

# Rotary Club of Howrah

Theme 2023-2024



## Bulletin

Chartered 5th June, 1976

**President:** Reg Emmett  
**Secretary:** Robyn Harrison  
**Bulletin Editor:** Rob Warren

**People Of Action In And For Our Community.**

**Thursday 22nd February 2024**

**“Behind the Badge” Jill Wright, then Isabel Webb - Her NYSF Experience.**

### **BOB HARDY AND MARK SALTER - TAS. BERRY INDUSTRY ...**

Our guest speakers were Rotarian Bob Hardy and Mark Salter from the Tasmanian Fruit Growers Berry Industry and they spoke about the fruit industry in Tasmania. Mark is also a member of the Rotary Club of Spring Bay.

Bob spoke first on the background of the industry which began in Tasmania 58 years ago. In 1963 53,000 tonnes of fruit were harvested including many old varieties of apples and blackcurrants, most of which was exported to England. During 1973 England entered the European Union which had a negative impact on the market for our fruit. The collapse of the apple market was swift.

With the demise of apples, the berry fruit market also collapsed except for blackberries. A new berry fruit industry began with the Cambridge Research Block being developed in 1984 looking into cherries. The Irrigation System was expanded in Tasmania allowing for a dramatic increase in cherries, strawberries with their production in Tasmania during the summer and Queensland in Winter giving Australia all year round fresh strawberries.



## **MORE FROM BOB & MARK .....**

Mark works for Fruit Growers of Tas. as Berry Industry Development Officer and is a fourth generation member of his family to be involved in the industry.



During 2020-2021 the farm gate value of the industry was \$209 million each year and growing. In 2010 Costa and Driscolls formed a partnership and along with Perfection Fruits (Aust), Smart Berries (Aust) and Berry World (UK) a large expansion occurred in Tasmania. These companies developed plant genetics, technical advice, marketing programs. Some of these companies have over 50ha of fruits growing.

Raspberries and blackberries in Tasmania provide 2,800 tonnes or 29% of the national production. Strawberries with 3,300 tonnes per year equal 4% nationally with blueberries at 2,200 tonnes per year being 6% nationally. High tunnels are now used for a more protected crop which are computer controlled with a hydroponic irrigation system. Now 90% of Tasmanian crops are being grown under tunnels. Raspberries and strawberries are grown in coir which is coconut husk from India and Sri Lanka.

The industry now has smaller volume growers using varieties of particularly blueberries. Seventy blueberry growers in Tasmania grow on 2ha or less each. The industry employs 6,000 during harvest with labour primarily from Tonga, Timor Leste, backpackers and locals. Berries are picked by hand, cool stored, packed and re cool stored on site and can be to markets in 24 hours generally. Tasmania has small volumes exported to South East Asia. New technologies are being developed to use improved recycling methods, fewer chemicals, the increased use of beneficial insects and other biological control measures. Mechanical harvesting is being tried with robots picking strawberries and using AI to predict yield and fruit quality making the industry more efficient. Questions were asked about the amount of wastage of fruit. Mark said a quantity is used for jams etc. Also query about Blueberry Rust which is controlled in winter.

Chair Richard thanked the speakers and presented Mark with a pen as a memento.

## HERE AND THERE .....

- President Reg reminded all that next week the club will a Behind the Badge Talk by Rotarian Jill Wright followed by Isobel Webb who will be speaking about her experience at National Youth Science Forum held in January 2024. NYSF was developed by Rotary but is now an independent organisation but is still supported by Rotary.
- Treasurer Gayle reported that the Financial statement for January 2024 has been sent to members and she is happy to answer any questions members night have.
- As mentioned previously the Sandy Bay Rotary Club is having a social bowls night on Monday 29th April at Howrah Bowls Club ( indoors). Howrah Rotary members are invited to come along for a fun social night of bowls and fellowship. It is not a fundraiser!! More info and discussion later.

**WHERE**            **Howrah Bowls Club – Indoor Centre**

**WHEN**            **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 5.30pm – 10.00 pm**

**COST**             **\$20 per head**



**Fun Night of Bowls – Bowls provided by Club. Trophies and spot prizes. Lucky Door Prize. Pizzas. BYO salad and desert (to share). Bar open**

**RAFFLE WINNERS:** First draw of the raffle was won by Shirin who gave her sister in law the choice of chocolates (to be collected next week as the Secretary had left them at home). Second prize went to Anne Reeves who once again selected the red wine because she is still back at school.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY .....

“We acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather and acknowledge Elders – past and present of Lutruwita”.



## DIARY OF EVENTS ...

### FEBRUARY

**Thurs.22nd** Behind the Badge - Jill Wright & Isabel Webb - NYSF Experience.

**Fri. 23rd** Friday Drinks @ the Bellerive Yacht Club. 5.00pm. To be confirmed.

**Thurs. 29th** John Sargent - History of the Derwent River ferries.

### MARCH

**Thurs. 7th** Club Assembly

**Wed. 13th** Coffee Club - Local Grocer Cambridge Park 10.00 am.

**Thurs. 14th** TBA

**Thurs. 21st** Veena and Denis Tilley - Fiji Project

**Thurs. 28th** \*\*\* NO MEETING - EASTER\*\*\*

### APRIL

**Thurs. 4th** Club Assembly

## DUTY ROSTER ....

Date	Greeter/Chair	Registration	Duty Officers
22nd Feb	Anne	Ankita & Helen	Peter L. & Bob
29th Feb	George	Shirin & Leeanne	David T. & Terry
7th Mar.	Reg	Sue S. & Ishwari	Rob & Richard
14th Mar.	David H.	Deb & Jill	Karin & Susie

## ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

Members who **are unable** to attend Thursday meetings **OR** those who **do not require** a meal should **contact SHIRIN before lunchtime on Tuesdays.**  
Contact SHIRIN at [smp@internode.on.net](mailto:smp@internode.on.net) **or 0466790991.**