



## Rotary Club of Maungakiekie Bulletin / Newsletter NL 218

16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**Apologies:** Phil Aish, George Arulanantham, Shameen Hyatt, Gary Hay7s, Robin Halford, Jeanette Thorne, George Varghese, Tony Bradley.

Tonight's Meeting was Chaired by Craig Jones who welcomed our Guest Speaker Sandra Tanner and reminded us of Changeover dinner on Monday the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

**Guest Speaker:** Sandra Tanner was introduced by Alan Bannin.

"It is s my pleasure to introduce Sandra who comes to us from Rotorua, Devonport, Snells Beach, and various other places which she'll probably tell us about.

Anyway, we're pleased to have you speak to us tonight, Sandra, and we're looking forward to what you have to say about your journey to Freewalks NZ and a proposal that the Club is working towards. Thank you."

**Sandra** thanked everyone for the invitation to speak to them tonight.

Sandra shared her diverse and eventful life journey, highlighting her experiences across various roles and locations. From her early years in Hamilton to her educational struggles, Sandra's story illustrated a path marked by a series of transitions influenced by her family and personal choices. Her journey took her from secretarial college to the workforce at Takapuna City Council, where she developed a keen interest in technology, particularly in computer systems, foreshadowing her later ventures into digital business.

As Sandra explored her professional landscape, she recounted her overseas adventures, starting with her role as a nanny in the U.S., which she approached with unexpected discipline. Her time in England led to a marriage and a successful stint in corporate finance, despite her initial unfamiliarity with the field. This phase culminated in a return to New Zealand, where she partnered with her mother to create a business focused on homemade jams and chutneys. The introduction of an online sales platform marked a significant shift in her entrepreneurial journey, as it opened up new markets, including international orders from expatriates.

The implications of Sandra's experiences extend beyond personal achievements; they reflect broader themes of adaptability and innovation. Her ventures are characterized by a willingness to embrace new technologies and market opportunities, as seen in her creation of both a restaurant guide and a directory for walks in New Zealand. This adaptability is particularly notable as she navigated setbacks, such as the failed restaurant guide in Fiji, ultimately leading her to successfully establish an online travel agency. These experiences underscore the importance of resilience and the ability to pivot in the face of challenges.

In addition to her business pursuits, Sandra's personal life is intertwined with her professional narrative. Her relationships, particularly with her long-term partner Gary and later with Alan, reveal a balance between career ambitions and personal connections. Sandra's story also highlights significant life changes, including her

mother's illness and the impact of COVID-19 on her living situation, illustrating how personal circumstances can shape one's professional trajectory.

In conclusion, Sandra's life story is a rich tapestry of experiences that showcased her entrepreneurial spirit, adaptability, and commitment to personal growth. From her humble beginnings to her current endeavours in digital business and travel, her journey emphasizes the value of seizing opportunities and learning from setbacks. Sandra's narrative serves as an inspiration for others, illustrating that a fulfilling life can be crafted through diverse experiences and a willingness to embrace change. The Club is currently working towards establishing a Local "Joy of Walking" project and evaluating working with Sandra's 'Freewalks.NZ' business.

Sandra was thanked for her address by Bill Grayson.

**Tony Rayner** referenced a PowerPoint presentation to assist in evaluation of Sandra's proposal. The proposal revolves around Sandra, a knowledgeable website developer with a passion for walking, who aims to establish a community-focused walking program. Sandra has extensive experience creating a directory of over 500 walking routes across New Zealand through her Free Walks platform. The initiative seeks to leverage her technological expertise and love for the outdoors to enhance local community engagement in the One Tree Hill, Maungakiekie, and Epsom areas. This program is designed not merely as a tour business but as a compilation of accessible walking routes to encourage exploration and promote health within the community.

The project includes the creation of a dedicated section on Sandra's Free Walks website, titled "the joyofwalking.nz." This area will feature self-guided walks tailored specifically to the Rotary Maungakiekie brand, allowing users to discover new paths while simultaneously fostering a connection to the club. The platform will facilitate the collection of interested participants data, enabling outreach for potential memberships. Additionally, users will have the opportunity to engage with various community activities, such as photo competitions and challenges that encourage exploration, thereby enhancing their walking experience and involvement.

Further context reveals the numerous benefits and challenges associated with this initiative. On the positive side, it aligns with Rotary's strategic goals of promoting community health and engagement. The program is designed to be flexible, allowing participants to walk at their convenience while using an app to record their walks and share new routes. However, there are concerns about how effectively this initiative will convert community engagement into new memberships, as well as the financial implications of ongoing operational costs. Understanding these dynamics will be crucial for the project's success.

Exploring the broader implications, the walking program not only aims to attract local residents, particularly families, but also has the potential for replication by other Rotary clubs across New Zealand. By distributing promotional materials in various local establishments, the initiative could further engage the community and raise awareness about local walking opportunities. This approach may resonate well with younger families eager for outdoor activities, thus fostering a sense of community and encouraging healthier lifestyles.

In conclusion, the collaboration between Sandra and Rotary Maungakiekie represents an innovative approach to community engagement through walking. While the initiative presents numerous opportunities for enhancing local health and connection, careful consideration of the operational model and marketing strategies will be essential. By leveraging Sandra's expertise and the collective goals of the Rotary club, this project could serve as a valuable resource for both members and the wider community, ultimately promoting a culture of walking and exploration.

