



Welcome to 2025! Wishing you all good health and fellowship with your good friends at Drouin Rotary and to the first Bulletin for this half year – Bulletin Twelve. The Fankhauser's have invited us to their place this Tuesday, 7th January for a social evening. Look for the details in this Bulletin.

Greetings from President Mike

• **Local Invalid Pensioner in need**

Tim Wills and I visited a local lady with severe health issues before Christmas, she is in need of assistance in organising a clean-up of her "heavily overgrown" backyard. This is not a call for volunteers to do the clean up, rather she can afford to have a reasonably priced contractor do the job but would like us to assist with organising as she is concerned at having strangers in the house.

If you know of a Reasonably Priced garden clean up company or contractor could you let either Tim or I know so we could organise a site inspection.

• **Longwarry Foodbank**

Our involvement with the "Longwarry Foodbank" over the Christmas period was very rewarding for those that participated, I would like to share a note from Russell Ford that shows the need in our community is on the increase and will be ongoing in the months ahead, with additional volunteers we could keep it to a once per month task for volunteers, if you can assist please let Russell know.

Those Longwarry Foodbank volunteers are amazed at how we turn up each week, almost unannounced, load up and then head off.

From our efforts we have never failed to complete a delivery that we have been asked to do. There are times when I ask you to do a bit more, because a referral from police or welfare workers comes in overnight, or on those very rare occasions a delivery or a bag has been left behind, there is always one of you ready to complete the task.

I keep all the assignment sheets and have reflected back on the year and conservatively this year we have:

- *Had a 30% increase in visits.*
- *This increase is typical across all support agencies Statewide, and in Baw Baw there is now a developing level of cooperation amongst the bigger agencies to ensure as many people as possible are being reached and that there is at least minimal duplication of "clients".*
- *In this last half of the year many new referrals are coming from police after doing welfare checks or from social workers and other support agencies who either don't do food relief or from smaller community groups that just don't have access to resources to meet requests coming to them.*
- *We have conservatively made more than 700 deliveries and delivered nearly 3000 bags of food.*
- *Possibly one of the immeasurable statistics is giving people who are struggling the knowledge that there are people who care about them.*

Deliveries will start again on January 24th, I will be in touch before then.

In case you are wondering, supplies at Longwarry are almost exhausted and the next delivery from Melbourne will be on January 10th. when Longwarry Foodbank will open again for walk ups.

From now until January 24th. there are supplies available to fill emergency calls for help.

Again, thank you everyone and we hope that for the many families and individuals we visit, life improves and for us that we continue in good health.

Cheers, Russell

Website: www.drouinrotary.com **Instagram:** [drouin.rotary.market](https://www.instagram.com/drouin.rotary.market) **Facebook:** [Drouin Rotary](https://www.facebook.com/DrouinRotary) & [Drouin Market](https://www.facebook.com/DrouinMarket)

• **December Rotary Market**

We had a very successful market and BBQ in December with a profit of \$2,200, a big thanks to all the volunteers on the day, a special thanks to Roger Playdon who stepped up to manage the stallholders and rosters in the absence of Ian Symons. We even had a visit from Santa during the morning, who had a strong resemblance to our regular "Market Manager".



Don't forget to mark down **Tuesday 7th January 2025** in your diaries as our first social event for the year, details below:-

Glynn and Liz Fankhauser have generously offered to host a BBQ social evening on 7th January 2025 at 6:00pm

Members and Partners are invited to 515 Old Drouin Rd (Big dam at front sign "Fankhauser Apples" near the driveway)

Please bring your own food requirements and refreshments and chairs, we will have the "Rotary BBQ trailer" on site for your use.

What's ahead

- Tuesday 7th January** BBQ Social Evening at 6.00pm hosted by Glynn and Liz Fankhauser's at 515 Old Drouin Road (big dam at front sign "Fankhauser Apples" near the driveway). BYO food, drinks and chair(s).
- Saturday 18th January** January *Drouin Rotary Market*
- Tuesday 21st January** BBQ at Civic Park, Drouin at 6.00pm UNLESS someone has a better idea

Anniversaries

Birthdays Mark Howes (4 Jan) , Jo Mc Kechnie (6 Jan) , John Franklin (8 Jan), Keith Pretty (9 Jan), Dick van Leeuwen and Tim Wills (13 Jan) , and Russell Ford (23 Jan).

