



RGYC FOUNDATION

Assisting Royal Geelong Yacht Club to foster the sport of sailing & give back to our community

FOURTH QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER APRIL 8th 2024

In my last Quarterly Newsletter in December I wrote of the anticipation and preparatory activities for the approaching receipt of Robbie Miler's bequest. I reported then that we had been involved with our selected wealth managers – Ord Minnett – in establishing Policies and Procedures for the investment of our total capital (now nearly \$750,000) for long term growth and annual returns. It is certainly not the intention of the Trustees to spend madly and we have locked in place Rules to identify the upper limits so that the capital cannot be touched and will keep giving for generations to come. Trustees can distribute up to 80% of the interest and dividends earned in any financial year. At this stage we will not be spending that much as we are still very focussed on building the capital to a meaningful sum.

On Friday 19th January a cheque for \$500,000 was presented by Rick Emerson and Glenn McAllister (Robbie Miller's executors) to the RGYC Foundation in front of a good gathering of RGYC Foundation Members, RGYC Members and the RGYC Cadet Fleet and families who had recently returned from a successful Australian Championship series in Hobart. It was pleasing that the Cadets were present as they are likely to be some of the first beneficiaries of the earnings from Robbie's bequest.

Currently in our budget for 2024/5 we have earmarked \$11,000 to go towards the sponsorship of one of the recently purchased RS 21's, initially for 12 months but with options to extend. This boat will have RGYC FOUNDATION branding and, within the contract, there are some opportunities for use of the fleet (6 boats) on a limited number of occasions. Watch this space for some exciting opportunities for engagement. This initiative by the Sailing Development Committee, driven by Alison Goodfellow, Brendan Garner and Drew Malcolm, has sparked a significant level of interest and has engaged a good number of young RGYC Members who might in the past have moved away with their studies and not been seen around the club for many years. In terms of junior Member retention it looks like a winner!

On Thursday 4th April, almost a year to the day since Robbie's passing, we held the inaugural Robbie Miller Dinner in the Main Lounge of RGYC with Robbie's plaque, photograph and Life Member's Certificate in "his" corner. My apologies again for bringing the event forward by one day but doing what we wanted to do was not going to mesh with the usual RGYC Members' night activities. I was pleased to present a Foundation Member Certificate to Mark Neilson, our latest Member, at the start of the evening.

We were blessed with about 80 in attendance with many non-Foundation members coming along to hear our guest speaker, Tony Mowbray. Tony talked of his major yachting voyages and survival in the 1998 Sydney-Hobart disaster, a solo, unassisted, and non-stop circumnavigation of the globe and a trip to Mawson's Hut in Antarctica with four non-sailors. He held most of us spellbound and an hour passed very quickly. Tony also spoke of his "five words", usually spoken about in his motivational speeches on the corporate circuit, DREAM,

THINK, TALK, COMMIT, ACTION and related them to the process of the development of his journeys from idea to reality. He drew significant parallels with the progress of the RGYC Foundation.

Andrew Balaam, Chair of the Board of Cottage-by-the-Sea and co-founder of Samaritan House, then spoke briefly of the importance of philanthropy in our community and its growth over the last ten years. He spoke of the “donor benefit proposition” - that the donor gains from giving and he also noted the trend that donors want to see change from their gifts in their lifetime.

In closing the evening, I thanked those whose good work had made the evening a success; Tony Mowbray, Michael and Jess Payne of Tucker’s funeral and Bereavement services and Paul Loughnan of European Affair. All of these are in support of the RGYC Foundation because they see and appreciate what we are trying to do. Tony massively reduced his usual speaking fee and covered his own transport and accommodation costs and we received donations from Tuckers and European affair. Nigel Newton and Katie of The Yot were tireless and incredibly helpful with all of the arrangements and the meal was scored 10/10 by the many who commented on it to me so “WELL DONE” to the new chef, Jeremy. Thanks to Lynne Johnston whose attention to our side of the dinner arrangements was superb. Emily, Ash and Daniella of the RGYC Office were thanked for their assistance especially as they were dealing with significant changes in their office. Jan Neeson happily took on the task of photographer for the evening and we thank her for that.

Tying in with Tony’s FIVE WORDS, I reflected on the conviction, commitment and action that Robbie, Ruth Plummer and others had, and the energy that they put into establishing the Foundation is recognised and rewarded by Robbie’s bequest. I feel very strongly that this should be a stimulus for us all to rejuvenate, reinvigorate and reactivate the Foundation. Robbie’s bequest allows us to open up some difficult discussions and move through to action in support of the Foundation. At each table place there was an RGYC Foundation Action Envelope containing an explanatory sheet on Memberships, Donations, Wills and Bequests which explained the “how to” in simple terms including a sample codicil form so that bequests can be made without the need for a total re-write of a Will – a fact not recognised by many. Hard copies are available from our Hon. Secretary but can also be provided electronically on request.

I think of people who have passed away over the past ten years and I know that many of them would have left a sum – small or large – to the Foundation had they been asked. These are difficult conversations and so they don’t happen BUT I want you all to feel that you HAVE been asked. I have enclosed a CODICIL form in the ACTION ENVELOPE because I get comments that donors don’t want to re-write their Will- a simple codicil is an amendment and does not need a total re-write.

We continue to look to the future with optimism. We see the potential for an increase in memberships, resources, community contacts and influences and a growing sense of the Foundation’s importance in our community. It is a future that all Foundation Members can contribute towards, particularly by each and every one of us looking around and raising the possibility of talking with others about joining us in the RGYC Foundation.

We have not set the date for our Annual General Meeting but will do so shortly and advise you of it. Meanwhile, good health and happiness to you all!

Jonathan Apted

Chair of Trustees

