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OCT
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ISSUE 665

\$5. Post Approved:
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COVER IMAGE: This year's Sydney Marathon Men's Race was won by Moroccan Othmane El Goumri, who wore a black armband during the race to pay tribute to the 2,800 victims of the earthquake that struck Morocco on September 8. (Photo: Sydney Marathon)

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Magazine Design – iMedia Corp
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Publisher – Rotary Down Under Inc
ABN:6211348579 | ACN:001408377

Printer – IVE Group

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Mental health and your club



R. Gordon R. McInally
President
Rotary
International

“On October 10, I will host a Facebook Live event, when we will recognise World Mental Health Day and further explore how Rotary members can begin this journey.”

The World Health Organisation designates October 10 as World Mental Health Day, and with Rotary placing a special focus on mental health this year, I would like to help answer the question posed to me most often when I travel to meet members: How can my club get started?

There are some wonderful examples of Rotary members taking action already. In the Philippines, the Rotary Club of Tiaong-Hiyas held a 12-week health challenge for mothers in the community to promote some baseline health screenings and coaching on a healthier lifestyle.

By the end of the challenge, the mothers had a special bond and decided to form a Rotary Community Corps called Ilaw ng Tahanan (‘one who lights up the home’) with the goal of involving more mothers in health education and wellness support — and later youth services, teen pregnancy prevention, and help with unhealthy substance use. Almost a year later, the RCC is preparing to open its own health centre where mothers can come for peer-to-peer support.

Another strong example is in Colorado, US. In the fall of 2021, a small group of stakeholders from the Rotary Club of Highlands Ranch formed the Rotary Clubs of Colorado Endowed Fellowship for Paediatric Mental Health, which enhances the ability of Children’s Hospital Colorado to recruit and train pediatric psychiatry providers and allows the hospital network to make additional appointments. This increases access to mental health care for children and decreases provider shortages.

Since then, the project has brought on new supporters and is now fully funded with a \$500,000 endowment. Investment income from this endowment will support a fellow — a psychologist or psychiatrist — at the Children’s Hospital. A new fellow will be named every one to two years, beginning in the US spring of 2024. Over time this will create a cohort to bolster the mental health workforce, treating kids from all 64 Colorado counties and neighbouring states.

There are many more great mental health project stories on Rotary Showcase, and I invite you to share your experiences as you begin your own projects.

Also, please reach out to mindhealth@rotary.org with any thoughts or ideas you would like to share about mental health in the Rotary world.

On October 10, I will host a Facebook Live event, when we will recognise World Mental Health Day and further explore how Rotary members can begin this journey. But I would like to leave you with one way every Rotary member can make a difference.

Right now, there is someone you know in the Rotary world – in your club, from a project you’ve worked on, in a Rotary Fellowship or Rotary Action Group – who could use a little more of your time and attention. Rotary is this great gift of global friendship, and that also means being there for each other.

Discovering the human connections that bind us is what we do through our membership every day. It’s what Rotary has always been about, and we can build on it by helping each other find peace at home.

We need to learn how to ask not just “How are you?” but also “How are you really?” By doing so, Rotary can continue to *Create Hope in the World.* RDU

Shining a light on kindness

*AN elderly resident prepares for a train trip...
Three hundred trucks converge on Castlemaine, Vic...
A Rotarian makes a difficult decision...*

We all know that kindness is part of Rotary's DNA, however, when two extraordinary stories of kindness emerged from the Rotary Club of Castlemaine's 34th Truck Show held in late 2022, a short six-minute film was produced to promote better understanding of the event.

Encouraged to enter the Castlemaine Documentary Festival LOCALS competition, held on June 16, 2023, the club was delighted to be awarded equal first prize

based on an audience vote of 200 people.

"Our aim was to get the film short listed and up on the big screen to help our local community understand what the Truck Show achieves for our town," said club President Kerry Anderson. "It was a totally new audience that wouldn't normally be interested in Rotary or the trucking industry."

The Castlemaine Documentary Festival is held annually in Castlemaine's iconic Theatre Royal. The festival offers a curated program of Australian and international non-fiction films. Audiences are introduced to a series of



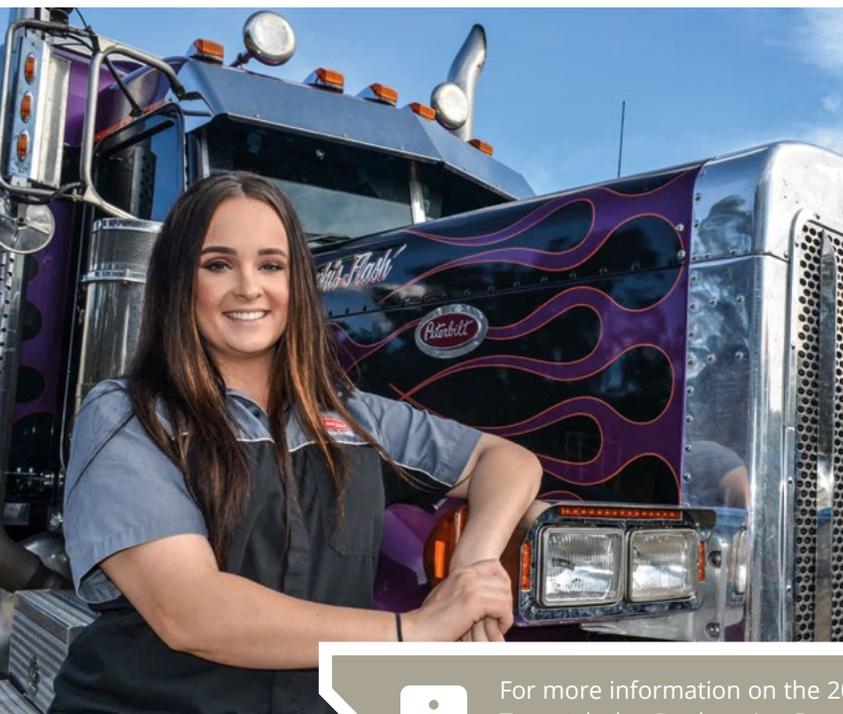
fascinating worlds populated by real characters with real stories facing real issues.

"Winning was totally unexpected as we were competing against some popular groups and professionally produced entries," said Kerry. "Given the warm response, we are confident that more acts of kindness have been encouraged and that we will see more spectators at the 2023 Truck Show on November 25-26."

The Truck Show is one of the largest and most successful events of its nature in Australia, attracting entrants and spectators from far and wide. More than 3,000 spectators turned up for the 2022 event, with \$50,000 raised for the local community. **RDU**

ABOVE: Castlemaine Rotary Truck Show Director, Kerry Anderson, left, and Rig of the Show winner, Jerome Edwards, enjoyed the surprise of 'Kindness' being voted equal first at the LOCALS Documentary Festival.

LEFT: Truck Show participant and local driver, Hayley Leech, was the public face of the 2022 Castlemaine Rotary Truck Show helping to change perceptions.



For more information on the 2023 Truck Show, visit rotarycastlemaine.org.au. To watch the Castlemaine Documentary Festival LOCALS documentary, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlgsO7UNgZU



Gala Night a glittering success

By Bruce Jenks
Stewart Financial Group
Rotary Club of Taradale, NZ
Photos: Simon Cartwright
Photography

ABOVE: Opera Tenor Brent Allcock from Stewart Group Wellington delighted the audience with his vocal skills at the Hawkes Bay Gala Night Flood Relief Fundraiser in July.

GOOD things happen when a great idea is supported by local businesses and Rotary. And that's exactly what happened when Hawkes Bay resident Germaine Meeuws from Stewart Financial Group suggested she utilise her event-planning skills to organise a Hawke's Bay Cyclone Relief Gala.

Germaine's philanthropic passion is usually the annual

Hawkes Bay Cure Kids Gala, which was postponed this year due to the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle in February. Instead, she pivoted and started planning a similar event for disaster relief.

Thanks to the team from Stewart Financial Group, Rotarians, and the support of many businesses in Hawkes Bay and nationally, along with the many generous individuals who attended the formal gala night, a total of \$28,000 was raised. The funds will help Hawkes Bay's families, community organisations and marae with recovery from the impacts of the cyclone.

"Cyclone Gabrielle was akin to a terrible postcode lottery; some houses flooded to the eaves, while others had a soggy backyard," said Nick Stewart of the Stewart Group.

"The immediate calls for clothing, toys, food and other necessities were met and exceeded. Folks got stuck in (quite literally) and dug others' homes back out of the silt. It was this same spirit we saw at our gala night. With the help of our generous guests, Stewart Group, with support from Rotary, couldn't be prouder of the \$28,000 raised for the Hawke's Bay Disaster Relief Trust."

Rotarians happily offered their assistance for the event. President of the Rotary Club of Taradale Tracey Hunter, Past President Kaye Wishart, John Reid and partner Ruth, and Vice President and Director Bruce Jenks and partner Lynette all assisted with operations and preparations.

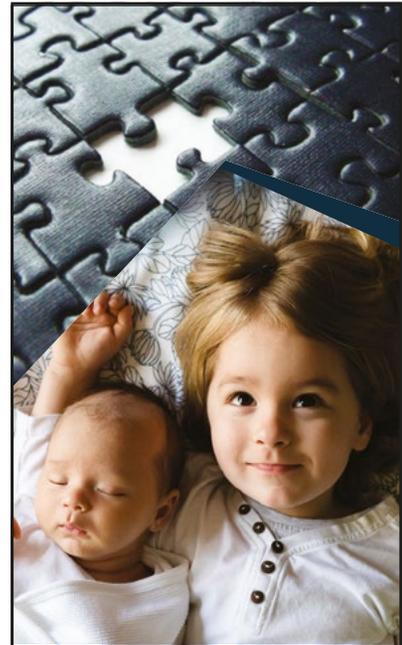
Generously donated prizes included vacations with luxury car hire, beautiful art pieces and wines, and a

generous helping of sweets. Funds were raised via ticket sales, raffles, silent auctions, a main auction event, and private donations by attendees on the night.

DJ Shane Hawkins (DJ 4U) donated his skills and time to ensure all enjoyed a twirl on the dancefloor. Nick at Easy Print and Kaye from beauKayes Florist also provided generous support. Kevin Wagg and Joe Snee, both from Property Brokers, presided as MC and auctioneer, providing superb entertainment. ^{RDU}



TOP TO BOTTOM: A signed Bay Hawks singlet was auctioned during the Stewart Group Gala Night to help raise funds for cyclone victims; Sponsors and guests enjoyed the stunning surrounds of The Old Church event space; The fashion stakes were high at the glittering affair; Mandy Cartwright from Grow HR raised a glass to the organisers; Joe Snee from Property Brokers provided great entertainment as auctioneer on the night; (L-R) Rory O'Neill, Germaine Meeuws, Don Stewart, Bruce Jenks, Brent Allcock, Nick Stewart, Prathme Rabeshen, and Paula Enticott.



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Singleton's centenary statue embodies Service Above Self

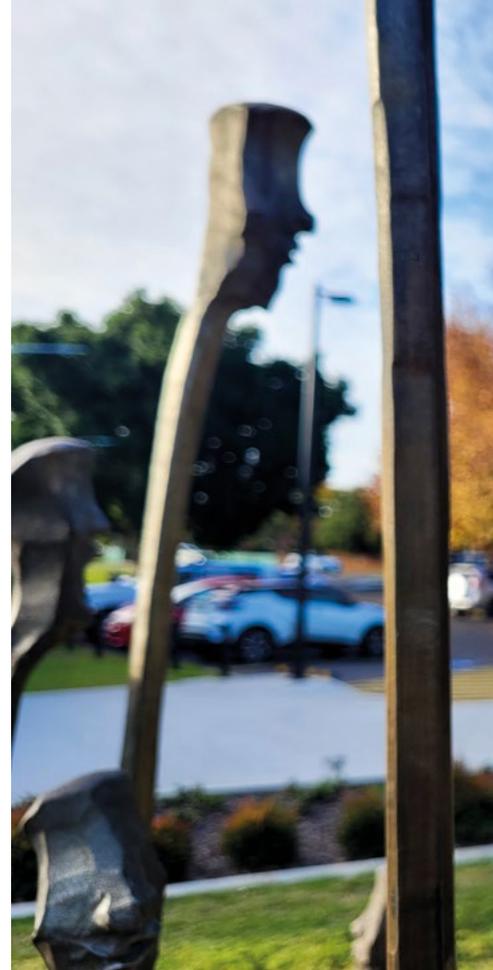
*By Megan Lobb and David Gausden
Rotary Club of Singleton
On Hunter, NSW*

WHEN the construction of the Singleton Arts and

Cultural Centre coincided with 100 years of Rotary in Australia, the Rotary Club of Singleton on Hunter, NSW, sought to commission an artist to commemorate this milestone and the contribution of Rotarians to the community.

The club has a long tradition of supporting arts in the community through its annual Art Prize, which has just celebrated its 40th year. An acquired artwork from this event is donated each year to the Singleton Collection.

