

# WORKERS UNITE WITH WHITE RIBBON

From its very inception, the Blacktown Workers Club relied on the support of its local community to build the Club from its foundations up. That support came in many forms: manpower, money, know how & a whole heap of time. What resulted is a Club with walls whose mortar is infused with the generous spirit of those early members.

The generosity has permeated throughout our 62 years of history. And the support flows both ways: members support the Club and Club supports the community.

Unfortunately, our community is in a crisis. FAMILY attitudes and religious obligations are contributing to the epidemic of domestic violence in our community with 38 instances of family violence reported in Blacktown every week. With more lives than we care to mention resulting in death.

In November 2012, Blacktown Workers Club General Manager, Neale Vaughan attended a local White Ribbon breakfast to show his ongoing support to encourage awareness for an issue which impacts not only just the local area but globally. Domestic Violence does not discriminate.

During the White Ribbon Breakfast meeting Neale was deeply affected by the story from a guest speaker whose sister had been killed through domestic violence and the devastating impact that such a loss has had on the whole family who had now been left to raise the victims two children. This would be the driving force behind the changes Blacktown Workers Club would undertake.

The White Ribbon Campaign began in Australia in 2003 and became a Foundation in 2007, its VISION...for all woman to live safely and free from domestic violence. Their MISSION is to educate and bring awareness to all people, especially men about the effects domestic violence has, not only on woman but children, families and loved ones.



*Neale Vaughan, Rosie Batty & Snr Constable Genelle Warne*

White Ribbon relies on the generosity of individuals, communities, business' and the Government to keep this great foundation going

In November 2013, Blacktown Workers Club were the major sponsor and host for the local annual White Ribbon Breakfast. Where along with the local police and domestic violence support agencies they continued to spread the word of awareness and need for change. 140 attendees supported the cause.

The goal for 2014 was to double the number of attendees to what has now become the premier White Ribbon Breakfast event. The Workers Club had become heavily involved in the White Ribbon Campaign, breaking barriers by being the first registered club to be participate in the White Ribbon Workplace Programme as well as raise funds for the cause in the City to Surf and PCYC events.

The Club urged fellow members to take join the cause and we saw 378 attendees attend the 2014 White Ribbon Breakfast. We could see the difference we were making but wanted to do more.



*BWC Staff*

The Annual White Ribbon Breakfast in 2015 was an overwhelmingly successful event. Channel 9 personality, Simon Bouda was the host to 717 attendees.

Rosie Batty, 2015 Australian of the Year spoke not only on her own personal loss but she inspired everyone to spread the word to encourage more men to be an element of White Ribbon and its significance so we can achieve abundance by standing together as one.

Andrew O'Keefe, a White Ribbon Ambassador of 12 years, explained how like a well maintain machine, every single person is important to make this great cause reach mountainous heights. Together as one we are the reason White Ribbon has been so successful in getting the words and actions executed so effectively.

To mark the event, we had a Hercules fly over proudly displaying a white ribbon. Close to \$100,000 was raised by people coming together, making a stand to say NO! to domestic violence.

The Workers Club received at the event their official accreditation as a White Ribbon Workplace and Neale Vaughan become a White Ribbon Ambassador.

In November 2016, the Clubs Annual White Ribbon Breakfast had over 550 guests attending including many special guests - Premier Mike Baird, Police Commissioner Andrew Scippione, Black-

town State Labour Representative John Robinson, Blacktown Deputy Mayor Tony Bleasdale and Neil Brae the CFO of Manly Warringah Rugby League. Also in attendance were TV personalities Andrew O'Keefe, Sarah Ferguson and Simon Bouda. We heard many moving stories which brought tears to our eyes, particularly when the boys from Bankstown Public School performed a song that sent out a strong message regarding domestic violence and included the line "you can be angry but still be a gentleman" - very simple but puts the message out there.

These events raise significant financial contributions for the White Ribbon Foundation, but the awareness to the campaign and pledge by attendees show that we are taking a stand against domestic violence.

