. I went on to high school in West Wyalong and met Bradley Duncan, although he was way too rough around the edges for me! He was a local sporting hero, playing and winning premierships in League and AFL in the same year. He played squash, basketball, cricket and Represented Country in Union against Ireland.

I left High School in 1989 with a DoE Teaching Scholarship, which was very lucky as my parents were struggling with the Rural recession and 4 other children. At the same time I started water skiing with Brad's family and we became friends.

I studied at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst where my world began to open up. I met Uncle Bobby Randall who was a guest lecturer for our Aboriginal Studies course. He entered the lecture theatre singing his song "Brown skin baby, they take him away". I had never known about the stolen generation until then, but I continued to study Aboriginal Affairs alongside my degree, and have a deep passion for teaching the inconvenient truth about our history.

In my final year, I went to Arnhem Land for my Prac. This was in the early 1990's. I had never been in a community that spoke English as a second language. There was no television, only radio and we could use the satellite phone at the school on Sundays. We had to order our groceries three weeks prior and they arrived by plane. The Gunwingu people of the Gunbalanya Lands in Oenpelli were the happiest people I have ever met. At school, students learnt bark painting, spear making and pandanis grass basket weaving from the elders. I was also able to travel deep into Arnhem Land and up to Managritta. I woke up to the brumbies running through the community, caught Barramundi,

### Program and Roster:

**Maree Higgins**  
Girl Guides

**Venue:**  
Royal Hotel

**Wednesday 23rd**  
**November**

**Chairman**  
David P

**Treasurer**  
Gary P

**Rotary Grace**  
Norm O

**Loyal Toast**  
Jeff N

**International Toast**  
Meredith M

**Rotary Information**  
Ian K

**Sergeant's Help**  
Sandie H

saw salt-water crocodiles, ate weird and not so wonderful bush tucker, got school sores and had fleas. I visited ancient rock paintings, witnessed tribal payback with nulla nullas, watched young kids arrive by themselves on walk-a-bout, welcomed boys back from their week long initiation ceremony at Inyaluk and was accepted into a traditional kinship. I left Arnhem Land a very different person to when I had arrived.

I did the second part of my prac in the University in Yogyakarta in Indonesia, having studied the language for 12 months prior. I lived with a muslim family in home stays and like our exchange students, learnt to speak the language fluently, the culture, religion and again sampled all kinds of weird and at times not so wonderful food. I graduated from Uni in 1993 and was placed at Wyalong Public School, central NSW for my first year of teaching. It was a great school, but also my worst nightmare- My best friend's father was now my principal, and he desperately wanted a male teacher. The lady in the office at Wyalong PS, Mrs Glennon, was actually the lady in the office at Weethalle PS when I started Kindergarten. My mother was the P&C president and my little brother and sister were at the school and were definitely NOT going to call me Miss Grellman! In 1993, Brad married his worst nightmare- A Teacher! The day before the wedding, West Wyalong was cut off by the floods so it wasn't anything like what we had planned! Brad was a third-generation honey producer for Capillano Honey, but Rural recession and floods forced him move to Newcastle to drive trucks soon after we were married.

I transferred to Busby West PS near Liverpool in Western Sydney in 1994 and I travelled to Newcastle on weekends. The school had over 1200 students and 95% did not speak English, including all of my Kinders. This school was an eye opener as it was too dangerous to stay on the grounds after 3.30pm. This was at the time of the Croatian/ Serbian War and with staff and students from both sides it was a very difficult place to work. The school had many refugees and disadvantaged students. To the students and their families- education was everything. I was classified as an AST, an Advanced Skilled Teacher and then then in my third year I was a relieving Executive Teacher. And I moved to the Central Coast, North of Sydney and I began to commute by train through the beautiful Hawkesbury river at 5.30 am every morning to get to Liverpool at 8.00am, 2 ½ hours each way- two trains and a bus, I clearly loved being a teacher. I left Busby West when a teacher, my friend Edmay Valerin was shot just opposite the school one morning.

