

Rotary Club of Drouin

2024-25 Annual Report

President Michael Kelleher

Rotary
District 9815



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2024-25

The start to Rotary Year 2024 – 2025 was a steep learning curve for me and one that was made a lot easier because of the Board I had with me on the journey.

It was also the first year of newly amalgamated Rotary District 9815, and the first of the Regionalisation Pilot Project which meant we were now part of the "Strzeleki" community group, and we have actively contributed to projects agreed upon as "community projects" such as SkyHydrant to Timor Leste, spectacles to Vanuatu and saying "No to Domestic Violence". In hindsight this all enabled me to gain valuable input from other club Presidents

The first fund raiser for the year was the Baw Baw Shire Tree Planting "Sausage Sizzle" which while being successful in raising funds was held on a cold and rainy day which dampened community involvement.

On that subject it is ironic that in a year that has seen farmers forced to feed stock due to low rainfall, we have had to cancel 2 markets due to rain and had 3 that have been either rained or blown away with the famed Easterly wind. I would like to thank our regular markets workers with special thanks to Ian Symons, Roger Playdon who have managed our stall holders over the year. Although we have suffered weatherwise, we still managed to fund a \$7,000 donation to Centenary house using funds from our market activities.

The first major project was the Drouin West Cemetery gazebo, led by Bill Petschack, who in his usual way led from the front resulting in the job being completed to a high standard and with little fuss. The result is a structure the Drouin Rotary Club can be proud to have their name attached too. That was preceded by another effort in refurbishing some of the seats around Civic Park and a working bee with Moe Rotarians to help out someone in Erica.

Our regular community service work is through two activities primarily: with the Longwarry Food Relief two Fridays a month during which 16 Drouin Rotarians and partners, 5 Warragul Rotarians and around 8 community members deliver 400 food parcels monthly to Drouin, Longwarry and Warragul. This highlighted the growing requirement in our community for assistance for with day to day needs. It was with this knowledge, that a group of Rotary members, led by Pauline Maunder, Janette Pocklington and Carol Fenwick with great assistance from one of our Rotary "Friends" John Tricarico, sprang into action and I must say in no time we had donations by local businesses that enabled a raffle to be organised along with sausage sizzles held at Coles Drouin. We also tried selling Christmas trees supplied by Warragul Rotary to assist reaching the goal of providing those struggling at Christmas for some cheer in the form of hampers to the value of \$4,000.

During this time, we received a phone call from our sister club of Phillip Island & San Remo, that if we "came down today", we could pick up some toys donated by the "Motorbike Ride for Kids". These were added to toys we had secured from the Emerald Rotary Club and others from 'Donations in Kind', secured by the Warragul club. The result was we delivered a ute load of toys to Longwarry Foodbank to be distributed to those needing help making kids happier at Christmas. An aside to this was the toys needed to be sorted into age groups, we had some 12 members and partners arrive to take on this task, I think this

activity proved most Rotarian men leave children gift buying to the lady of the house.

The second regular activity is the 'Breakfast Club' at the secondary college where toast and milo drinks are served twice a week in alternate months, the other being handled by Drouin Lions.

We had a musical themed Christmas function that had us all dancing to music from a great young band and of course the highlight being the Drouin Rotary Choir, under the Musical Direction of Lois Ryan, who somehow along with Rob Pocklington kept the group in time if not tune. The New Year started with an evening of fun and fellowship at Glynn and Liz Fankhauser's home.

The New Year also saw the preparation begin for our biggest single fund raiser being the Farm World Field Days where Rotarians manned gates, drove tractors and managed people movers over 5 days...contributing nearly 700 hours in volunteer service. The turnout by all Rotarians was impressive as with the leadership of Kevin Roberts and the roster management of both Tim Wills and Max Scott made for a most successful event, that saw plaudits from Lardner Park Management

Our fortnightly meetings have seen a number of interesting speakers give presentations on various subjects along with themed nights such as our football pie night, International Women's Day and Melbourne Cup event. And then there was the Inaugural Drouin-Warragul Trivia Night. We will win next year! We also celebrated our 10 year anniversary of meetings at the Hong Kong Inn and I would again thank William, Christine, Sam and staff for their hospitality and friendship over this period.

