On Thursday about 15 members of our Club attended the funeral of Tom Brown. Bruce Nichols delivered a fine eulogy about Tom the Rotarian and the man who came from USA to Australia at age 81. Janet expressed her gratitude to us all for joining the celebration of his life.

Earlier on Thursday, Geoff Cook, Barbara Little, Noel Sturgeon and myself met with Helen Marotta, a representative from the Ivanhoe Grammar School. She has wonderful ideas about projects for the school in which we could become involved, including our New Generations, Community and International Committees. She will address our Club in the new year.

A reminder for those attending the progressive dinner: we are starting at 5.30 at Bussaracum Thai at 223 Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe.
My name is Bruce Nichols, and I am a member of the Rotary Club of Heidelberg. I am speaking on behalf of our President, Tony Bowlen, and all our members. I have only known Tom since he joined our Club in 2011, but from the outset, it was evident that Tom was a dedicated Rotarian, who lived his life following Rotary ideals. After knowing Tom for some time, I learned that he had nursed his late wife Patricia, though a long illness.

Tom served in Rotary for a total of 45 years as he was a member of The Rotary Club of Tracy, California for 38 years. He was awarded a Sapphire Paul Harris Fellowship for his work in that Club.

We were very fortunate that Tom decided to come to Australia to marry Janet, because as a result, we gained a very fine Rotarian. This stroke of good fortune came about, because Janet was a client of our President, Tony Bowlen. Many here may not know that Tom served in the United States Navy for 24 years and was an officer in the Marines. I once made the mistake of referring to that role in the past tense, and Tom corrected me by saying, “once a Marine, always a Marine.”

Tom was a keen golfer and member of the Rosanna Golf Club, where he played regularly. Tom was also a car enthusiast and I think he had quite a collection in the US. I recall the first car he bought in Australia was a Subaru Forester. He then replaced that with a BMW convertible and he bought a Saab for Janet.

Tom was a very enthusiastic member of our Club, participating in all the service activities, and he and Janet joined in the Club’s social events. Tom served at the front desk at our weekly meetings, where he welcomed us, received our payments and recorded our attendance. Whenever there was hands-on work to do, such as a BBQ or Golf day, Tom was there with a ready smile. He always had a 100% attendance record, until his health declined, and even then he made every effort to get to meetings.

Tom suffered a major stroke and a number of falls, which resulted in several spells in hospital and a time incapacitated at home. He was forever courageous and cheerful, and always made light of his ill health and injuries.

If Tom had one fault, it was that he put too much salt on his own meals. However, despite that, Tom was a good cook and on more than one occasion I was invited to join Tom and Janet for a roast dinner; and the odd glass of wine. It was on such occasions, and later, that I saw how much love Tom and Janet had for each other, and how Janet lovingly cared for Tom during his illness.

Tom was a good friend to all in our Club and we will miss him greatly.

BN
PDG Keppel Turnour OAM PHF, being presented with a letter signed by RI President Ian Riseley, to recognise Keppel's remarkable contribution to Rotary over a period of 60 years.
Graham was born in Coburg and as his father died before he was three, his mother, grandmother and “Uncle Mick” were key figures in his life. He has fond memories of primary school at Pascoe Vale South and secondary school at Strathmore High School. He was very fond of watching old movies and enjoyed the beach. This could account for the long blond hair he had at that time!

Graham started his working career as a payroll clerk at Melbourne University. He studied accounting at Swinburne, initially part-time and later full time. He then worked at Telecom’s Victorian head office at Cromwell house for twelve years and after studying IT he joined Telstra where he specialised in Lotus 123 and Excel. He had two boys Gareth and Miles with his wife Maree Chen, from whom he is now divorced. He is now a self-funded retiree and has occupied himself by renovating a house and travelling within Australia and to USA, Hong Kong, China, Europe and Bali.

His hobbies include photography, cooking and collecting cooking knives. His future plans are to become active in the Club and travel to Brazil to visit his eldest son, and later to Europe to visit his youngest son.

Ed