

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 26 October 2018

Rotary's Record-Breaking Achievement

Rotary punches above its weight yet again! It beat Iron Man's record of 5339 signatures on a card. All thanks to the thousands of people who visited its marquee at Floriade.

BACKGROUND

As a project of Rotary District 9710, a group of dedicated Rotarians gathered together to create a display at this year's Floriade. Recognising 90 years of service in Canberra, the team themed Rotary's exhibit around the celebration of this achievement. A party for all!

Given the enormous amount of work Rotary does throughout the world, it was appropriate that the display included over-sized items.

The decision by Rotary to play a prominent role over the course of the month paid off in spades.

The pop-up marquee set up within the grounds of the popular flower festival drew a steady stream of passers-by curious to learn more about the organisation's many community activities.

As in previous years, the **Gnomes on the Knoll** again proved a major drawcard to would-be Picasso's eager to pick up a paintbrush and give a pint-sized backyard statue a personalised touch.

But it wasn't the only attraction for those with an artistic bent. During Nightfest, a flashy mural created by visitors and the Rotaract team using glow-in-the-dark paint drew plenty of *oohs* and *aahs* once the sun went down and the ultraviolet lights came up.

Then during the day, it was the turn of a **huge two-tier birthday cake** (complete with candles) to win the hearts of the young. So convincing was the mock icing that many a little finger was seen prodding and poking just to be sure it wasn't real.

A **birthday card the size of office partitions** came equipped with marker pens and a challenge to beat the world record for signatures. Participants were not found wanting. A massive 11,515 were collected by the end of the festival – a suitably superhuman result considering the official record (less than 6,000 signatures) is held by Ironman himself, Robert Downey Jr.

Four large maps that were mounted around the marquee gave visitors the opportunity to record their home towns and the placement of hometown flags on a world map gave a striking indication of the multitude of nationalities who dropped by. Of the 762 visitors to the marquee who identified as coming from overseas, those from Asia and the sub-continent led the way over Europe and the Americas, but, the final number of different countries of origin topped 80.

Of course, there was also no shortage of domestic visitors from right across Australia stopping in for a chat and/or a surreptitious selfie.

The marquee also exceeded expectations in terms of piquing interest in potential new members

numbers. By the festival's end, a **District record of 112 people** had signed up with an interest to join Rotary. These included young people expressing enthusiasm about engaging with our local Rotaract clubs.

Obviously, this augurs well for the organisation. While the marquee might now have been dismantled, the signage packed away, and the flower beds well and truly picked clean, there is no doubting the effort put into this year's display was worthwhile and a credit to all concerned.

The valuable work of Rotary continues.

MEDIA CONTACT: For more images or interviews please contact

Steve Hill

Past District Governor, District 9710

M: 0412 854 047

E: sphill1617@gmail.com

Margaret Hassall

District Governor, District 9710

M: 0413 309 596

E: hassall.m@bigpond.com

Two sample of photos available on request (*Dropbox link will be supplied*):



2.5mH x 2mW cake



Rotarians with giant Card containing 11,515 signatures