With assistance from the Community Economic Development Fund, administered by Singleton Council, to cover the



cost of the sculpture and installation, local blacksmith artist Will Maguire, who has achieved national acclaim for his artworks, was chosen to create a sculpture.

The aim was to enhance community interest in different art forms, to tell a story about the connection between Rotary and the community, to celebrate 100 years of Rotary in Australia, and highlight the community involvement of Rotary clubs.

Will describes his design as “a cluster of individuals – handmade, irregular humans united in a cause and distinct in individual concern for others. A group where its value is greater than the sum of its parts, this arrangement of figures finds its strength collectively in the complex possibilities when viewed and considered from different perspectives.”

The work is durable and low maintenance, designed



to be climbed, sat upon, and interacted with. The process of creating the sculpture used blacksmithing techniques that are thousands of years old; skills pass from master to apprentice, generation after generation.

The statue perfectly embodies the continuity of Rotary in Australia and the world as it has evolved through generations of

Rotarians taking up the challenge of doing good in the world.

"To me, Rotary is really about people doing good things for people," said Will. "What I have tried to do is focus on the individual only insofar as it forms a necessary yet incomplete part of the more abstract group. It is only as we observe closer that we see details such as mouths and communicative linkages between the individuals who make it up. This, I hope, can be understood as recognition of the ongoing community building work by Rotary; by individuals embodying the Rotary motto of *Service Above Self*."

The Rotary Club of Singleton on Hunter says the artwork is a modern yet timeless piece, which they hope will engage the community in a conversation about Rotary. ^{RDU}

On the ground where need is greatest

SHELTERBOX supported more than 400,000 people last year, with the provision of vital aid. This was only possible because of the help from our supporters, communities and, of course, Rotary, our Project Partner in disaster relief.



ShelterBox
Robert Walliser
Chair
ShelterBox
Australia

The need to reach communities with vital aid continues to grow.

It is now 20 months since Russia launched its full-scale invasion on Ukraine. An estimated five million people remain displaced within Ukraine and almost six million are living as refugees abroad. ShelterBox is launching its sixth project to respond to the needs of those affected. This will include the provision of shelter repair kits to enable people to undertake repairs to their properties, so they are able to live with a reasonable degree of comfort and independence. ShelterBox Australia has launched an appeal to raise \$100,000 in support of this project.

A ShelterBox emergency assessment team has been deployed to Morocco, liaising with Rotary contacts and local organisations to find out what support is needed following the devastating earthquake in Marrakesh. A lot remains unknown about this disaster at the time of writing, but as we evaluate a possible response, we urgently need help to ensure that ShelterBox is well placed to support.

In Libya, we've partnered with the France-based ACTED to provide emergency aid as winter draws near. We've worked with ACTED on many occasions, including in Afghanistan and Central Africa.

If your club would like to donate to these or other worthy causes, please visit our donations page at www.shelterboxaustralia.org.au/donate/ or contact our CEO Mike Greenslade via mike.greenslade@shelterbox.org.au

Get connected at the Three Cs Café

Launched in May 2022, the Three Cs Café is a virtual mental wellbeing project by the Global Nurses and Midwives Rotary Club (GNMRC), encouraging colleagues to Check-in, Connect and Chat.

*By Wendy McIntosh and Maria Clemente
Rotary Club of Global Nurses and Midwives*



MEMBERS of GNMRC recognised that isolation and lack of support were having a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of colleagues globally, and that this had

been heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The experiences of colleagues and the global community during that time highlighted the importance of having a safe virtual space to meet

and talk about matters that may be difficult to discuss in workplaces. There was an evident need in the nursing and midwifery community to connect with others to decrease a sense of isolation,

For more information on the Three Cs Café, visit www.gnmrotaryclub.com/page/the-three-c-s-cafe-check-in-connect-and-chat



loneliness, and – for some – despair and depression. And thus, the Three Cs Café was created: a virtual space for the community to Check-in, Connect and Chat.

The concept was inspired by the Frazzled Café initiative developed by comedian Ruby Wax in the United Kingdom – a walk-in café hosted by facilitators who are trained to sit with customers and provide them with support, a friendly ear, and a place of connection.

GNMRC Charter President Wendy McIntosh is a trained group facilitator with over 30 years working as a mental health nurse. Wendy recognises the importance of understanding group dynamics and that the skills required to facilitate a virtual café would be somewhat different to the usual

skills nurses and midwives demonstrate in their professional roles.

An eight-week intensive training program commenced in March 2022. The essence of GNMRC’s hope for Three Cs Café was experienced by the facilitators as they supported each other in the process of learning and developing a new shared skill. Some were also able to integrate the skills learnt from the café training into their professional roles.

“The training was at a good pace, with a mix of explanations, videos, and activities, then a chance to reflect,” said GNMRC charter member Helen Cole. “The experience of being in the café and learning with the group was good. It was a very supportive, nurturing

way to learn.”

“The most difficult thing is to allow for silence, but also to be curious with your questions to allow café participants to bring forward what is important for them to discuss,” said club member Sue Walker.

Café participants don’t need to be a Rotarian, nor a member of GNMRC, but they do need to be a nurse or midwife. With the support of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) the reach has been great, with colleagues from countries such as Mexico, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia joining the supportive virtual chat.

Café sessions are available via a Zoom link provided after registering for a session. Each session lasts for one hour, with several sessions offered each month. **RDU**

Correction to Balwyn Centenary Grant recipient

IN the September edition of *Rotary Down Under* we ran an article on the wonderful club projects that received funding in the latest round of the Rotary Club of Balwyn Centenary Grants.

One such recipient was the Rotary Club of Richmond for its project equipping a birthing centre in Nepal.

Unfortunately, it was stated that the club resides in NSW, when of course it calls Victoria home. Our sincere apologies to the club for this oversight. **RDU**



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Paying it forward via the National Youth Science Forum

One year ago, Tasmanian senior secondary student Aisha Bissett had little knowledge of what Rotary did. Now, she is one of the organisation's inspiring young advocates.

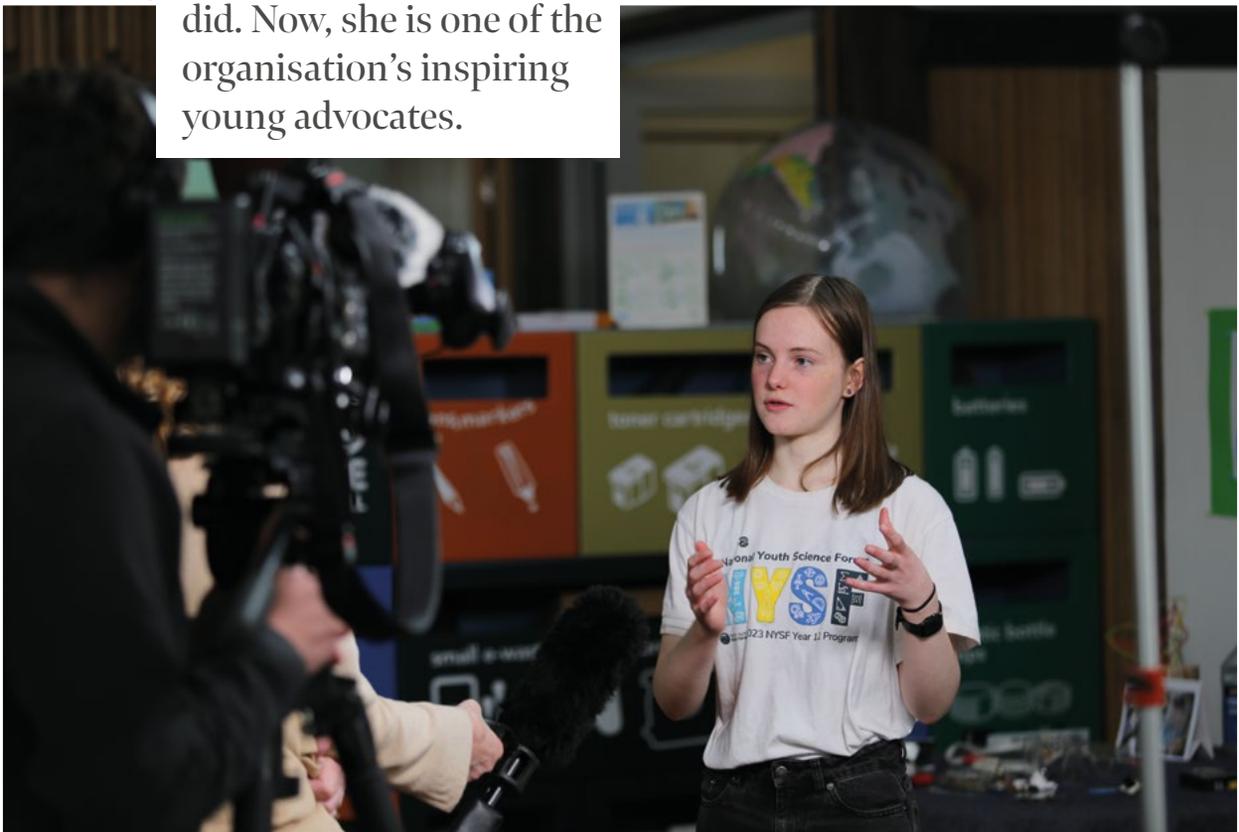
By Amy Fallon

RESPONDING to a social media alert, Hobart College student Aisha Bissett discovered Rotary via the prestigious National Youth Science Forum (NYSF), of which Rotary is the founding partner.

Every year, Rotarians support the program for Year 12 pupils, promoting it in local communities, managing students' applications, and helping with funding or fundraising so they can attend. Since 1984, more than 15,000 young Australians have progressed through the NYSF. Local Rotary districts across Australia conduct the participant selections for the program, which runs every January.

"I had been to some other Rotary programs like the Driver Awareness program at my school," said Aisha, adding that the statistics on road safety presented during the program have always stayed with her. "So the word Rotary was sort of familiar, I just didn't really know what they did."

All that changed in May when, looking for new opportunities, she approached the Rotary Club of Salamanca and District





Governor Nominee Pam Scott presented her with information about the NYSF.

Her application was successful, and on commencing the immersive program she was allocated to a group – Tagai – named after the star constellation. Tagai is a key figure in the creation stories of the Torres Strait Islander people. For their homework assignment the Tagai participants came up with a waste reduction solution and discussed how to sustainably eliminate computer waste.

A film featuring Aisha encouraging other students to put themselves forward for the NYSF program has been released for Rotary Reconnect Week this October. Throughout Reconnect Week clubs are encouraged to reach out to their alumni and ask them to

reconnect with Rotary.

“Rotary is an international organisation that just really cares about helping people, promoting peace in the global world, reducing poverty and making sure people have the things that they need – basic human rights,” said Aisha. “But they also operate on local and national levels, where they do different things in your local community.”

Today, Aisha is viewed as a new Rotary climate leader. She is currently the student mentor for southern Tasmanian students participating in the Tasmanian Youth Climate Leaders Program and Conference. She was selected for this role because of her energy, knowledge and commitment to making a difference in her community and beyond.

Among her role models Aisha lists Deputy Mayor Toby Thorpe – Tasmania’s youngest Deputy Mayor, a gifted public speaker, the 2021 Young Australian of the Year TAS, and the 2020 Premiers Young Achiever of the Year TAS. It was Toby who encouraged the Rotary Club of Huon Valley to sponsor her for the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program, which she took part in after reaping the benefits of the NYSF.

In turn, Aisha is spreading the word to others, paying it forward. She encouraged her classmate Konan Masuda to apply for the NYSF program.

“Aisha told me how great the program is, why I should attend, and why it’s such a great opportunity, and she convinced me to sign up,” said Konan, who has been selected to attend

ABOVE: Hobart College student Aisha Bissett, right, shares insights into the National Youth Science Forum with fellow student Konan Masuda and Hobart College sustainable living teacher Jenny Dudgeon. (Photo: Adam Reibel)

LEFT: A film featuring Aisha encouraging other students to put themselves forward for the NYSF program has been released for Rotary Reconnect Week this October. Hobart College Assistant Principal Simone Cunliffe captured Adam Reibel filming Aisha for the feature.

the NYSF in 2024. He will join hundreds of other gifted science students from around the country. Running January 5-13, the program will involve lectures, workshops and professional visits, as well as being mentored by researchers and peer supporters who have graduated from the prestigious extension program. Aisha has been selected as a peer support leader for the NYSF in Canberra, before moving to Sydney to complete her tertiary studies.

After missing out on the Rotary Science and Engineering Challenge because of COVID restrictions when he was a Taroona High School student, Konan was excited to learn that he was eligible to apply for the NYSF.

"At the moment I want to become an electrical

engineer or environmental engineer, but the program might challenge that perspective and maybe change my pathway into something else that I'm more interested in," he said.

Hobart College teacher Jenny Dudgeon and Acting Assistant Principal Marjorie Morgan encouraged Konan to complete his application, which was supported by school Principal Dr Elizabeth Robinson and President of the Rotary Club of Kingston, Ewen Cameron. The club sponsored half the fees for the course.

Marjorie said that Aisha and Konan are an incredibly proactive pair, always there when she puts out a call for somebody to go above and beyond.