I have had the pleasure of welcoming Melva Blackley and David Mitchell to our club during the year. Another occasion that gave me great pleasure was to present Sapphire Paul Harris Fellowship recognition to Dick van Leeuwen and Don Blackley who between them have served as Rotarians for some 94 years. It never seems to amaze me when we celebrate joining anniversaries as to how many combined years our club has given to the community.

We have been able to give disbursements over the year to the value of **\$29,910** to our community both Local, regional and International. Locally we have participated and ran community service events that assist our young people, those in poor health and those who are struggling financially.

I would like to thank all Rotarians and their partners for their generous support throughout my year as President.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Members for their support and time during the year, with special mention to Dianne Wallace for her work in producing our bulletin, it has made my time as President an enjoyable experience. In particular I would make mention to our Treasurer and Secretary who have put up with my many questions and discussions during the year. To Max and Tim, a big THANK YOU.

To my wife Sandy, I would like to give thanks for the never ending support, that she has always shown, to whatever task I have taken on over our time together.

To incoming Presidents Ian and Russell Ford, and to 'first lady' Jan, I wish you a successful and enjoyable year – you have the clubs full support and I am looking forward to a productive 2025 – 2026.

Live-4-Life sponsorship	\$ 1,500
Disaster Aid - sky hydrant for Timor Leste	\$ 1,400
<i>Rite Mentoring</i> camp	\$ 900
Longwarry Lions Food relief - xmas donation	\$ 2,000
St Vincent de Paul -xmas donation	\$ 1,500
The Crossing Drouin-In Centre - xmas donation	\$ 500
<i>Share the Dignity</i> project	\$ 220
Monash Children's Cancer Clinic -DG partner project	\$ 2,000
Gippsland Centenary House	\$ 7,000
Variety Club – <i>Elvis Car</i> donation	\$ 500
AED project – maintenance of one unit	\$ 311
Model United Nations Assembly-MUNA sponsorship	\$ 250
Neerim District Secondary School - scholarship	\$ 1,000
ROTARY FOUNDATION	\$ 3,720
POLIO PLUS	\$ 1,044
Drouin West Cemetery Project	\$ 6,865
TOTAL	\$30,710

Yours in Rotary,

Michael Kelleher

President 2024-25



Club Administration

A big vote of thanks to all who assisted during the year including:

- Peter Konjevic has continued to greet members at club meetings and record attendances.
- Rotary Insurance tasks have been looked after by Ian Haughton.
- Sergeant at Arms, Ian Bennett for his work to encourage a donation or two during the year.
- Property Master William Wong and his staff at the Hong Kong Inn.
- Dinner Programs, to all those than assisted in making the dinner meetings interesting and enjoyable.
- Dianne Wallace and Tim Wills for an entertaining and informative bulletin throughout the year.

Rotary Foundation

- This year we have secured two District Foundation Grants – Scholarship \$500 and Drouin West Cemetery Project \$3,400 – which we matched for two projects.
- We have contributed \$A3,720 to Rotary Foundation and \$A1,044 to the 'End Polio' fund this year.
- We have one 'Centurion' donor (\$A100 p.a.) and two 'Sustaining Members' donors (more than \$US100 p.a.) within our membership.
- Two members, Dick van Leeuwen and Don Blackley, received a sapphire pin recognition Paul Harris Fellow recognition for their extensive years of service.
- This club has contributed a total of \$US133,691 since it was chartered.

New Generations

A vote of thanks to Russell Ford for his work with our Schools during the year with some of the highlights being:

- Chairo Christian School took part in MUNA fielding 2 teams, and Chairo have been offered the opportunity to participate in MUNA again and have accepted.
- The Rotary Secondary School Scholarship was this year given to Neerim District Secondary College where the \$1,000 was used to support the academic activities of students in need.

