



DISTRICT D9700
ROTARY FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE
NEWSLETTER
September 2015
DG – Gary Roberts



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What is Rotary Friendship Exchange? *The Friendship Exchange Program is an International exchange program for Rotarians and Rotary couples that provide participants with the opportunity to experience other cultures by staying in the homes of Rotarians, visiting their clubs and participating in the lifestyle/activities of their communities. The goals of the exchange are to advance international understanding and peace through visits across borders, as well as promote interclub relationships, fellowships and service projects. The Rotarians participating gain the opportunity to make long lasting friendships while exploring different areas of the world.*

What is happening in District 9700? Plans are underway for the visit in November of District 2380 Sweden. All of the team were members of the hosting group for the 9700 team to Sweden so it is exciting to know that we have successfully encouraged them to travel so far to visit us in return. Hosting towns are Orange, Cootamundra, Leeton/Narrandera & Wagga Wagga. Please take the opportunity to join in any activities with this group so you too can learn what a wonderful program RFE really is. District 4740 from Brazil will be visiting 9700 during late April early May 2016 with the reciprocal visit to their District taking place in September 2016. Strong interest has been received from both USA & Canada districts for 2016/2017 and approaches have been made to the UK & Germany.

ROTARY DISTRICT 9700 – Outbound Exchange to District 5360 Alberta Canada - 21st June 2015.

Team Members: John and Ann Fraser, Brant and Brenda Weily - Orange North, Geoff and Maria Bargwanna Orange, Debbie and John Schache - Bathurst Day-Break, Joan & Paul Graham - Narrandera, Dennis and Carol Bishop - Wagga Wagga Koorinal.

Our team visited four cities in the state of Alberta Canada. Our first host was **High River**, situated about 100km south of Calgary. We were introduced to their horse orientated culture by attending a rodeo where we saw the event highlight of Chuck Wagon racing (very exciting). They took us on a day trip to see some beautiful scenery and fauna. We were also there for changeover, which was an outdoor BBQ at a Rotarians home. There were over 100 people in attendance for this informal style official meeting.

After three days we moved on to **Rocky Mountain House** a town of 13,000 residents that was located in the mountains north east of Calgary. They have a very enthusiastic Club of approx. 28 members, lead whilst we were there, by Al Bergsma. Al was their RFE team leader when they visited us last year. Their club have a lady called Granny Alda who is like a 20 year old, but in fact is in her late eighties, she was such a character and a ball of life. We enjoyed a coach tour, picnic, cinnamon buns, wiener roast, pizza party, and lots of varied activities and great friendships.

Our next host Rotary Club was in the city of **Red Deer** directly north of Calgary. Canada Day (1st July) occurred whilst we were there, this is a tradition very much like Australia Day. We enjoyed a special breakfast of pancakes, maple syrup and bacon with much flag waving and generally a delightful time.

Our last host city was **Calgary**, just in time for the famous Calgary Stampede. What an event that was. With a fantastic street parade lasting several hours, a delicious breakfast in a car park next to the parade, then later that afternoon actually attending the Stampede. However the enjoyment was not over as on the next day we visited Spruce Meadow a brilliantly presented equestrian complex. We enjoyed show jumping at the highest level.

We visited the Rotary Club's of all our hosts and the team put together a presentation about our District 9700, often concluding with the sing of Waltzing Matilda. At our last meeting in Calgary we were made temporary cowboy citizens and were presented each with a hat to mark the occasion.

Once again, it was a great experience.

John Fraser RFE team Leader



This is a wonderful program! If you want to be part of it please get in touch as soon as possible with Lance or Robyn