"With the full support of the school, we're incredibly proud that they've got the get up and go to take advantage of these opportunities and incredibly proud that they've also come back to the school and shared that with other students," said Marjorie.

In September, Rotary District 9830 Public Image Director Roslyn Teirney met the two participants and the teachers who encouraged them to learn more about Rotary vocational and leadership opportunities.

"Thank you for the warm hospitality," said Ros. "Rotary Tasmania appreciates all the colleges and schools that partner with us to promote the youth programs funded by Rotary clubs." **RDV**

BELOW: Hobart College students and National Youth Science Forum participants Aisha Bissett and Konan Masuda with District 9830 Public Image Director Roslyn Teirney. (Photo: Simone Cunliffe)



Rotary Alumni Reconnect Week

Rotary Reconnect Week is a way for former Rotary program participants and scholars like Peace Fellows, Youth Exchange Students, Rotary Scholars, ex-Rotaractors, and Interactors to reunite with the Rotary community. This is a week to see how Rotary shapes lives in the community and around the world. Together, members and alumni can find new ways to promote Rotary's ideal of service.

To view the National Youth Science Forum film featuring Aisha Bissett, visit fb.watch/nf1PMW-OyO/?mibextid=v7YzmG



Shape- shifting *Singapore*

Wen Huang visits the home of the 2024 Rotary International Convention for a third time and finds that the flourishing Asian city-state has reinvented itself – again.

Rediscover Singapore

In June 1999, a year after joining the staff of Rotary International, I attended my first convention. It was then that I first witnessed the global power of Rotary and made my first batch of Rotary friends. I was also introduced to Singapore for a second time.

[CONTINUE >>](#)



ABOVE: Singapore's skyline architecture is considered among the most beautiful in Asia.

OPENING IMAGE: The Supertree at Gardens by the Bay.

My first trip to Singapore occurred five years earlier when, as a journalist, I covered the third Europe-East Asia Economic Summit. At that time, Western financial media were referring to Singapore as the 20th century's most successful development story, which meant that the summit lured scores of policymakers, economists, and business people from across Europe and Asia.

Having grown up in China, where decades of Mao's draconian rule had impoverished the country, I, along with millions of other Chinese, became enamoured of the Singapore model of economic success. My first impression of Singapore in 1994, which will forever be associated with the brightly illuminated skyscrapers that

dotted the banks of the Singapore River, confirmed my belief that this was a place of modernity and prosperity.

My return in 1999 for the Rotary Convention only reinforced that impression. Singapore, like many of its neighbours, was still reeling from the Asian financial crisis of the previous two years. So, the arrival of nearly 18,000 business and professional leaders from around the world helped reinvigorate the tourism industry, whilst also signalling the resurging presence of Singapore and Eastern Asia.

For me, that feeling of prosperous modernity still prevailed, but in other ways, I had arrived at an entirely different destination. As I explored multicultural Singapore,

my senses — especially my tastebuds — exploded with new impressions. I shopped for spices in Little India, visited the majestic Sultan Mosque in Kampong Gelam, and savoured the famed Hainanese chicken rice in Chinatown. The experience was like a slice of mille crêpe cake, a locally popular dessert whose nine layers of treats and colours blend toward something inscrutably delicious. Finally, I thought, I knew Singapore.

That is until recently, when I watched the 2018 movie *Crazy Rich Asians*. Partially filmed in Singapore, the romantic comedy displayed breathtaking shots of the country's architectural landmarks, lush gardens, and mouth-watering food. Much to my surprise, many of those scenes were almost

unrecognisable to me.

I realised that my perceptions of Singapore were frayed and outdated.

But that is just another aspect of the place, no matter how recently or how often you've travelled there; "One of the secrets of Singapore's success is our ability to keep reinventing what we need to survive and grow," says Joanne Kam, a vice chair of the 2024 Host Organisation Committee who served as the 2022-23 governor of District 3310 (Brunei, parts of Malaysia, and Singapore). "Each year and each decade brings new changes. So, the Singapore you see in May 2024 will be very different from what you and others remember."

That message was reiterated at this year's convention in Melbourne when I saw a promotional video at the Singapore booth. "You think you know Singapore?" intoned a deep voice, "Think again."

It was as if the voice were summoning me back — and

this July I complied, revisiting Singapore in anticipation of the 2024 convention.

Next May, thousands of Rotary members will follow in my footsteps, some of whom will be visiting Singapore for the first time. Until then, sit back and imagine that same deep voice enticing you to make that trip as I describe just a few of the delights of this vibrant and dazzlingly modern nation.

A City in Nature

Even in July, the sun rises late here — after 7 a.m. I'm newly arrived in Singapore, cruising in a taxi along Orchard Road, an upscale shopping strip. That's when I see it: a 23-storey tropical forest sprouting from an ascending stack of open terraces, each one supported by mammoth concrete columns that are themselves festooned in lush green creepers. It's as if sentinels of the equatorial jungle have overcome gravity. I squint my eyes and, from this distance, it's as if I'm looking at a giant block of



Chinese script wreathed by nature.

This is the newly opened Pan Pacific Orchard Hotel, recommended to me by the Host Organisation Committee. As a smiling front desk agent processes my papers in an open-air lobby, I ask a bellhop to show me the second-floor terrace, which is essentially a mini-tropical forest populated by exotic trees that I couldn't begin to name. Sitting on a stone step, I close my eyes. The sound of a cascading waterfall soothes my tired mind.

A man's voice startles me awake, "If you go up to the fifth-floor terrace, you will find tropical palm trees encircling a languid lagoon," says the receptionist. "You could relax on a lounge chair beneath a woven canopy of palm fronds."

ABOVE: Pan Pacific Hotel Orchard is a new biophilic designed hotel in the Orchard area of Singapore.

LEFT: The Malay Kampong Glam district.



RIGHT: New Bridge Road in Singapore's Chinatown decorated for the Chinese New Year.



“One of the secrets of Singapore’s success is our ability to keep reinventing what we need to survive and grow. Each year and each decade brings new changes. So, the Singapore you see in May 2024 will be very different from what you and others remember.”

My reverie on the hotel’s Forest Terrace was an appropriate introduction to Singapore, which is rightly known as the Garden City — though Singaporeans prefer to call their metropolis ‘a city in nature’ as they strive to be the world’s greenest urban centre. More than 40 per cent of the country is covered in greenery, be it in the form of nature reserves, parks, gardens, or a rainforest clinging to a skyscraper. The city-state has mandated that all new commercial and residential developments use landscaping such as green roofs, leaf-lined walls, or luxuriant gardens to help curtail the heat island effect found in almost all major cities.

Over breakfast the next day, Peng Sum Choe, a past president of the Rotary Club of Pandan Valley and CEO of Pan Pacific Hotels

Group, introduces me to the concept of ‘biophilia’, a term defined by the late naturalist E.O. Wilson as humankind’s irresistible urge to affiliate with other forms of life. Choe says biophilic design now permeates Singapore, where nature — greenery — has been artfully integrated into the cityscape.

The pioneering concept of a garden city was the vision of Singapore’s first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, who became known as the ‘Chief Gardener’. In 1971, his government inaugurated an annual Tree Planting Day on the first Sunday in November, and Choe says that tree planting and other environmental projects have been a priority for Singaporean Rotary members over the past two decades.

And the city is slated to become even greener: The

Singapore Green Plan 2030 calls for more than 200 acres of new parks and doubling the annual tree planting rate. “Each time I return from an overseas trip, I’m grateful to the lush greenery in Singapore,” says Choe. “It puts me at ease, bringing me close to nature.”

If you want to see this abundant verdancy concentrated in one colourful and futuristic spot, visit the 250-acre Gardens by the Bay, home to a series of natural attractions. Flower Dome, declared the largest glass greenhouse by Guinness World Records, gathers orchids, magnolias, and a multitude of other plants from around the world. Cloud Forest is a tranquil dreamland of unusual flora and breathtaking panoramas, while towering overhead, the forested slopes of Cloud Mountain soar to a height



of 115 feet. Is it any wonder that Choe calls Singapore a 'beacon' for sustainable tourism?

Where cultures meet

In May, when Rotary leaders gathered at the convention in Melbourne to appear in a Welcome to Singapore video, Ghim Bok Chew presented them with silk scarves adorned with a radiant, multi-hued orchid called the Vanda Miss Joaquim. Chew, an RI director and the chair of the Host Organisation Committee for the 2024 convention, later explained to me that the orchid is named after the woman of Armenian descent who first cultivated the hybrid flower in Singapore more than a century ago. "This orchid is Singapore's national flower and a symbol of our history and national identity," he said, "And this particular orchid is an apt symbol of the island country's multicultural heritage."

I get a glimpse of that heritage on my first day in Singapore when Joanne Kam, my Rotary guide and adviser, leads me to Chinatown, a sprawling enclave tucked alongside the city's glittering skyscrapers. Here we see a five-storey pavilion-style temple — where a holy relic, one of Buddha's teeth, is on display — a Chinese heritage centre, and dozens of Chinese restaurants, including Hawker Chan, a funky diner famous for its soy-sauce chicken rice dish that was once known as the least expensive Michelin-starred meal. Shops along the narrow streets display a colourful array of teas, silk dresses and robes, gold and jade jewellery, medicinal herbs, and porcupine-shaped durians, a sweet-tasting tropical fruit with a notoriously pungent smell.

Chew joins us for dim sum at the bustling, Rotarian-owned Yum Cha restaurant and tells me

how his grandparents left their ancestral villages in China's southern province of Fujian and journeyed to Singapore for better economic opportunities. While his cousins attended Chinese schools, his parents broke with tradition and sent him to study in England; after graduating from the University of Liverpool, he returned home and, with a degree in computer science, launched a career in information technology and finance.

After our meal, as we make our way through the Saturday throng, Chew points out an imposing green structure, the Jamae (Chulia) Mosque. "There is a Hindu temple down the road," he says. "Different religions co-exist peacefully here."

On my third day, Kam accompanies me to Kampong Gelam, a Malay district,

LEFT:
The Sri Srinivasa Hindu Temple in Little India.

BELOW:
Jamae (Chulia) Mosque is one of the earliest mosques in Singapore.





ABOVE: Sri Veeramakaliamman is one of the prettiest and busiest temples in Little India.

RIGHT: Abdul Gafoor Mosque, Little India.

where I meet Tengku Indra, a business consultant who has his own family history to share. He is a direct descendant of Hussein Shah, recognised by the British in the early 19th Century as the Sultan of Singapore. The family eventually lost the title, but its royal heritage lives on in Tengku Indra's name: Tengku means "Prince" in Malay.

Dressed in a traditional baju melayu outfit, Tengku Indra, the Charter President of the Rotary Club of Kampong Gelam, shows me around one of Singapore's oldest urban quarters. As we walk and talk, Tengku Indra gestures toward the golden dome of the Sultan Mosque, which his ancestor had built for his subjects. Streets and bustling byways lined with halal restaurants and specialty stores surround the mosque. Here visitors can

find handcrafted jewellery, perfumes, and accessories for the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. And, as Tengku Indra emphasises, the neighbourhood is also home to Indian and Chinese people, who have set up businesses there.

My next stop is Little India, where two other Rotary members, Rajamohan Munisamy and Anil Changaroth, both of Indian descent, await me. Changaroth treats us to a sumptuous meal at Madras New Woodlands, a South Indian restaurant in the centre of Little India, where you will find the Corinthian pillars of the Abdul Gafoor Mosque, a 50-foot-tall statue of Buddha in the Sakya Muni Buddha Gaya Temple (known as the Temple of a Thousand Lights), and colourful shophouses on Serangoon Road that sell traditional

Indian dresses, dried herbs, and spices.

Over paratha, an Indian flatbread, and dosa, a thin pancake, Changaroth, the charter president of the Rotary Club of Peace Builders Singapore, informs me of the different types of South Indian food in his flawless Mandarin and English.





LEFT:
The colourful facade of a building in Little India.

BELOW:
Meat skewers cook over hot coals in Singapore's Satay Street food market.

I sit next to Munisamy, a past district governor and vice chair of the Host Organisation Committee. A practising Hindu, he is married to a Catholic woman of Philippine descent. Their three daughters follow their mother's religion.

"Diversity is very important to us," says Munisamy. "Singapore does not have many natural resources. But we're rich in human resources. We want people

of all races, both established immigrants and new arrivals, to live and work together peacefully. That's our valuable asset."

