

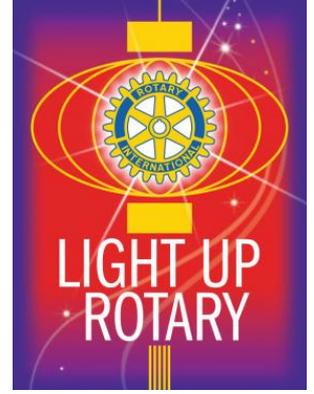


# The Rotary Club of Whangarei

(Chartered 1925)

District 9910

Chronicle for 10 December 2014



## *Int President Gary C.K. Huang*

President – Gail Taylor, Secretary- Alison Rossiter, Treasurer - Peter Bayne, Chronicle - Andrew Bax, Community – Andrew Bax, International - Roger Barber, Programme –Mike Elrick, Almoner - George Wilson, Historian - Lloyd Morris, Website - Andrew Bax, Board Member – Bill Rossiter, Board Member – Maurice Schicker, District Governor – Bruce Rasmussen, Assistant Governor – Rosemary Meyer

### **President Gail welcomed members and guests to the Christmas meeting.**

**Apologies :** Alison, Maurice,

Guests were introduced and welcomed, it was good to see some old friends at the meeting. Jim Kilpatrick commented that he hope we continue the tradition of inviting past members and spouses, he very much appreciates the lunch.

Thanks to Gail for organising the meal and co-ordinating the various plates, everyone enjoyed the lunch.

A big thank you to Pat for once again providing the hamper raffle, Mike did his usual sales act and put the pressure on punters to buy tickets. After Gerry Kerr insisted that she win, I got her to make the draw. Rodger B was the winner.

**Pat Carol gave us an address:-**

## Rotary Christmas 2014

The Grinch is not a fiction of children's books. The Grinch can be found in Government, in schools, in town halls, in supermarkets, on national radio, wherever we are banned from listening to Christmas music, putting up coloured lights, spraying artificial snow on windows, eliminating Christmas dinner as a cost saver, creating a nativity play for the end of term, having a glass of wine or a beer on the beach with the Christmas barbie or any one of a dozen things we knew to be Christmas and are now regulated into a fading memory. Where unlike my childhood days Labour laws ensure there is no standard, two week holiday for the workers and where very often kids get their presents, not on Christmas day but from the boxing day sales when everyone gets a bargain.

So what's wrong with that you ask? Well nothing really, if that's what you want. And obviously many do. And we had better get used to what is now an established way at Christmas. But it does carry the strong possibility that in the huge commercial blowout the whole point of Christmas will be missed. A point imbedded in a story born at a time when there was the strongest ever need for peace and hope in a world of extreme sectarian violence, greed, slaughter, terror, ethnic cleansing and universal hate, in the world of the East where it all began and where it is now, and must it be forever?

Let's hope that what we have left is enough for celebration and some reflection and an opportunity to act on the meaning of the season; to share something whether it be a present or our presence.

In our family, we do celebrate, we do the traditional stuff, the tree, the turkey, the gifts, the family gathering, church, candles and whatever the kids want to do in the afternoon. It's similar but also very different in lots of ways from my childhood experience of Christmas but so it must be. The special treat for Christmas night for us as kids, was going to bed with the latest girls own omnibus and being allowed to read for ages. It's not quite the same with an ipad, tho just as absorbing, if our own grandchildren are

any guide. Our grandchildren attend a school where the nativity story is still seen as the essential value of Christmas and so we have enjoyed some end of year events around that with them.

And in their lives is reflected the fundamental differences between what we knew as children and what they live in NZ today. Differences in a way of life where the interpretation of Christmas is within an increasingly multicultural society. Where there are very different ethnicities and ideologies. While Helen Clark pointed out that in its laws and customs, NZ is a Christian Society, the fact is, that increasing numbers of our population are not. We have fervent Hindus, Muslims, Jews and a variety of other theologies. They have their Diwali, and Hanukkah, their Chinese New year, their own festivals of light, peace and renewal. Many have come from the kind of terror that forced Mary Joseph and Jesus to flee their homeland. They celebrate Christmas as well. Many of them see better than their Christian neighbours the value in announcing the message of peace and hope together; in unity, strength.

So where is this ramble leading. Mike and I enjoy the memories of our childhood Christmases, but we love watching the grandchildren with their young Indian, Korean, Irish, and Chinese neighbours and friends, in school and out, participating in the various celebrations of peace and light all representing the Christmas message, however we call it, and there is nothing more delightful than a little smiling Chinese shepherd, head wrapped in a teatowel, standing beside the crib, or Jasmine Sanderson Elrick dressed in a Sari dancing at Diwali.

We reckon the world is not a bad place where we can recognise Christmas in such as these. If these kids can do these things together, then they can certainly grow up to build their new world together.

And as to the extras, the frills we love, and they insist we get down out of the attic every Christmas, the minute we need resource consent to put up our tree on our deck is the moment I march on city hall and parliament..Enough is Enough,----.beware the Grinch!

<b>Duty Roster (a.m – 11:30 for noon, p.m. – 5:30 for 6:00pm)</b>			
<b>Lunch first, dinner second – 1<sup>st</sup> Wed lunch 2<sup>nd</sup> dinner etc</b>			
<b>Notify Club of apologies – 4387429 (by Tuesday)</b>			
<b>Duties</b>	<b>28 Jan (am)</b>	<b>4 Feb (am)</b>	<b>Hospital</b>
<b>Speaker</b>	BBQ Lunch	Lunch Forum	Gail
<b>Host</b>	Everyone	None	
<b>Thanks</b>	None	None	
<b>Reception</b>	Everyone	None	
<b>Parting Thought</b>	Gail	Rodger	

Parting Thought from Andrew

It's true, Christmas can feel like a lot of work, particularly for mothers. But when you look back on all the Christmases in your life, you'll find you've created family traditions and lasting memories. Those memories, good and bad, are really what help to keep a family together over the long haul.

**Caroline Kennedy**