I was transferred to Narara Public School on the Central Coast in 1997. During this time, I had my two daughters, Kaitlyn and Laura. In 2004, Brad joined the NSW Police Force and I became a relieving Assistant Principal at Narara. In 2010, I applied for Assistant Principal at Corowa PS and we moved back to the country. We made this decision when we began to realise that our values were country values and the people we knew on the coast didn't understand or particularly care for the drought or the hardship that our friends and family were facing.

We had never been to Corowa, but my Aunty Elvie Jelbart had always lived at Burrumbuttock. We were sure that we broke the drought when we moved here. I had hoped to live close to the river but by the end of July 2010 the Murray was flooded and I vowed never to live in River street, so we bought in Hume Street. In 2016, I became a Teaching Principal at Walla Walla PS where I was able to connect with community through the Town Development Committee and the Refugee Resettlement project.

I went to Thurgoona PS in Term 1 as the Deputy Principal to get back into big schools again as there are 660 students, before returning to Corowa PS in May as the Principal.

Brad and I have always tried to instil the importance of community and service to our daughters Kaitlyn and Laura. They both attended local schools here in Corowa, joined the rowing club, danced at Judy O'Malley's and played netball at Coreen. They are now both at Charles Sturt University Wagga and work at Woolworths during the holidays.

Kaitlyn is studying Psychology and Laura is studying Radiation Science in Nuclear Medicine, so they too will have jobs to serve their community.

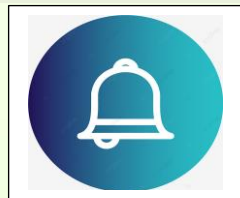
Now that we live in Corowa, I enjoy fishing (at least that is what I tell Brad), waterskiing and I can back the boat trailer! I love living and exploring this region, running, cycling and hiking.

I am in my 30<sup>th</sup> year as an educator and I have worked in 6 schools across three regions, very big and very small. I cannot say which of the schools is my favourite as they are also so different, but I know I still have a lot to learn from students, colleagues and communities.

I have never forgotten any of the students I have taught and can still tell you how they were in English, Maths, work habits and behaviour. I am in contact with many past students, in fact I have a 25 yr old living at my house at the moment who is doing her Prac at Albury High before flying back to her new home in Canada, I taught her in Year 2, 17 years ago.

I am passionate about educating our rural students to have equal opportunity that city students have in the hope that they have choice in their life. My hope for rural communities is to grow our own- for the next generation of workers to be from the country, nurtured by the country, for the country.

## International Club Toast - Ian K:



We are toasting the Rotary Club of Stirling, Adelaide, South Australia. The Club has been serving the local and international community for over 45 years. The Club supports youth and community groups and those in need like Stirling Hospital.

The Club raises funds by doing catering, raffles, film evenings and a sculpture for interiors and garden exhibitions. They also help doing painting, repairs, small building projects and car parking.

## NOTICES:

- Christmas Market – 4<sup>th</sup> December – Federation Council has approved use of the Memorial Hall for our Christmas Market – should it be required. Deposit has been paid
- 2022 School presentation Assemblies – Margaret Brown is looking for Rotarian volunteers to be at each presentation assembly

2022 School Presentation Assemblies					
School	Date	Venue	Time		Rotarian
Howlong Public School 02 6026 5206	Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov <b>RSVP Fri 25 Nov</b>	Howlong PS	10.00 am		
Lowesdale Public School 02 6035 8216	Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	Bujara Recreation Grounds	7.00 pm Concert		
Corowa Public School 02 6033 1606	Tues 13 Dec	CPS	10 am + mornin g tea		
St Mary's Primary School 02 6033 1183	Wed 14 Dec <b>RSVP Fri 9 Dec</b>	St Mary's school hall	11.30 am		
Corowa High School 02 6033 1889	Thurs 15 Dec	CHS hall	11.30		
Corowa South Primary School 02 6033 1535	Tues 13 Dec	CSPS	9.30 am		

- Paul Miegel has indicated that he would like to be considered for District Governor. As part of this process Corowa Rotary Club would be required to host the District 9790 Conference. A vote was taken and there was overwhelming support for Paul's consideration
- Council has approved the liquor license for the B&S Ball but indicated that any council involvement would be invoiced
- Ian K has volunteered his tractor and slasher to clear the carpark for the B&S Ball
- Gary was heading into hospital on Thursday, we wish him well and a speedy recovery



**IMAGINE  
ROTARY**

### Rotary Grace:

Oh Lord, the giver  
of all good,  
We thank you for  
our daily food.  
May Rotary friends  
and Rotary ways,  
Help us to serve  
you all our days.  
Amen.