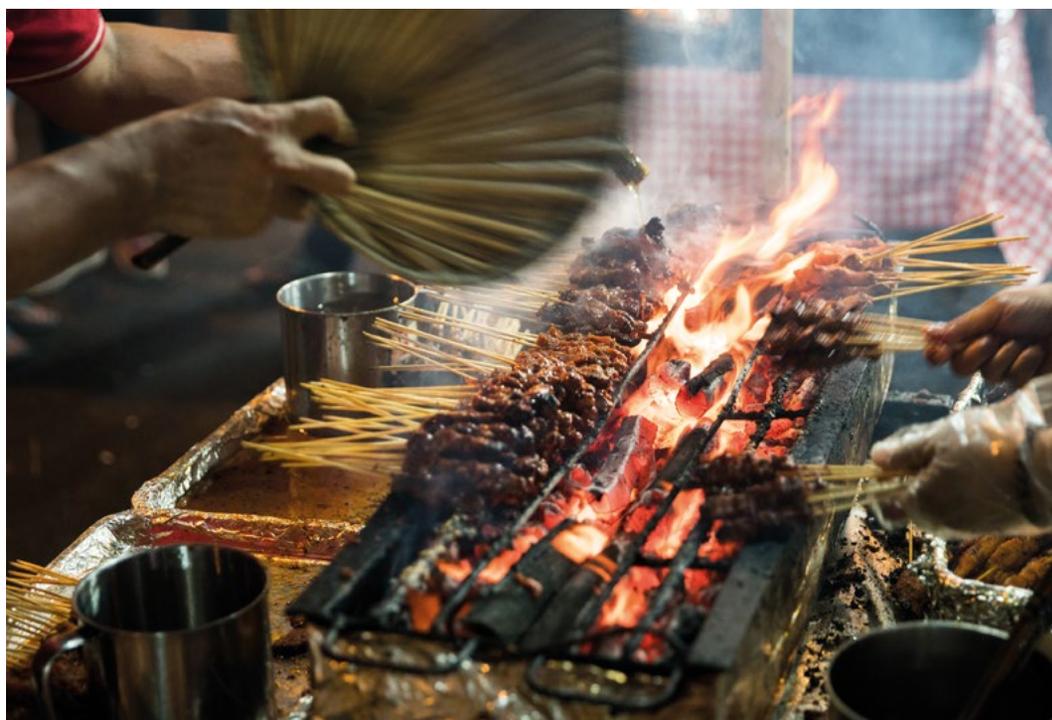
When I characterise Singapore's multicultural model as a melting pot, Kam corrects me. "A melting pot is a society where people blend together to form one basic cultural norm based on the dominant culture," she says. "Instead, each ethnicity is encouraged to preserve its

unique culture and traditions and appreciate that of others."

And, as Chew told me earlier, "Rotary in Singapore embodies our multicultural society."

At a time when racial and ethnic conflicts are roiling many societies, his hope is that the 2024 convention will enable Singapore — and Rotary — to showcase their unique approach to ethnic and cultural harmony. **RDU**

"Diversity is very important to us. Singapore does not have many natural resources. But we're rich in human resources. We want people of all races, both established immigrants and new arrivals, to live and work together peacefully. That's our valuable asset."



Introducing the Club Carbon Calculator

Rotary clubs in Australia, New Zealand and Europe can now use a carbon calculator to identify the carbon footprint of their meetings, events and projects as a first step to reducing and offsetting their carbon emissions.

ACCORDING to the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG), all clubs should understand where emissions are occurring to identify where possible changes can be introduced. This can now be readily done using either an online estimator for rapid assessment, or an Excel spreadsheet calculator for more detailed analysis. Both can be found at [esragoceania.org/take action](http://esragoceania.org/take-action).

"We are united by the common goal to reduce climate change," says Ludwig Kalthoff, of ESRAG Europe.

"Our aim is to spread the Every Club Carbon Friendly (ECCF) initiative across Europe and across the world."

The ESRAG Club Carbon Calculator Project began in 2018-19, when the Rotary Club of Wellington, NZ, calculated its annual

carbon footprint to be eight tonnes of carbon dioxide. Using a Club Emissions Reduction Plan, and a Carbon Offsets Purchase Plan for regenerating native forests, it became the first Rotary club in the world certified as a Carbon Zero Organisation.

"The committee decided that we could make a real difference if we could encourage 46,000 Rotary clubs in the world to become carbon zero, and 1.4 million Rotarians globally to reduce their personal and household carbon emissions," says Dr Roger Blakeley, Chair of the Wellington club's Climate Change Committee.

In 2020, ESRAG Chair 2022-23, Dr Patricia Armstrong, convened an international group of Rotarians from Australia, New Zealand, UK, Mali, and US, to develop a carbon calculator that had global application. Toitū

"The committee decided that we could make a real difference if we could encourage 46,000 Rotary clubs in the world to become carbon zero."

Envirocare New Zealand was commissioned to develop an Excel spreadsheet carbon calculator for Rotary clubs, and a pilot version was successfully trialled in Australia and New Zealand.

Garry Fowler, of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, Vic, was part of the core group.

"We wanted a way for clubs to easily gather data on their club's emissions from club meetings, events and projects," Garry says. "This included travel by

HIGH
EMISSIONS



LOW
EMISSIONS

Photo: Laurie Zuckerman/Shutterstock.

members to and from meetings, food and drink consumed, electricity used, and waste. We provided a standard format to capture the data."

The ESRAG spreadsheet calculator was launched at an international Zoom event on May 19, 2022. "It was exciting to launch the calculator initially for New Zealand and Australia as we envisaged it could be extended for use in other countries," says Chair

of ESRAG Oceania Ted Waghorne.

District 9910 Governor Matt McLeod volunteered to develop a web-based calculator version. The easy-to-use online estimator is rapid and easy to use to identify emission levels and suggest where reductions can be made. Some clubs may prefer to use the Excel spreadsheet calculator, with more details and accuracy and the facility to print pie charts and graphs.

"So go on-line now and estimate or calculate your club's emission levels, then plan how these can be reduced," says Roger. ^{RDW}

If you wish to apply the calculator to other countries or regions, email Pat Armstrong via pat.arm@esrag.org.

All other enquiries can be directed to Roger Blakeley via roger.blakeley@outlook.com.

Rotary District 9675



From little things big things grow



From yachting regattas and marathons to assisting mental health, domestic violence victims, tradeswomen and early childhood development, District 9675 members are certainly living up to our *People of Action* mantra.

By Anne Matthews, D9560 Passport Rotary Club



istrict 9675 covers a small, densely populated region of the mid coast of New South Wales, encompassing the regions of Sydney, Macarthur and Illawarra. Reaching from the Sydney suburbs south of Darling Harbour, 120 kilometres down the coast to Kiama and then out to Wollondilly/Oakdale and St Marys in the west. There are 54 clubs and 10 area governors.

Sydney is the home of the first European settlement in Australia. The first fleet of 11 ships carrying around 1,400 people arrived in Sydney Cove (now Circular Quay) in 1788. Today, Sydney is Australia's largest city and is home to 66 per cent of the state's population. Situated on a beautiful

harbour front, with its famous 'coat hanger' Harbour Bridge and magnificent 'sails' Opera House – widely regarded as one of the world's most famous and distinctive buildings – other attractions include the Sydney Tower Eye, The Rocks (home to Sydney's oldest pub) and the beautiful Strand Arcade.

The Rotary Club of Sydney is Australia's second Rotary club and was chartered on May 17, 1921.

The district includes the coastal region of Illawarra, which includes the two cities of Wollongong and Shellharbour and the coastal town of Kiama. Wollongong is the third largest city in New South Wales. The dramatic and beautiful Grand Pacific Drive from Sydney to Wollongong is one of the most spectacular drives in Australia and has been used in numerous worldwide car advertising campaigns. The drive takes you through rainforests and over Sea Cliff Bridge, through pretty seaside villages and beaches then continues onto the beautiful coastal town of Kiama at the southern end of the district.

Macarthur is a region in the south-west section of the district. Most of the area is taken up by the semi-rural Wollondilly Shire, with the majority of the region's population living within the satellite city of Campbelltown and its surrounding suburbs. ^{RDU}

PREVIOUS PAGE:

2023 Sydney
Marathon Men's
Race winner
Othmane El
Goumri, centre,
from Morocco wore
a black armband
during the race to
pay tribute to the
2,800 victims of the
earthquake that
struck his country
on September 8.
(Photo: Sydney
Marathon)



District Governor Tonia Barnes



TONIA has 20 years' experience in executive management in a number of organisations. Her professional expertise was based on a diverse career that provided many perspectives across a range of social and public policy issues. Prior to being a consultant in that area, Tonia established a national not-for-profit organisation – Palliative Care Australia – where she developed a platform for palliative care priorities, reforms and policies in Australia. She has also been a member of several health promotion boards, and a board member for several not-for-profit organisations.

In 2002, Tonia joined the Rotary Club of Canberra East, ACT, where she was immediately involved in the community projects area and served as the Rotary representative on a children's disability board for a number of years. She held the positions of community, international and member development director for several years, as well as president in 2007-08.

Following Tonia's move to the south coast of NSW she transferred to the Rotary Club of Kiama, where she held the positions of international and Foundation director and was president in 2018-19. She has held district positions of

international service chair, ROMAC chair and Paul Harris chair. Tonia has engaged in Rotary service wherever her work took her across the globe.

Tonia is married to Chris and family is a high priority for the Barnes'. They have two adult sons, who live in Sydney and Perth. She enjoys being outdoors, walking and swimming, and has a keen

interest in Australian and international political and current affairs. Travel is high on the agenda, as is her passion for rugby union! RDU



Polio Koala (PK)

DISTRICT Governor Tonia Barnes is keen to get all clubs in her district raising awareness and funds for Rotary's *End Polio Now* campaign. To assist her deliver this message, Tonia purchased 54 Polio Koalas, which she presents to each club during her DG visits, asking members to fundraise for Rotary's number one priority – ending polio.

Rotary is so close to achieving this goal, which was visualised by Sir Clem Renouf, RI President in 1978-79. Sir Clem's dream is almost a reality, with only two endemic countries – Pakistan and Afghanistan – left in the world, and only seven cases reported in 2023. However, until every child is vaccinated, the world will never be free of this crippling disease.

Polio Koala was a sell out at the RI Convention in Melbourne, where Tonia and PK first met. PK is now delivering the *End Polio Now* message all around the world. This cute little Australian icon in its bright red *End Polio Now* shirt is a licensed RI product and can be used as a fundraiser. For example, clubs can auction them or have a 'Name the Koala' event and ask people to pay \$2-\$5 to choose a name and then sell 50-100 tickets. When you draw the ticket the person with the winning name wins the koala.

If you would like to follow Tonia's fantastic initiative or just buy one End Polio Koala, please email PolioKoala@outlook.com

City2Surf



CITY2SURF is a popular Sydney road race and fun run and is now the world's largest run, attracting up to 85,000 participants. The event has been held annually since 1971 and attracts competitors from all over the world.

The 14km course starts in the city and ends at Bondi Beach. The steep 2km climb from Rose Bay to Vaucluse is notoriously known as Heartbreak Hill and is a rite of passage for runners.

The event is held on the second Sunday in August, and for the past 12 years Rotary has been involved by providing volunteers. For every 75 volunteers supplied, the event organisers give \$100 for each volunteer to their Rotary or Rotaract club. If a club provides fewer than 75 volunteers,

\$80 per volunteer is given to their club.

Club members and friends act as course marshals along the route. Due to the large number of participants, starting times are staggered and volunteers start at 5.30am. Over the years, several Sydney

clubs have provided a team of 75 volunteers. Many Rotarians also participate as runners or walkers.

Participating as a volunteer in this legendary event is a great way for Rotary to not only raise money but to advertise our organisation. **RDU**

ABOVE: Up to 85,000 people participate in City2Surf each year, making it the world's largest fun run. (Photo: Brendon Thorne)

RIGHT: Ireland's Niamh Allen took out the 2023 City2Surf women's title. (Photo: Chris Huang)



DreamCricket

DREAMCRICKET gives children with special needs the opportunity to play cricket in a supportive environment, helping them develop their physical skills and increase their confidence and self-esteem. Children with physical, intellectual or sight impairments can participate.

The program is held during school hours for children from one or more schools and with the assistance of their teachers. The children rotate through a variety of activities, which are adapted as needed to enable each child to experience success. Often senior students from nearby high schools assist with the activities and help children with the various manoeuvres.

District 9675 has a kit of equipment that is available to use, and assistance from clubs that have run a DreamCricket Day will be happily given.

DreamCricket is fun for everyone, and an excellent experience for the high school students. **RDU**



Sydney Running Festival

THE Sydney Running Festival is an annual running and walking event with a range of distances to suit everyone. The distances include a 42km marathon, 21km half marathon, 10km bridge run and 3.5km family fun run. The Running Festival started in 2001 and for the past 10 years, the Rotary Club of Rose Bay has been organising volunteers for the Moore Park area. Like the City2Surf, volunteers receive a donation from the organisers for their Rotary or Rotaract club of \$70 per person. It is a great way to raise funds for a club project.

This year's event was held on Sunday, September 17. The Sydney Marathon Men's Race was won by Moroccan Othmane El Goumri, who wore a black armband during the race to pay tribute to the 2,800 victims

of the earthquake that struck Morocco on September 8. Speaking through an interpreter, the 31-year-old said he had almost not flown to Sydney for the race.

