

Incoming Speakers

23rd March – Catherine Cocks, Environmental Officer, City of Stonnington

Forthcoming Events

9th May – Café Internationale – International House Melbourne University

27th May – RC Malvern's 50th Anniversary – Malvern Town Hall – official RC Prahran Meeting

4th July – Christmas in July - Rotary Foundation dinner at Lynne Wilton's – Book with Andrea Walton!

For District News, please go to: clarice@rotarydistrict9800.org.au

	<u>23.03.09</u>	<u>30.03.09</u>	<u>06.04.09</u>	
House Committee Duty 12.30 start	T McCarthy J Mahon	J Mahon P Peters	P Peters E Cohen	
Bulletin:	P Peters	P Peters	P Peters	P Peters



Bridge Club Roster (7PM to 8.30PM)

24.03.09 R. Swan; D. Hardham

31.03.09 D Hardham; J. Harris

07.04.09 J Harris; P Buxton

Bulletin

Rotary Club of Prahran



Meets Monday

Mt Erica Hotel

Corner High Street and Williams

Prahran

12.45 For 1PM Luncheon

Website: www.rotaryprahran.org

Email: prahran@districtrotary9800.org.au

Prahran Chartered 27th December 1955

President	Peter Schneider
Vice President	Graeme Newton
Secretary	Helen Robbins
Treasurer	John Harris
Bulletin Editor	Pike Peters

No. 2353 Monday 23rd March 2009

Catherine Cocks – Environmental Office – City of Stonnington

12.45 for 1.00 PM – Mt Erica Hotel

Reception: C Southall

Cashier: T McCarthy

Nerissa Mapes – Perspectives on Parkinson's



Nerissa Mapes is an attractive, vital and articulate woman who surprised and informed all at the meeting on Monday.

Nerissa shared her personal journey with Parkinson's Disease:

Her Grandmother was diagnosed with Parkinson's some 12 years ago. Nerissa is away working in London – and is not certain if this is a death sentence. As she says she later learns that one 'dies with Parkinson's, not from it'. Nonetheless she is shocked upon

returning home that her once vital grandmother is now very much an old woman.

Nerissa then received her own diagnosis with Parkinson's at 28 Years old. Her initial reaction was one of shock: why is life still going when my life has been shocked to the core.

But life does go on and Nerissa has achieved a lot, including:

- Post Grad in Public Relations
- Own Foundation: Perspectives on Parkinson's

Nerissa found that her diagnosis was hard on friends and family., and had a huge impact on her relationships.

Her solution was to have a Party for Parkinson's – asked friends for \$20 donation; didn't have to do a thing – they catered, brought alcohol and raised \$1,000 which was the start of *Perspectives on Parkinson's*.

- Started in March 2007 – since then raised \$60,000
- The next step for the foundation is to establish the Nerissa Mapes Scholarship for a PhD in Parkinson's research.

Before her diagnosis there were some symptoms: buttons, bows, using cutlery – getting out of house took an hour. Then once in a shop Nerissa was trying on a top; she got it on fine, but it took 15 minutes to get it off. She was a 60 words a minute typist, but slowed as she lost the ability on left side.

Her GP thought it was nerve damage so he sent her to neurologist. This proved to be a blessing in taking only 2 to 3 months to get diagnosis.

But the experience with the specialist left a lot to be desired. He provided no information and had the worst bedside manner Nerissa has ever experienced.

Since her diagnosis, Nerissa has worked very hard to raise awareness and to raise funds. She was the first ever Parkinson's Unity walk ambassador; this walk will take place this year in Melbourne on the 31st August.

Here in Australia this is a hidden disease; in the US there are a couple of high profile sufferers in Michael J Fox or Muhammad Ali.

Nerissa in fact was heading to Parliament House the day after our meeting for a launching of a GP awareness program. Parkinson's is a disease where the symptoms are controlled by medication that replaces or masks the lack of dopamine in the system. She currently takes 4 tablets once a day; a friend takes 33. This happens as the dopamine disappears. The reduction is about 30% less when symptoms start showing and the decline continues.

For Nerissa early symptoms were a slowness of movement. About 70% of Parkinson's patients have a tremor – Nerissa doesn't.

The way forward includes stem cell research. Nerissa states that Obama is her hero for re-opening research in the USA.

Nerissa has already received a Rotary Shine on Award. Our Club proudly made a donation to *Perspectives on Parkinson's* on the day of Nerissa's talk to the Club.

Roberta Williams: \$35,500 raised for the Great Australian Bike Ride!



Roberta Gordon returned to our Club to update us on her incredible fundraising effort which sees her tally at \$35,500 for Australian Rotary Health, even before she rides around Australia!

She also mentioned that our Club donation was the amount that meant she funded her new bike – we wish Roberta the best of luck for this terrific, high-profile fundraiser for Australian Rotary Health!

More Conference Capers:

Geoff Heeps recounted that his highlight was using the spa bath, which wasn't filled enough and drenched the bathroom at the Sebel.

Stephen Smith went for a 'jog' with Angus from Rotary Club of Footscray. He and Angus carried umbrellas and consumed along the way:

Chips, a souvlaki, Pluto dogs, and two pints of Guinness!



Get Well Soon!



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Lewis Woolf will have open-heart surgery this week. We wish him a speedy recovery .

Always Remember – Rotary rocks!

