



ROTARY CLUB OF BLACKWOOD

Chartered 14th September 1970



DISTRICT 9520

MEETING NOTES FROM 5th January 2010

INVOCATION AND TOAST

Sgt Graham Roberts opened the joint meeting of the Blackwood Rotary Club (meeting number 2013) and the Mitcham Rotary Club (meeting 2434) at 6.35 pm and asked **Helen Henbest** to give the Invocation and Toast.

PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Cherilyn:-

- Welcomed everyone, made special mention of guest speaker Geoff Thomas and guests Marlene Lehmann, May Thomas and Peter Trumble and wished all a happy new year

President Andrew Atterton:-

- Indicated that the members of the Mitcham club were pleased to be here

MAKE-UPS

During his 14 weeks overseas, **Bernie Morgan** made one visit to the Rotary Club of Vila Carrao, Sao Paulo. He presented President Cherilyn with a banner autographed by all members of that Rotary Club.

FOR THE GOOD OF ROTARY

Sue Wymond reminded us of the:-

- bowls night on Wednesday 20th January 2010 at the Happy Valley Bowling Club
- BBQ at the skate park had been rescheduled to the 30th January. Volunteers are required to help
- Shelter Box meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd March



SERGEANTS SESSION

Sgt Graham Roberts levied a total of 19 fines and one cross fine which raised a total of \$82.30. This was split 50:50 with Mitcham.

GUEST SPEAKER

Helen Henbest introduced the guest speaker **Geoff Thomas** who spoke on Modern Day Agriculture. Helen noted that Geoff was a former president of the Rotary club of Blackwood, a Paul Harris fellow and a fellow of the Institute of Agricultural Science. He was educated at the Universities of Adelaide and Melbourne



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Geoff gave us insights to his early childhood, being raised on a small farm at Pinnaroo that his father purchased in 1920. He also emphasised the importance of agriculture to the Australian economy now and in the past.

Key points:-

- Today agriculture generates 40% of GDP. Agriculture is also relatively stable (more stable than mining) and provides food stability.
- Australia was a world leader in agricultural research, production and distribution but now agricultural research 'is a mess'. Need to be smart to be a farmer these days.
- The scene has changed, e.g. the average farm size has increased from 20 acres to 12,000 acres. Farmers are now smarter with better technology, e.g. GPS – but all this comes at a price. Typical land price for 18,000 acres is \$9 million with a further \$4 million in plant and stock and a typical farmer commits \$1 million pa.
- Now it is all about profit and how to manage risk, drought and seasonal uncertainty.
- The impact of agriculture on climate change – there is a fine balance between agriculture and environment.
- Politicians stuff it up – government policy is based on the popular view. Politicians have lost the plot as have forgotten where the wealth is coming from. Government policy is more important than climate change.

Costs will increase (e.g. methane carbon credits).

Keys for agriculture and the rural communities that rely on agriculture:-

- Transport costs
- Communications

PRESIDENT'S LAST WORDS

President Cherylyn Fleming

- Thanked the guest speaker, guests and the Mitcham Rotary Club
- Announced that the speaker at the next meeting would be Cory Pearson, GSE representative who went to Colorado, USA
- Closed the meeting at 8.31 pm