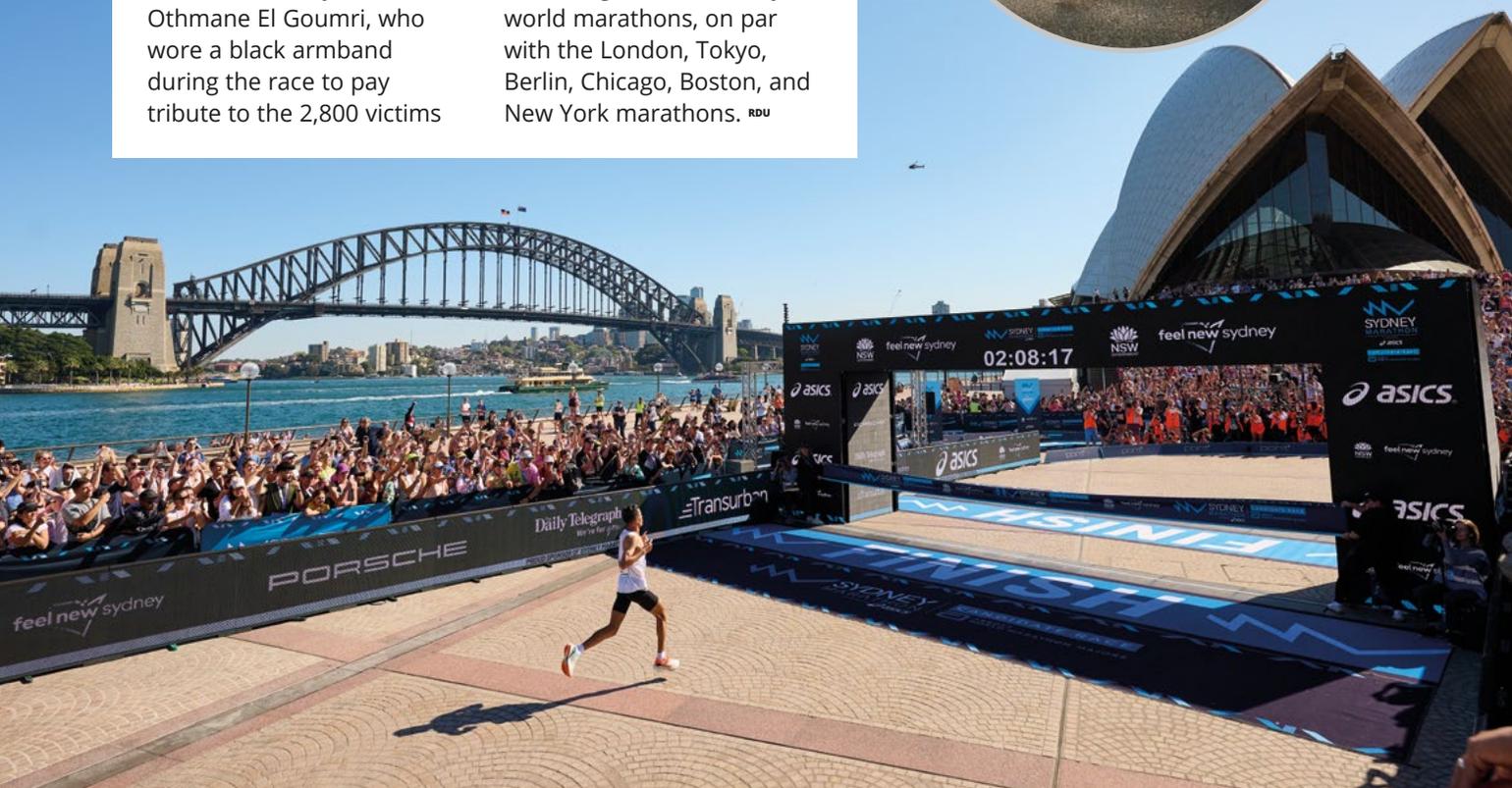
"It did affect him because it is his country and he has loved ones who were affected by the earthquake that just happened in Morocco," the interpreter said, after translating El Goumri's answer to a question.

"At some point he didn't think he would make the trip to Sydney. But in the last minute he decided to come, and throughout the race he was thinking about all the people in Morocco and this victory is for them."

The Sydney Marathon is becoming one of the major world marathons, on par with the London, Tokyo, Berlin, Chicago, Boston, and New York marathons. **RDU**



(Photos: Sydney Marathon)



Rotary SOLAS Charity Regatta

By Guy Glenny

Chair, Sydney Cove Regatta Committee

TWENTY-NINE years ago, the Rotary Club of Sydney Cove conceived the concept of a charity regatta as its principal fundraiser. The club had been chartered in 1988, the bicentennial year, and first met on a Captain Cook Cruises vessel on magnificent Sydney Harbour. It therefore made sense that the Harbour should be associated with its fundraising activities.

This year, the club's prestigious Friday afternoon event will be held on November 17 at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, home to the Rolex Sydney to Hobart yacht race. Volunteer owners from CYCA offer their racing yachts and crew to compete in the regatta, which can be sponsored for the day by corporates wishing to entertain their clients or staff with a day of adventure and hospitality.

Many of Australia's best-known yachts compete, including *Wild Oats X* and *IchiBan*, which won the 2017 and 2019 Sydney Hobart races respectively. This is a great drawcard for the sponsors, who can sail on yachts normally reserved for the most experienced sailors, and enjoy the facilities of one of Australia's premier yacht clubs. No previous sailing qualifications are necessary.

In addition to enjoying a fantastic sail on the harbour with their clients, the corporates also appreciate the opportunity to raise funds for the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF), the Safety of Life at Sea Trusts (SOLAS), and other Rotary Club of Sydney Cove charitable projects. Since inception, the regatta has raised in excess of \$5 million, around half of which has funded various projects for the Children's Hospital, particularly around respiratory diseases.

For more information on the regatta, visit www.rotarysolascharityregatta.com.au where there is a dramatic information video featuring Kristina Keneally, the new CEO of Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation. RDU



Illawarra Shoalhaven First 2000 Days Community Project

THE First 2000 Days of Life is a project of the Rotary Clubs of Corrimal, Dapto, Fairy Meadow and Kiama. Research has shown that the first 2000 days of life has a significant impact on a child's development and their future health and wellbeing. It is now known that the in-utero experience

of a baby followed by a child's early life experience predicts their chances of succeeding at school, of doing well in life, and of having chronic diseases as an adult.

Given the importance of raising awareness of this research, the four clubs are working with local NSW

healthcare professionals and agencies to deliver the key messages under the First 2000 Days Framework. Rotary is providing the important link between health and agencies as Rotary works across the community providing funding and support to many agencies supporting local families.

The project is known as the 'Illawarra Shoalhaven First 2000 Days Community Project'. The aim of the project is to make the community aware of the importance of the first 2000 days, to communicate the key messages from The NSW First 2000 Days Framework and let people know where to seek further information and help if required. **RDV**

"It is now known that the in-utero experience of a baby followed by a child's early life experience predicts their chances of succeeding at school, of doing well in life, and of having chronic diseases as an adult."





Supporting the Environment

SINCE 2019, the Rotary Club of Corrimal has been working on environmental clean-ups within their local community. The Corrimal Rotary Environmental Group (CREG) was formed from these activities.

It all started after Past President Kay Mireylees, inspired by the Plastic Free Ocean project of Rob Edwards OAM CSP, started the first plastics clean-up at Corrimal Beach on Sunday, July 7, 2019. The ongoing work of CREG is the club's

commitment to involvement in Rotary's new area of focus – Protecting the Environment.

Rotary, supported by Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG), manages and supports many different environmental projects, however, the emergence of COVID-19 meant that the environmental focus centred on clean-ups for some time, as it provided an outdoor activity where members could socialise at distance.

Local Clean-ups

Local clean-ups have included beaches, creeks, Lake Illawarra and open spaces. The amount of rubbish found has been significant and ranges from plastic bags, cans and bottles, cigarette butts and straws, to shopping trolleys, three-seater lounges and electric lifting lounge seats. All clean-ups must be reported to council's Rise & Shine team for insurance purposes and to arrange collection. Because of the clean-ups around Lake



and soon expanded to young students from the Illawarra Friends of International Students (IFIS) and Rotaractors from the University of Wollongong club. Members of the public have also been inspired when seeing members at work and some have since become friends or members of the Rotary Club of Corrimal. It certainly has had an impact!



Propagation Workshops

The propagation workshops arose from members of the Rotary Club of Corrimal who have been active in bush-care and tree planting with the local council, and later with Rotary Adopt-a-Tree.



The beach and creek clean-ups are held regularly on Thursdays and the first and third Saturday of the month, with a dedicated group of members and friends getting involved. The clean-ups take around two hours followed by a very social and well-deserved cuppa at a local venue.

Through these activities members have become aware of the importance of planting trees, particularly where seed has been sourced locally. These local trees, shrubs, grasses and vines will support endangered wildlife better than commercially available natives. Birds that have significantly declined in the area include Gang-Gang and Glossy Black cockatoos and the critically endangered Regent Honeyeaters.

Illawarra and the relationship the club has with Council, they were consulted about improvements that were needed around the lake.



The clean-ups began with Corrimal club members

Environmental activities have broadened to include propagation workshops, greening projects and habitat restoration in local parks and gardens and working with the District Adopt-a-Tree program.

The propagation of native trees and shrubs was an activity that members who were physically unable to participate in tree plantings and maintenance activities could be involved with. The workshops are provided by the local LandCare group and have been a popular activity.

“Through these activities many connections have been formed with other local organisations, all working towards improving our environment and sustainable living. Friendships and partnerships have developed with LandCare, GreenConnect and a local urban farm and recycling organisation.”

Tree Planting

Tree planting is another way that the Rotary Club of Corrimal gives back to the environment. CREG members are involved with Wollongong City Council (WCC) Natural Areas Team, undertaking activities such as bush-care and local tree plantings.

The original plantings were done three years ago at Cawley Park in Russell Vale and just recently there has been an extension of that planting, doubling the area planted. This was undertaken through an invitation from the Council Natural Areas Team, who wanted their own tree planting to celebrate National Tree Day. Members have also participated in two plantings at Anama St and in Cabbage Tree Creek in Fairy Meadow, Hooka Point in Berkeley, and William Beach Reserve at Dapto.

The club participated in a planting at Port Kembla

Beach bush-care site, run by the WCC Natural Areas Team and the Illawarra Aboriginal Lands Council. This involved a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony by the Coomaditchie Elders, followed by a walk through their lands to the bush-care site, where members were undertaking a mass planting to smother an invasive grass weed.

They were also involved in a Tree Planting Day at Mt Keira Summit Park in partnership with the Rotary Club of Wollongong and the Illawarra Aboriginal Lands Council. Mt Keira is a sacred mountain to Indigenous women, and the female members who volunteered were treated to the story about Mt Keira and the Five Islands and secret women’s business.

In conjunction with Rotary Adopt-a-Tree, the club has taken part in plantings at

High Range (twice) and Mandemar near Mittagong, Severn Park at Berridale, Peelwood near Crookwell and Belubula Park near Canowindra.



Micro Plastic Education Program

In July this year, club members assisted WCC in a micro plastic education program at The Lagoon, North Wollongong, with Year 7 students from Keira High. Lots of plastic and micro plastic items were collected, including minute particles of rubber crumb from the matting used as the base for the children’s play area in Stuart Park next to The Lagoon. This is particularly bad as rubber floats in water and gets washed very quickly into the lagoon and the ocean, affecting marine animals and plants. Some members of the club attended an AUSMAT micro plastic sampling training day to assist AUSMAT collect and collate data about micro plastics in our environment. They attended and assisted with the AUSMAT Community Sampling Day at Belmore Basin in Wollongong.



Student Community Garden

In the winter of 2020, many club members were involved in a community kitchen to support international students who were stranded here, with no access to money and struggling to survive. This evolved into a project to create and lead a community garden for the students. It was an enormous effort by CREG members for a full two years, which resulted in a community garden now run wholly by the students.

It is from this broad range of activities that CREG has evolved into a vibrant part of the Rotary Club of Corrimal. The club has been successful in winning Bronze, Silver and Gold level awards in their District Club Enviro Award scheme.

Through these activities many connections have been formed with other local organisations, all working towards improving our environment and sustainable living. Friendships and partnerships have developed with LandCare, GreenConnect and a local urban farm and recycling organisation.

These relationships gave rise to the notion of holding a sustainability event, which Corrimal has called GreenFest Sustainability Expo.

GreenFest Sustainability Expo

GreenFest Sustainability Expo is a one-day family event aimed at gathering sustainability inspiration, covering all areas of our

lives, in one place. It brings together organisations and practitioners to unite the community in terms of sustainable living, and inspires and informs local community members – young and old – to connect with the environment to better understand the impacts of climate change, helping them to make better choices about what they can be doing.



The inaugural event was held in December 2022 and will be held again this October. From the relationships with Corrimal High School through Rotary youth programs, the principal has offered the school as a venue for GreenFest 2023. It has synergy with the school's own environmental activities, which include an agricultural area with sheep, alpacas and chickens and an aquaculture garden.

The club hopes to grow GreenFest into a respected and vibrant annual community event. **RDU**



Greenhouse Park

GREENHOUSE Park is a project undertaken by the Rotary Club of Wollongong as part of their 75th anniversary celebrations.