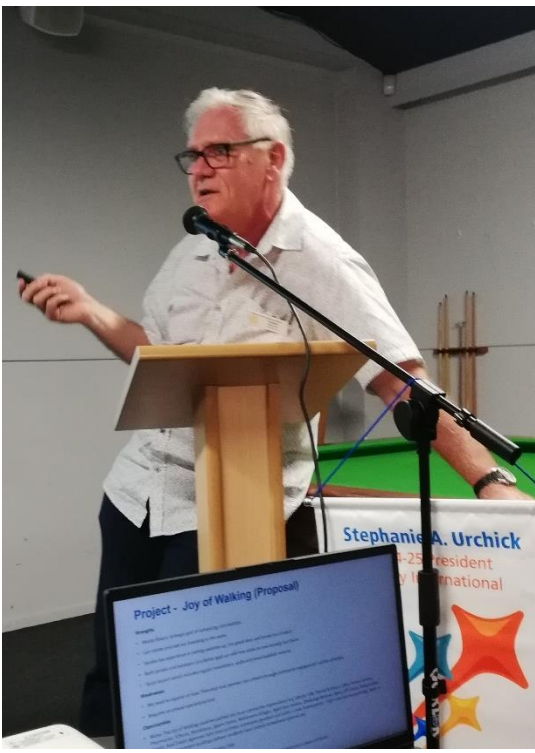
**Barry Stafford** discussed the potential benefits of launching community initiatives, to attract younger members to a local club. Barry reflected on a missed opportunity to attend a relevant seminar but gained insights from the materials provided, particularly a successful case from a Queensland club that effectively engaged younger demographics. This example raises the critical question of whether similar initiatives could enhance the club's reputation and broaden its appeal to a younger audience, emphasizing the need for experimentation and innovation in community outreach.

Two key arguments support the proposition of implementing a community activity. First, Barry referenced the concept of "park run," a popular global initiative where individuals participate in organized running events. These gatherings not only promote physical fitness but also foster community spirit, drawing significant attendance. By tapping into the success of such initiatives, the local club could create a welcoming environment for younger individuals and families looking for accessible leisure activities. As the community undergoes demographic shifts, the emphasis on physical engagement through activities like walking could serve as a valuable tool for attracting new members.

Barry also highlighted the growing suburban landscape, which is experiencing development and an influx of younger residents. This demographic shift presents an opportunity for the club to position itself as a central hub for community engagement. Walking, being an easy and inclusive form of exercise, is identified as a primary activity that can engage a wide audience without requiring specialized equipment. Such initiatives could provide valuable data on community interest and participation, which can be utilized to tailor future outreach efforts.

Additionally, the digital nature of modern initiatives was discussed as a means to appeal to younger generations. The use of technology not only facilitates organization but also minimizes the burden on club members to maintain records and communications. This approach aligns with the preferences of younger demographics, who are often more engaged with digital platforms.

Barry advocated for the exploration of community initiatives aimed at fostering engagement and inclusivity. By promoting activities like walking and leveraging successful models from other regions, the club could enhance its reputation and attract younger members. The discussion underlines the importance of adaptability and innovation in community outreach, encouraging a proactive approach to meet the evolving needs of the community. Engaging with the younger demographic not only benefits the club but also contributes positively to the broader community, fostering a spirit of cooperation and support.



Thought for the week: Gwynyth Carr.

*Bill Gates said he chooses a lazy person to do a hard job, as a lazy person will find an easy way to do them.*

Next week: 23<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

**Guest Speaker:** Rob Woodley, General Manager of the Blues Charitable Trust.

Duties Monday night....

President Craig

Attendance Lloyd

Hospitality Alan

Scribe Bill A

Meals Gwynyth, Rob

Host Bill G

Thanks Gary

Thought For The Week Paul.

*Apologies to Noel before 5pm Friday*

***Smile: It makes people wonder what you have been up to!***

For those who didn't know where  
this fashion came from 😊



**The irony for mankind  
is that a computer  
program asks a human  
to prove that they're  
not a robot.**

**Marriage is a  
relationship where one  
person is always right  
and the other person is  
the husband.**



## MAUNGAKIEKIE ROTARY CHANGEOVER 2025

### CHAAHAT INDIAN CUISINE RESTAURANT

President Craig warmly invites you and your partner to a totally different venue this year! With tasty **but** mild Indian food, located at central Greenwoods Corner, Epsom members can attest to the quality of the food!

- ❖ Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 6pm for 6.30pm
- ❖ Located at 3/583 Manukau Road, Epsom  
behind The Emerald (formerly the old ASB Building)
- ❖ Parking available in local side streets.
- ❖ Cost \$45 pp includes wine, beer and juice
- ❖ Set menu with starters and mains
- ❖ RSVP to Gwynyth please [gwynythcarr@hotmail.com](mailto:gwynythcarr@hotmail.com)

By Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June



Rotary Maungakiekie Bulletin Editor: Bill Appleton  
[bill.appleton.ri@gmail.com](mailto:bill.appleton.ri@gmail.com)

End note:

***Marathon runners with bad footwear suffer the agony of defeat***