Wedding anniversaries Pauline/Brian Maunder (10 Jan) , Peter/Lynda Konjevic (16 Jan) , Gary/Judy Surman (27 Jan)



The Rotary theme for January is **Vocational Service**.

During this period, clubs highlight the importance of the business and professional life of each Rotarian.

Special activities promote the vocational avenue of service.

Paul Harris Fellow Recognition

At the Christmas Dinner, President Mike had the pleasure of recognising the significant contributions of Dick Van Leewuen and Don Blackley awarded each with the Paul Harris Fellow. This is what President Mike said.

Members and guests would be aware that this club, like most in our Zone, consider the presentation of Paul Harris Fellow recognition to be the highest recognition the club gives. And this club has done that seventy seven times. The first was given in 1981 to Fred Armstrong, the club's founding President. Further recognition may be given through the addition of sapphires to the badge, and that has been done for five members by the club and for two by the Rotary Foundation.

Tonight, as a result of the initial nomination by Colin Gardner and Robert Stewart, it is my pleasure to give sapphire recognition to two members to Dick Van Leewuen and Don Blackley.

Firstly, the senior member, by nearly ten months, Dick van Leeuwen:

Dick was inducted into the Club on 4th October 1977 by then-President Russ Rees, sponsored by Gordon Williams. He has therefore been a member for just over 47 years. In 1981-82 he served as President having previously been Programs coordinator, Public Relations chairman, Sergeant-at-Arms and Bulletin editor. He was recognised with a PHF in June 2006 by then-President Ray Howe.

Dick has consistently contributed to the service opportunities of this club and since inception has been one of those delivering food parcels for the Longwarry Lions Food Relief. He takes control of the cashier's drawer for the second shift at most Drouin markets – although often found spending time socialising with fellow Keenagers in the marquee. He can be found precariously balancing on the back of a people-mover at Farm World and the Garden Show or putting himself forward to investigate opportunities and provide critique on club activities.

One of his greatest contributions to the club has however been in member attraction, particularly over the past few years, with a total of six credited to his involvement. This record exceeds all other members, with the next highest being four. And Dick's extensive service to our community has often been acknowledged, particularly his chairmanship of the West Gippsland Development Board, and as a Baw Baw Shire Councillor and as Mayor.

Secondly, Don Blackley:

Don Blackley was inducted into the Club on 29th August 1978 by then-President Kevin Fawcett, sponsored by Russ Rees. He has therefore been a member for 46 years and five months. In 1986-87 he served as President, having previously held a number of Director &/or Committee Chairman roles e.g. Foundation, Membership Development, Community Service Awards and, perhaps most notably, Farm World co-ordination from 1994 to 2007. He was recognised with a PHF in June 1999 by then-President Pat Gogan.

Don is not one of those members who is seen at the front all that often but, he has earned the admiration of his fellows as one who could be relied upon to "BE THERE" when needed. And perhaps the most recent example of that is his involvement and extensive knowledge in supporting Russell Ford in the production of the A History of the Rotary Club of Drouin – The First 70 Years last year.

And another significant contribution has been in member attraction, with a total of four credited to his involvement. This record is exceeded only by one other member – Dick Van Leewuen.

Over decades, Don has given extensive service to our community including as a Councillor and final Shire President of the Buln Buln Shire, councillor with Baw Baw Shire and many years' service on the Drouin Cemetery Trust, Drouin History Group....among other involvements.



Happy, Happy, Happy

The Christmas Dinner at the Drouin Golf Club was a great success with much fun and fellowship enjoyed by everyone. The Band played all the oldies encouraging many to join in and dance. Many thanks to Lois Ryan for her great contribution to fun and fellowship during the evening. Lois has a great talent in producing quizzes that test everyone and give much suspense as the answers are given and a winning table identified. The Drouin Rotary Choir, with some new members, lead us in special version of the Christmas Corals. Thank you Lois and Choir.