The site of the environmental eco-friendly oasis is based on the Tom Thumb Lagoon salt marsh, which was used as a waste depot and builders' tip from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Since the 1990s, the Wollongong City Council and a team of dedicated volunteers have worked to turn this site into a community green space. The park is at the southern edge of the city overlooking Port Kembla Harbour.

The Rotary Club of Wollongong committed more than \$120,000 to supplement the \$250,000 capital works provided by the Council. This contribution has created the entry sign with the Rotary logo, a Rotary Rain Forest Walk, an education/interpretative centre and general facilities.

Considerable tree planting and beautification of this Greenhouse Park is one of the club's proud project commitments for future generations. Several members are Friends of Greenhouse Park, a community-based group of volunteers. They work to protect and enhance the remnant salt marsh, the Green and Golden Bell Frog ponds, native habitat for birds and animals, and community gardens. **RDU**



The Maroubra Centre

THE Rotary Club of Botany Randwick provides much needed support to the Maroubra Centre, which is a community mental health facility. The centre is part of the Southeast Sydney Local Health Service and has a client base of over 800 people, extending throughout Sydney's eastern suburbs. The centre has a dedicated team of professional and caring staff to support the needs of their clients.

Community mental health services such as the Maroubra Centre are different to inpatient mental health services. They play a vital role throughout the recovery process by supporting people between the ages of 18 to 65 who have severe mental illness and psychiatric disabilities.

The centre helps clients with self-care, social and relationship skills, and quality of life via physical health, social connectedness, housing, education and employment.

Both the Botany and Randwick clubs were chartered in the 1940s and merged in June 2020. The Rotary Club of Randwick provided significant funding for the refurbishment of the Maroubra Mental Health Unit just prior to the two clubs' merger

The Rotary Club of Botany Randwick has since assisted the Maroubra Centre by donating a range of much needed gym equipment to assist the exercise physiology team. RDW

Ukraine Crisis Appeal



By Guy Glenny
Project Manager RAWCS
Ukraine Crisis Appeal
Rotary Club of Sydney Cove

IT is now 20 months since President Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Having established the RAWCS Ukraine Crisis Appeal in 2015 to assist the Ukrainian community in Australia provide humanitarian aid to their homeland, the events of February 2022 stirred the entire Australian community to aid this fledgling democracy in its existential fight for survival.

The partnership between RAWCS via the Rotary Club of Sydney Cove and the

Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) has proved extremely durable over the past eight years. The AFUO has enlisted the support of the Ukrainian community and its significant fundraising capacity. Rotary's name and reputation has been important in attracting donations from Rotary clubs and the wider community. With over \$8 million in donations, it has been possible to rapidly mobilise funds to where they are most needed.

Some \$1.4 million has been sent to Caritas Ukraine for Internally Displaced Person's (IDP's) short term accommodation as they



move from the war zones in south-east Ukraine to the west of the country or transit overseas.

Mental health care is also being provided to ease the anguish of traumatised families, with so many loved ones killed or suffering debilitating injuries. The appeal has recently responded to a request for an additional \$150,000 for the inhabitants of Kherson devastated by the flooding from the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka Dam.

In June 2022, the appeal formed a partnership with the Rotary Club of Kyiv International for the establishment of long-term accommodation for IDP's displaced by the war. The Kyiv team have liaised with local councils around the country to find suitable buildings that could be converted to accommodation, such as disused schools and hospitals. The appeal has funded the fit-out of these buildings, including beds, mattresses, bed linen, furniture, fridges, washing

machines, microwaves and emergency medical equipment.

Over the past 16 months, accommodation has been provided for some 11,500 people at a cost of \$3.2 million. One of the co-chairs of the AFUO has been a regular visitor to Ukraine during the war and has been overwhelmed by the feedback from the IDP's, including children, who have cherished a secure place to live after seeing their homes and neighbourhoods devastated by the Russian onslaught.

The other main fund contribution has been for

medical equipment. An AFUO subcommittee called Medical Aid for Ukraine has sourced equipment from hospitals and medical companies in Australia and arranged shipment to Ukraine at very favourable rates. Medical equipment costing \$2.4 million, but worth significantly more, has been sent. The equipment includes portable x-ray and ultrasound machines, orthopaedic equipment, skin staplers and tourniquets. Rotary's MediShare team has been extremely helpful in the logistics of storage and transport of equipment to ensure its prompt despatch. RDU

ABOVE: A child runs as she holds a Ukrainian flag in front of the destroyed building of a cultural centre, hit in a missile strike. (Photo: Sergey Bobok/AFP)

BELOW: Children at the Caritas Ukraine for Internally Displaced Person's Centre.

OPPOSITE: Medical Equipment in transit to Ukraine.



Yavusania Village Fiji Medical Centre Clinic Project

RIGHT:

Members of the Rotary Club of Cronulla, villagers and medical staff during a visit to the Yavusania Village Fiji Medical Centre Clinic in 2018.

BELOW:

MP and State Attorney General Mark Speakman, left, with Chief Ratu Aseia Vakalalabure at the Rotary Club of Cronulla's Fiji High Tea Fundraiser in July 2022.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM:

Nurses from Nadi Hospital work in the clinic one day a week, meaning villagers no longer need to travel to Nadi for minor ailments.

THE Yavusania Village Fiji Medical Centre Clinic Project was initiated by the Rotary Club of Cronulla in 2016, when member Maria Moran – a director of Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children (ROMAC) – was approached by (Asinate) Rosie Latowa. Now an Ambassador of ROMAC Australia and New Zealand, Rosie was the fifth ROMAC child to come to Australia for treatment.

Rosie indicated that her childhood village in Fiji, Yavusania Village outside of Nadi, had an empty house and that the villagers hoped to turn it into a medical clinic to treat minor ailments such



as cuts, bruising and sprains, instead of needing to travel to Nadi Hospital. The clinic required medical supplies to get it up and running.

A group of members from the Rotary Club of Cronulla first visited Yavusania Village in 2016. At that stage the clinic was an empty shell and they had to sit on the floor to present the many items they had brought with them.

The club then held several high teas to raise funds for supplies. They also received supplies donated by Sutherland Hospital and purchased other essential items that were not available in Nadi.

Members returned to the village in October 2017 with the medical supplies and many school supplies for the local kindergarten. They met with the village chief and head nurse and were treated to a kava drinking ceremony

to thank the club for its support.

During a return visit in 2018, members found that two nurses from Nadi Hospital were working in the clinic one day a week and that it was also being utilised by three other villages, making it a very sustainable project, with the villagers helping to keep the clinic running.

During this visit the club was asked to assist in providing an operating theatre for the clinic. With the help of a district grant and another high tea fundraiser the club was able to send half the required funds for villagers to make a start on building the operating theatre.

However, rather than building an extension to the clinic, as originally planned, it was decided to build a stand-alone treatment room



To purchase tickets, visit itstime.org/Home/RafflePage/105570



The club is undertaking further fundraising activities, including an on-line raffle partnering with the Its Time Foundation. First prize is a holiday to Fiji, with the raffle to be drawn on November 17. ^{RDU}

LEFT:
The current progress of the stand-alone treatment room in Yavusania Village, Fiji.

in a different location after identifying difficulties with the original site, including concerns relating to flood and fire.

The club sent the remainder of the agreed funds allocated to the project, with the government agreeing to help with the additional funds required to build the stand-alone treatment room, which was more expensive than the planned extension.

Then COVID hit. Supplies ran out. The villagers had no work, as the majority worked in the resorts.

Determined to see the

project completed, the Rotary Club of Cronulla held another high tea fundraiser in early July 2022, and it did very well. The chief medical officer from Nadi, who is Rosie's cousin, attended via Zoom and, along with the president of the medical clinic, provided an update on the clinic and how vital it is to the villagers. They also requested more money to complete the stand-alone treatment room as the Fiji Government was no longer able to provide assistance.

It is estimated it will cost approximately AU\$14,000 to complete the building.



About Rosie Lotawa

ORIGINALLY from Fiji, Rosie was the fifth ROMAC child to come to Australia for treatment. Today, she lives and works in Australia and is a ROMAC Ambassador.

Rosie recently received Paul Harris Fellow recognition from the Rotary Club of Cronulla for her work with ROMAC. Her recognition was presented by Past District Governor Stephen Humphries and Rotary Club of Cronulla President Maria Moran.

As well as regularly speaking at conferences and clubs around Australia and New Zealand, Rosie visits every ROMAC child who goes to Sydney Children's Hospital for treatment. She always takes toys and a loving presence.

Rosie is the team leader for the Rotary Club of Cronulla's Fiji Trip, where she organises visits to schools, villages and hospitals and coordinates meetings with doctors, village elders and Rotary clubs.





Women & Girls Emergency Centre Rotary Scholarships

“The Rotary Club of Sydney Darling Harbour has been assisting the centre by providing scholarships of between \$500 and \$2,000 to assist clients achieve their study and training goals.”

THE Women & Girls Emergency Centre (WAGEC) is an emergency centre with a central support office based in Redfern, Sydney. Its focus is to create safer futures for women and children by ending gender-based violence in a generation.

When people first come to WAGEC, the staff talk to them about their situation, then refer them to the best services and programs for their needs. When women and families come to them in crisis, WAGEC helps them find housing and other immediate support.

The centre can provide short-term accommodation for women and families across the inner city and inner west of Sydney, totalling 90 beds on any given night. They also provide

more than 45 transitional properties for families and a large 10-bed transitional property for single women.

The Rotary Club of Sydney Darling Harbour has been assisting the centre by providing scholarships of between \$500 and \$2,000 to assist clients achieve their study and training goals. The money can be used for any costs associated with training, including course fees and expenses such as textbooks, trades materials, uniforms, stationery and study material. It can also be used to pay childcare fees directly associated with study, IT costs associated with study including purchasing a laptop or Internet access, and for travel costs relating to and from the place of study.

Clients apply for the scholarships through WAGEC’s Access Program, and many success stories have been reported back to the club.

One client received a Rotary scholarship of \$1,300 to purchase a laptop to enable her to complete her studies. She is now in her final year of studying Early Childhood Education at TAFE and has been working part time and caring for her children whilst studying. Although her course is free, she needed a laptop to complete her studies as so much of the course is now being completed online. Her goal is to qualify and become a full-time Early Childhood Educator.

Another scholarship of \$1,350 was awarded to fund a Diploma of Management

and Leadership. The recipient has since received an opportunity to be part of a program called Habitat Women, a paid training program that teaches construction skills, while providing workshops and support. She has also received her White Card and will be applying for stable work once she's finished her program. She commented that, "The Rotary grant wasn't just about money, it was about feeling supported."

A third client received \$2,000 to fund Traffic Control Combo course fees, a White Card course, and Licence to Operate a Personnel and Materials Hoist course fees. The client achieved her goal, gained employment, and secured a private rental for herself and her son, enabling them to move out of WAGEC accommodation. Thanks to the Rotary scholarship, the client and her son now have their own space and a fresh start. **ROU**



Race Day Fundraiser

THE combined Rotary Clubs of the Illawarra held their annual Race Day on Saturday, September 23, 2023, at Kembla Grange Racecourse. This is the combined clubs' major fundraising event for the year, with all funds raised donated to two deserving local charities: Escabags, which supports victims escaping domestic violence and abuse and The Barstool Brothers, which supports male mental health initiatives.

This is always a great opportunity to get together with friends and work colleagues for a fun-filled afternoon at the races. **ROU**



Illawarra's Peace Poles

TO celebrate the centenary of Rotary in Australia and New Zealand in 2021, the Rotary Club of Canberra Burley Griffin, ACT, invited 100 Rotary clubs from around Australia to donate a Peace Pole to a local primary school. Two years on, this ongoing project has seen up to 315 Peace Poles installed throughout Australia.

In the Illawarra, the Rotary Club of Fairy Meadow has been involved from the beginning and has installed three peace poles in local schools. The Rotary Club of West Wollongong installed one and recently the Rotary Club of Wollongong has installed three.

Each year, the clubs join with their respective schools to participate in the United Nations World Peace Day ceremony, which is held on the third Tuesday in September. A short ceremony is conducted at the Peace Pole. The Rotary clubs send members to deliver a keynote peace message to the school, including the words of ancient Chinese Taoist philosopher Laozi, recited within the ceremony as well as the universal message 'May Peace Prevail on Earth', which is then spoken in each of the languages displayed on the Peace Pole. The languages on the poles are chosen by the school and include the local Indigenous Dharawal language.

The Illawarra clubs find it a very rewarding experience to be involved in such a powerful and ongoing message of Peace in line with Rotary's area of focus. **ROU**

Paws4aCause Dog Show

BELOW: Chair of the Paws4aCause Committee, Di North, with her son's black Labrador, Taco. (Photo: Adam McLean - Illawarra Mercury/ACM)

OPPOSITE: Sarah Ciantar and Abby Goold with their Standard Poodle, Primbee Rose. (Photo: Wesley Loneragan - Illawarra Mercury/ACM)

INSET: Denisha Smith and her dog, Biscuit, won the best fancy dress for dog and owner.

PAWS4ACAUSE Dog Show is a project of the Rotary Club of West Wollongong. The \$6,000 proceeds from this year's event, which was held in May, went to Interplast to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the organisation in Australia and New Zealand.