For Good Food,  
For Good  
Fellowship  
And the  
opportunity for  
service in Rotary,  
We Give Thanks.  
Amen.

Today we are  
thankful for all we've  
received.  
However we live, we  
firmly believe  
All is a blessing that  
we must pass on  
No matter our status  
or where we have  
gone. Kindness and  
generosity are what  
we impart  
Showing the world  
what's in Rotary's  
heart.

### Rotary 4 way Test:

- 1: Is it the **TRUTH**?
- 2: Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
- 3: Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
- 4: Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

# Rotary Club of Corowa:

## Website:

<http://corowarotary.jimdo.com>

We are also on FACEBOOK!

<https://www.facebook.com/corowarotary>

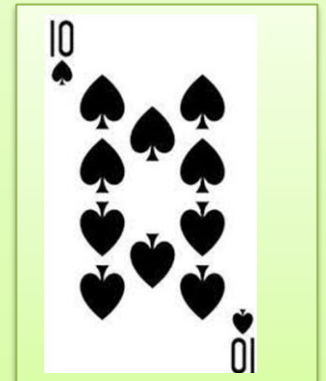


## Raffle:

Presidents Muscat: Graham C



Cut the Cards: Graham B –10 of Spades



Meeting Date	WED NOV 30th	WED Dec 7th	WED Dec 14th
Venue	Howlong Golf Club	Royal Hotel	
Program	Rotary Information Meeting	AGM/Assembly	No Meeting
Chairman	Stacy P	President Stephen	
Treasurer	David P	Stacey P	
Rotary Grace	Gary P	David P	
Loyal Toast	Norm O	Gary P	
International Toast	Jeff N	Norm O	
Rotary Information	Meredith M	Jeff N	
Sergeants Help	Ian K	Meredith M	



The Rotary Club of Corowa meets every **WEDNESDAY**  
at **The Royal Hotel: 6:30pm for a 7:00pm start**

President 2022-2023: Rotarian Stephen Apps  
Secretary: Rotarian Margaret Brown  
Treasurer: Rotarian Paul Miegel  
Vice President: Rotarian Deborah Rowe  
President Elect 2023-24: Rotarian Bill Bott  
**P.O. Box 153 Corowa, NSW, 2646.**  
Bulletin Editor: Rotarian Bill Pentney



**IMAGINE  
ROTARY**

Please remember to notify **Deb Rowe** if you **CANNOT** attend our weekly meetings or if you wish to bring any guests.  
If you are arranging a guest speaker, please advise Deb of the number of people attending and if they need a screen of projector.

**Deb can be contacted by:**

Phone or text: 0413 122 884 or email: [seeshell84@hotmail.com](mailto:seeshell84@hotmail.com)

**YOU WILL BE INVOICED FOR A MEAL  
IF YOU FAIL TO NOTIFY IF NOT ATTEENDING.**

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Membership Anniversaries:

- Ian K – 11/2019

## Quotes of the Week

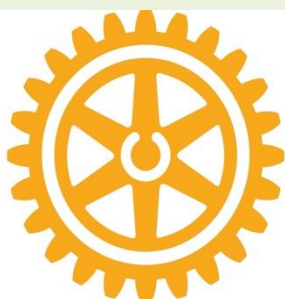
- I read that 4,153,237 people were married last year. Not to cause any trouble.... but shouldn't that be an even number
- You know that tingly little feeling you get when you love someone? That's common sense leaving your body

## Image of the Week

Kids got it easy these days. When I was a kid, this guy hosted playschool 🤪🤪🤪



Rotary



IMAGINE  
ROTARY