Community Service

Thank you, Roger Playdon, for your overseeing the projects which have been carried out this year and for the individuals who lead individual activities, being:

- The monthly Drouin Rotary Market led by Ian Symons (stallholders) and David Proposch (barbeque) plus many regular contributors across the board.
- Robin Hood reserve community barbeque for volunteers at the Baw Baw Shire Council tree planting activity.
- Erica Palliative Care support project led by Tim Wills with the involvement of the Rotary Club of Moe.

- Civic Park seats refurbishment led by Bill Petschack and supported by many keen handymen.
- 'Drouin West Cemetery Rotunda' led by Bill Petschack and ably supported by retired tradesmen and sundry labourers.
- Monthly delivery of food parcels on behalf of the 'Longwarry Lions Food Relief', managed by Russell Ford.
- The twice weekly 'Breakfast Club' at Drouin Secondary College in alternate months, in conjunction with the Drouin Lions Club, led by Tim Wills.
- Christmas Toy Run which sourced toys from Donations in Kind through the Rotary Club of Emerald and also the Rotary Club of Warragul plus excess through the Phillip Island Toy Run, through the Rotary Club of Phillip Island & San Remo, all of which were distributed by the Longwarry Food Relief.
- Ambulance Vic uniform de-badging and subsequent repurposing for charitable purposes led by Tim Wills and relying on a few hardy 'un-pickers' in the Rotary family, Drouin Lions and CWA and, Warragul Neighbourhood House.
- Maintenance and general help at Yooralla Drouin by Kevin Roberts.
- 'Lardner Park Field Days' support over six days, overseen by Kevin Roberts.
- 'Big Blokes BBQ' and 'Girls Day Out' events clean-up activity at Lardner Park by a group of enthusiastic cleaners under the stern hand of Kevin.
- A number of smaller activities helping out people in need of assistance in our community, including saving a 2 pallet loads of clothing from landfill.
- And quite a bit more.....



**VOLUNTEERS BUILD
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES**



Rotary Community Leader Report to Rotary Community Group 'Strzelecki' Clubs

On 1 July 2024 the 3-year *Zone 8 Regionalisation Pilot* began operations. Rotary International commissioned the pilot as one of two – the other being Zone 19 Great Britain & Ireland - to see if Rotary could reverse the decline in membership, provide clubs with improved resourcing and greater efficiency from Rotary International and streamline the structure of Zone 8, while also seeking to reduce the costs of membership.

Your Club is part of Rotary Community Group (RCG) 9815-Group 6, named by the member presidents as the "Strzelecki Group" and it comprises nine clubs: the former South Gippsland Cluster (Foster, Inverloch, Wonthaggi, Phillip Island & San Remo, Leongatha and Korumburra) plus the three clubs in Baw Baw Shire (Drouin, Warragul and Trafalgar). The first meeting of the RCG was on Saturday 24 August where club presidents discussed their activities and voted on future opportunities for the RCG member clubs.



They nominated seven projects to be investigated and implemented where possible by all clubs: Hygiene for the Homeless, Rotary Safe Families, DV Safe Phones, SkyHydrant for Timor Leste, Spectacles for Vanuatu, Membership Engagement and, Friends of Rotary.

The Club Presidents for 2025/26 will come together in August and determine their priorities for the coming year.

Unfortunately, not all aspects of the Pilot have been successful to date and a "reset" of the pilot will be announced.

What is clear from the Pilot is that collaboration between clubs offers many benefits to the participating clubs and their members, as well as our local, national and international programs.

Whatever the outcome of the "reset", one thing is certain, we cannot continue as we always have if we want our grandchildren to see Rotary as a vibrant organisation. We, the current members, need to learn from all the positives the pilot may uncover and determine how our club will stay and enhance itself as an attractive part of the communities we serve and so revitalise and grow.

I look forward to working with the 2025-26 Presidents and club members to the benefit of the clubs, their communities and the work we do.

Yours in Rotary,

Tim Wills
Rotary Community Leader