This is a dog show with a difference, with prizes given in six categories – the dog with the waggiest tail; the cutest puppy; the most

dignified old timer; the best dressed; the best hair do; and the best fancy dress (owner and dog). There were almost 100 dogs entered in the various categories this year.

As well as the dog show, there were 28 market stalls featuring dog groomers, dog trainers, dog treats, dog clothing and accessories, dog hydrotherapy and dog rescue. A professional dog photographer was on hand

to take portrait photos of dogs and their owners.

And, of course, there was the Rotary barbecue and a raffle!

Wollongong City Council supported the event by providing a team from their compliance department, who were able to give information to people on responsible dog ownership.

Guide Dogs NSW brought along some of their puppies in training. They are always looking for foster homes to care for these dogs before they start their proper guide dog training. Guide Dogs NSW also gave a demonstration on guide dog training.



Besides the categories for judging, there was also a fascinating demonstration of flyball, which is a speed and agility dog relay. Another popular event was 'Dog Lotto', which involved 20 numbered tyres inside the ring and numbered tickets sold. The star of this event was Buddy, a well-trained dog who performed beautifully.

The Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM, officially opened the dog show. Local Federal MP Alison Byrnes and State MP Paul Scully also attended, which was further recognition of the importance of this community event. It is estimated that over 500 people attended at various times during the day.

The show was well supported by the local media, with advertising on local radio stations in the lead-up to the event. The *Illawarra Mercury* also ran a story before and after the event.

Just about all club members were involved on the day with various activities such as working on the barbecue or cake stall, selling raffle tickets, running Dog Lotto, traffic marshalling and dog marshalling. RDV



Donations to New South Wales Flood Victims

AFTER hearing about the devastation of the 2022 floods in Central West NSW, members of the Rotary Club of Corrimal sprang into action, collecting clothing and blankets to help those in need.

With winter approaching and many flood victims still without power, club community service director Jean Thompson called a local radio station to advise listeners of the collection. The response was overwhelming.

Judy Doherty, Denise Knightley and Jean drove two large vans, filled to capacity, to the CWA damaged rooms in Eugowra. Among the goods were 60 quilts made by Illawarra quilting groups, winter clothing, blankets, shoes and toiletries.

From Eugowra, the members travelled to Cudal, where they stayed for two nights. This gave them the opportunity to meet the town's people and hear of their plight. Thus began another collection to help the people of Cudal.

Trish Law, Dave Whitelaw, Carmel Allen and Jean again drove two large vans to Cudal, where they delivered donated new blankets and warm clothing to the local bowling club. It had been reported that the nights were freezing, so the warm clothing and blankets were very much appreciated.

Many flood victims are still living in caravans or pods, and it will take many years to recover. RDV

Rotary Inspirational Women's Awards

BELOW:

Ten of the 16 2023 RIWA finalists: Mary Hollingworth, Sharon Robertson, Janelle Dodd, Stacy Jane, Gwenneth Johnson, Megan Cox, Patrina McLean, Gladys Panoncillo, Maryam Zahid and Robyn Hutchison, with RIWA Ambassador Louisa Hope and The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP.

ROTARY Inspirational Women's Awards (RIWA) is an annual event for District 9675. Her Excellency, The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC, KC, Governor of NSW, is the Vice Regal Patron of the event.

In keeping with Rotary's motto of *Service Above Self*, these awards acknowledge

and celebrate community service performed by women through their various activities and endeavours. They recognise the work done by women, the 'quiet achievers' whose actions inspire others and make a difference to their communities.

RIWA recognises service

to the community across all sectors. The awards are directed at the non-Rotary community, and are about commitment, dedication, perseverance and proactivity in improving the lives of others. The awards are open to women across NSW, with separate awards for city and rural nominations.



The four award categories include Rotary Inspirational Woman of the Year (30+) Rural and Urban, Rotary Young Inspirational Woman of the Year (18-30) and Rotary Inspirational Woman of the Year Healthcare Worker.

A panel of independent judges from Rotary districts assessed nominees on three key criteria: Community service which best exemplifies Rotary's motto of *Service Above Self*; Achievements; and Personal Attributes.

The seventh RIWA annual presentation was held at Rydges World Square Hotel, Sydney, on September 10, 2023. An inspiring video message from Her Excellency, the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC, congratulating and thanking all the RIWA finalists and winners, was shown at the event.

Guest speaker for the night was RIWA 2020 Young Inspirational Woman of the Year Fibha Frameen. Fibha holds a master's degree in law with specialisations in human rights, policy rights and international law. Her outstanding international journey gained momentum after winning RIWA. Holding a Peace Scholar scholarship, Fibha attended one of the largest and most prestigious Youth Summits, One Young World in Manchester in 2022 and is now a One Young World Ambassador.

The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women and Seniors attended the event and extended her congratulations to all the finalists and winners, thanking them for their

2023 RIWA Winners

2023 Rotary Inspirational Woman – Urban
Stacy Jane

2023 Rotary Inspirational Woman – Rural
Mary Hollingworth

2023 Rotary Inspirational Woman Healthcare Worker
Linda Tiltsen

2023 Young Rotary Inspirational Woman
Yasmin Jimmieson



ABOVE:
2023 Rotary Inspirational Woman winner Stacy Jane.

contributions to their communities, which have saved many lives and changed countless others for the better.

The award presentation highlighted the inspirational qualities of the 16 finalists – announced at a reception at NSW Parliament House in August – who were all presented with trophies in recognition of the laudable contribution they were making to their communities. The trophies were presented by District Governor 9675 Tonia Barnes.

Domestic violence survivor Stacy Jane was announced as Rotary Inspirational Woman of the Year 2023. Stacy established the charity Escabags after escaping

her abusive relationship in 2019. Escabags offers free Escape Bags to individuals and families fleeing domestic violence, providing essential items during the critical initial days of seeking support. Stacy, driven by her own experiences, aims to fill the gap in support for victims, empowering them with practical solutions. Escabags has distributed more than 8,500 Escape Bags nationally and has gained support from government, businesses and the police. She has taken her inspiring operation from a small bedroom to a commercial warehouse and has earned high recognition for her impactful contribution to the community. ^{RDU}

More information on the Rotary Inspirational Women's Awards can be found at www.riwa.com.au

Indigenous Projects



DISTRICT 9675 currently has five major Indigenous projects.

01 Aboriginal Child and Family Health Initiative

This was the 2021-22 District Governor partner project. The aim is to develop significant health opportunities for Aboriginal families across greater Sydney. The project copied key elements of a program that had been successfully operating at the La Perouse Aboriginal Community Centre since 2009, in partnership with the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick.

At the La Perouse centre, an arts and crafts program is used to facilitate creative expression, celebrate Aboriginal culture and learning, promote health, literacy and parenting skills, and give access to child and family health and educational services. Mothers are able

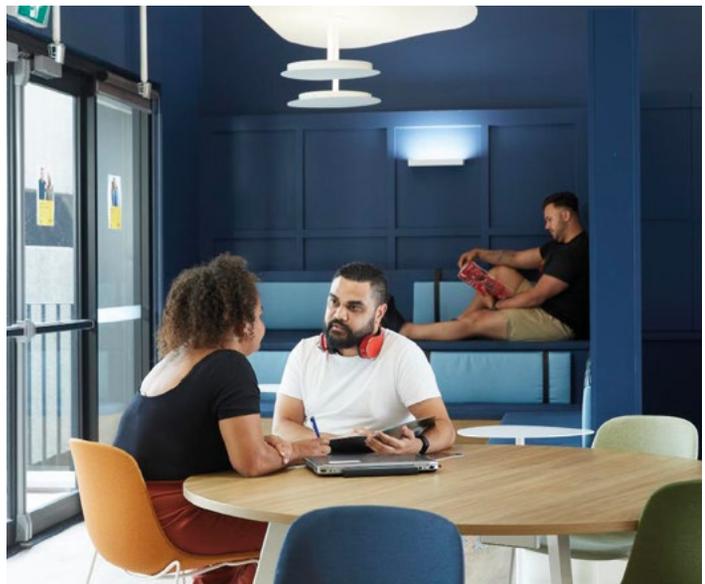
to connect with and support each other.

With Rotary funding, the project has researched and explored the transferability of key elements of the La Perouse program to Western Sydney Aboriginal Communities, with active support from the Children's Hospital, Westmead.

02 Tribal Warrior Mentoring Program

This program is based in Redfern and is designed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth of all ages up to Year 12. It helps the participants to develop into confident, independent young adults. Tribal Warrior

"With Rotary funding, the project has researched and explored the transferability of key elements of the La Perouse program to Western Sydney Aboriginal Communities."





has been a central part of the Redfern community for over two decades. It empowers the community through connections to culture and family. All activities are designed to contribute to a Redfern that is strong, proud of its history and achievements, and economically self-sustaining into the future.

Rotarian volunteers attend the boxing sessions held Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6am at Redfern Indigenous Centre of Excellence.

03 Indigenous Knowledge Hub at University of Technology Sydney (UTS) – UTS is building the first Indigenous residential university college in Australia and Rotary will partner with the university to develop a 'knowledge hub' within the college. The aim is to promote a sense

of pride and hope within the indigenous community, particularly Indigenous youth with challenging low levels of school attendance and university participation.

The Hub will comprise five key areas: the library, the Keeping Place, the Family Research Space, an Elders Office and an academic workplace.

Rotary is supporting a pledge of \$3 million over three years to fund two phases of the program to help make the vision for the Indigenous Knowledge Hub a reality.

04 Trachoma Prevention –

Trachoma is an infectious eye disease that can lead to blindness, but is preventable with good hygiene practices. Australia is the only developed country in the world with trachoma, causing significant problems in a number of Indigenous communities.

Ending Trachoma became a combined districts program as part of the centenary of Rotary in Australia. In the lead-up to the centenary, Rotary, in coordination with other organisations, started an education program to help communities treat and eradicate trachoma and improve the general health of their people.

In 2019, the statistics showed that 18.3 per cent of children aged five to nine years old, across the 25 Indigenous communities that were screened, had trachoma. The latest reading has dropped dramatically to 3.7 per cent – a huge reduction for the 21 communities screened in the area of Alice Springs.

The goal now is to ensure that hygiene practices and community environments are improved so the disease can be eliminated completely. The World Health Organisation has updated its global goal to eliminate trachoma by extending it from 2020 to 2030.

05 Little Wings and Medical Wings

– Little Wings is a not-for-profit organisation that provides ongoing free flight and ground transport for seriously ill children in rural and regional NSW, ACT and Queensland. Little Wings started by providing free transport services to children undergoing cancer treatment at Children's Westmead Hospital, thus minimising the physical, emotional and financial strain of travel. Rotarians act as volunteer drivers to take patients to and from Bankstown Airport and the hospital.

Medical Wings delivers clinics in partnerships with local hospitals, Aboriginal medical centres, primary health clinics and immigration centres to make sure families are able to obtain support in a culturally safe and welcoming environment. Medical Wings currently supports 3,200 families across regional and remote NSW by providing increased access to services and improving family wellbeing by reducing anxiety related to access to health facilities and treatment.

The service also provides free transport for paediatricians from John Hunter Hospital to regional NSW Aboriginal communities. RDV

"UTS is building the first Indigenous residential university college in Australia and Rotary will partner with the university to develop a 'knowledge hub' within the college."



Supporting and Linking Tradeswomen

SUPPORTING and Linking Tradeswomen (SALT) is an organisation started by District 9675 Rotarian Fi Shewring from the Rotary Club of Wollongong. When Fi started work as a painter and decorator with her future husband, she was the only woman on the worksite of 50 men. Fi started SALT to make it easier for women to gain apprenticeships.

SALT is a non-profit incorporated organisation that provides a support network for tradeswomen, apprentices and women who wish to enter the trades. Fi says that “jobs don’t have a gender” and has helped hundreds of women obtain a trade. The organisation also runs workshops to educate companies on the power of a diversified workforce.

Fi was one of the four presenters at the Empowering Girls breakout session held at the RI Convention in Melbourne in May. RDU

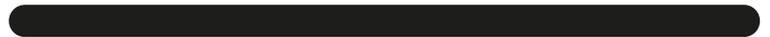


Support for the Kiamā Pipe Band

THERE are many reasons why the sound of bagpipes and drums can stir the blood and tug at your heart, be it a lone piper or a massed band. Sadly, fewer and fewer Australian towns, cities and organisations boast the presence of a local pipe and drum band. In what is most often a voluntary role, the colour and spectacle a band provides to local events and celebrations is highly valued by the community.

Pipe bands have long been part of military tradition, most notably in the UK and its former colonies. Many of the same standard tunes are found in the military and civilian pipe band repertoires. Similarities exist regarding musical style, historical and musical influences, and dress and deportment.

The Rotary Club of Kiama has been a keen supporter of the Kiama Pipe Band. On October 19, 2022, club President Carol Jagger was delighted to present the Kiama Pipe Band with a cheque for \$1,500. This donation will purchase new equipment and assist with ongoing expenses. This financial assistance will mean there is a continuing presence of this grand local tradition in Kiama. RDU



Peace Building Workshop

THE inaugural 2023 Peace Building workshop, an initiative of the Rotary Club of Sydney, was held on May 4. The workshop challenged participants to explore the reality of modern slavery, domestic abuse and to gain insight into the elements that contribute to a peaceful nation. Chairman of the club's Peace Building Group Sy Laga'aia expertly brought together a panel of presenters to discuss these issues.

The first presenter, Patricia Garcia, from the Institute of Economics and Peace, heightened participants understanding of what constitutes a peaceful nation.

The next presenter, Rachael Natoli from

the Lokahi Foundation, generously shared her personal experience of abuse and discussed the multifaceted nature of abuse and its effect on adults and children. Then Blake Loaney from A21, a group formed 15 years ago to fight human trafficking, presented confronting figures regarding the number of people enslaved in 2023. Blake shared how A21 assists them in finding freedom and breaking the cycle.

The second workshop on June 3 was both informative and enlightening. The focus was the sensitive issue of abuse in all its forms. Speakers were Hannah Tonkin – the first NSW Women's Safety Commissioner – Stacy Jane, who shared her story and spoke about Escabags, which provides emergency supplies to those fleeing domestic violence; Rebecca



Pursche from the Institute of Economics and Peace; Bev Lange from Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA); and Victoria Natautama from A21 speaking about modern slavery. **RDU**

School Supplies for Tonga

THE Rotary Club of Caringbah has been sending containers of school supplies to a small primary school in Tonga. Angaha Primary School is located on Eua, which is a two-and-a-half-hour ferry trip from Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga. The school has 324 students and 12 teachers.

The club is not only working to help Angaha Primary School become better equipped, but has also encouraged a number of schools in the Sutherland Shire to provide or pledge equipment. They have donated a laptop as well as tables, chairs and desks.

The club also appealed to their local community to donate funds, so they could purchase items such as printers, photocopiers, and a huge variety of stationery, which will assist the pupils obtain an up-to-date education. **RDU**





Sydney's premier youth-based club

THE Rotary Club of St George Next Gen was chartered in 2015 and it is Sydney's premier youth-based club. Not only does it support the Sydney community with projects such as delivering hundreds of lamingtons to frontline workers during COVID, its members support youth in remote communities.

In 2018, the club held a barbecue to raise money for Deakin (pictured), a 12-year-old talented athlete from Elliott, a very small remote community of about 350 people, seven hours drive south of Darwin. Deakin was flown to Melbourne to represent the Northern Territory in athletics. Deakin and his family had already raised some money and the club agreed to cover the rest of the costs. ^{RDU}

Social Purpose Organisation Leadership Workshop

THE Social Purpose Organisation Leadership Workshop is an event currently being organised by the Rotary Club of Kings Cross. The workshop will be held on February 5, 2024 at the Rex Centre, 58-60 Macleay St, Potts Point NSW 2011.

The purpose of the workshop is to bring together leadership teams who work in the social

purpose, not-for-profit, volunteer and community service sector who are actively operating in Kings Cross. The workshop aims to enhance the effectiveness and impact of these organisations in the community.

Topics to be discussed include:

- Responding to increasingly competitive funding environments
- Attracting talent and the efficient use of resources
- Evaluating impact and donation of Return on Investment (ROI)
- Transforming our operating model to accommodate the millennial generation
- Evaluating impact and donation ROI
- Leadership in volunteer organisations ^{RDU}

To register for the event, visit www.kingscrossrotary.com.au/events/kings-cross-social-purpose-organisation-leadership-workshop/form

The Krabi Project

THE Krabi Project is an excellent example of how Rotary clubs can work together to achieve great outcomes.

In 2021, the Rotary Club of Dapto in Wollongong was contacted by expat Kate Neuss, who was living in Krabi, Thailand. Kate asked if the club was able to fund a small project at the Klong Muang Primary School in Krabi – a Muslim school in a very poor village.

The school provides education to 255 students over three years of kindergarten and six years of primary. There are 91 students in kindergarten and 164 students in the primary school.

Teachers are required to accompany K1 and K2 children to the toilet, and while the existing toilet block is not far from their classrooms, teachers must leave the room to take a child to the toilet, disrupting lessons and leaving the other children unattended.

The director of the school has long wanted to build toilets that are attached to and directly accessible from the three kindergarten classrooms. Because class sizes are between 20-35 children, toilet breaks can be highly disruptive.

The students in P1 are allowed to go to the toilet block by themselves, but

there is no cover between their classroom and the toilet. The director had also requested a short walkway of approximately eight metres be built between their classroom and a building with a toilet, which will be refurbished for their use. This refurbished toilet will let the teacher watch any student using the walkway and the toilet building from the classroom.

The school also needed funds to upgrade the playground equipment for the kindergarten to supplement and/or replace existing equipment, much of which is old and handed down from other schools.

After several meetings, the Rotary Club of Dapto

formed a project team with Kate as project manager, and members of the Rotary Clubs of Krabi, Coffs Harbour and Camden. The Rotary Club of Dapto contributed \$5,000 and the Rotary Clubs of Coffs Harbour and Camden \$2,500 each. The Rotary Club of Krabi did some of the hands-on work and organised local contractors.

The project was completed in February 2023, with the building of three toilets, the covered walkway, the upgrading of existing playground equipment and the purchase of new playground equipment.

The impact on the children, teachers and the community has been significant. **RDU**

BELOW:

The new covered walkway at Klong Muang Primary School in Krabi, Thailand, means teachers can always see students as they cross from their classroom to the newly refurbished toilet block.



How YOU can help shape the future of Rotary and Rotaract in Zone 8

Approved by the Rotary International Board, the ongoing Regionalisation Pilot is testing new ways of operating to ensure Rotary and Rotaract will be around in our region for generations to come, adapting to suit the specific needs of the diverse countries and cultures in Zone 8.

AS part of the pilot, three new groups of volunteer roles are being introduced to empower and support clubs.

Districts will continue to operate throughout the pilot, and people currently in district roles can also take part in these new volunteer roles.

Current club and district arrangements regarding The Rotary Foundation will also remain in place.

Rotary International General Secretary John Hewko says the pilot is an

essential step in growing Rotary in our Zone, while still upholding Rotary's core values and essence.

"We're recognising that today one size no longer fits all. We were highly successful with our traditional roles and traditional governance structure for well over a century, and they have served us well," says John.

"But just as in any organisation – and Paul Harris said it best – Rotary needs to be evolutionary at all times, and revolutionary

occasionally. And I'd argue that given some of the challenges we're facing in some regions around the world, it's almost a moment to be revolutionary."

Here, three Rotarians in the Pilot's Corporate and Administration Regionalisation Establishment Team (RET) explain three ways you and your club can take part in the implementation of these new roles over the coming months.

Vote in the Regional Council election

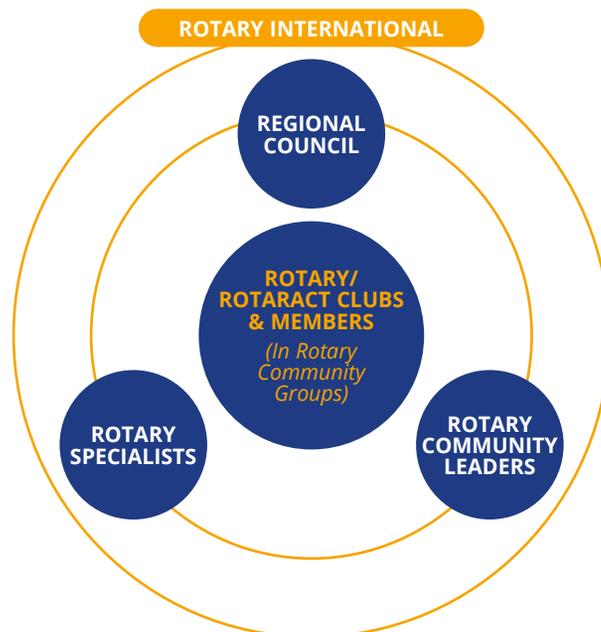
Ian Scott from the Rotary Club of Central Blue Mountains, NSW, is the co-lead of the Corporate and Administration RET, responsible for handling what he calls the "fun governance stuff" of the pilot.

Part of his job is organising the election for the Regional Council, the body that will represent and support clubs in Zone 8 at a regional level.

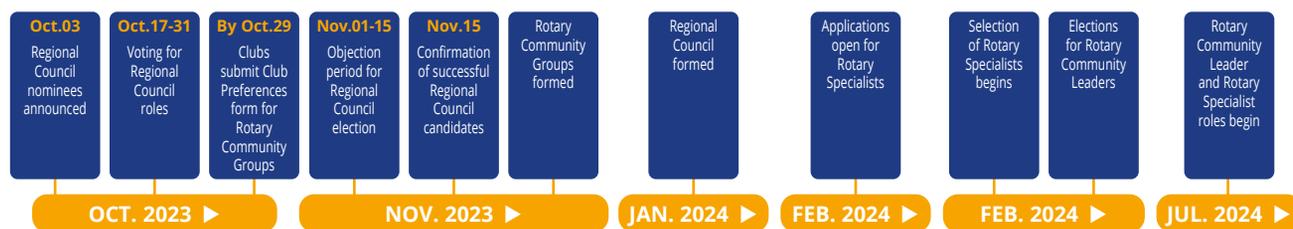
Ian says the Regional Council is a fundamental part of tailoring Rotary and Rotaract to suit the specific needs of the zone.

"We'll have one voice for the whole zone, we'll be able to put together zone-wide

PROPOSED REGIONAL MODEL



KEY PILOT MILESTONES



public image campaigns and zone-wide fundraising, of course also tailored for the specific countries in the zone.”

Voting for nine positions on the Regional Council opens on Tuesday, October 17 and closes on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 AEDT, with votes to be submitted by club presidents.

Ian recommends clubs discuss who will be the best fit for each role once Regional Council nominees are made public on the *Creating Tomorrow* website on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 AEDT.

“Think carefully about the ballot when it comes out, and vote so we get a good strong mandate for the Regional Council!”

Discuss and submit your club’s preferences for Rotary Community Groups

Rotary Community Groups lead and member of the Rotary Club of Beaufort, WA, Alison Dalziel, is working to implement a new way of grouping clubs in Zone 8. Each club will be placed into a Rotary Community Group (RCG) with other clubs who share something in common with them.

RCGs are designed to help clubs collaborate more with each other, allowing them to work more effectively and at a larger scale than they could on their own.

Each club will submit one Club Preferences form by October 29, 2023, 11:59pm AEDT, specifying how they’d like to be grouped with other clubs.

The Regionalisation team, along with district leaders, will use this information to allocate each club to RCGs, accommodating club preferences where possible.

Two key points your club should think about are:

- The **primary** way you’d like to be grouped with other clubs, based on commonalities such as geography, type of club, or shared language.
- Whether you’d like to be part of a **secondary** grouping, an informal online network based on a shared interest.

Alison encourages all clubs to discuss their preferred groupings so club officers can answer the Club Preferences form based on the views of their members.

“What difference can you see it would make to have more collaboration and a much higher level of support? What would be possible? What could you create as a club in that environment?” says Alison.

Consider applying to become a Rotary Specialist

Tania Broadbent from the Rotary Club of Eumundi, Qld, is the Rotary Specialist Network lead, working to get the new Rotary Specialist volunteer role up and running.

Each Rotary Specialist will draw on their expertise in a particular field or subject matter to provide expert advice to clubs that request their guidance, covering potential topics such as conflict resolution, insurance and club compliance, among many others.

Tania encourages Rotarians and Rotaractors from a diverse range of backgrounds to consider applying to be a Rotary Specialist when applications open in February 2024.

“This role is open to members who may not have previously had the opportunity to share their expertise outside of their club environment.

“We also hope that members who have held district positions will apply to become Rotary Specialists, and continue to share their expertise with members and clubs within Zone 8,” says Tania. ^{RD04}



Visit www.creatingtomorrowrotary.org and follow the new Facebook page at www.facebook.com/creatingtomorrowrotary for regular updates on the pilot.

Our goal is in sight



On October 24, we renew our commitment to our top humanitarian goal for World Polio Day.

This year, let's remember a young health worker in Pakistan known as Bibi Marjana (Miss Marjana). She braves the snow and cold in the mountains to vaccinate 84 children in rural areas, visiting each home, often miles apart.

Miss Marjana is one of the thousands of frontline workers in Afghanistan, Pakistan and outbreak areas I consider heroes in the final push to end polio. The work they do, coupled with the vision of our partners and the support you give, are moving mountains.

With Rotary's partnership, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative is aggressively pursuing two key goals from its 2022-26 strategy. First, we aim to halt wild poliovirus type 1 transmission. This year, only six cases have been documented as of this writing. Could this be the year we see the last of these poliovirus cases? We're cautiously optimistic that it might.

Second, we aim to report the final case of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2, or cVDPV2, in outbreak countries. About 80 per cent of cVDPV2 cases last year occurred in sub-national areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Yemen. We must implement tailored strategies to stop the virus in these areas.

Other challenges persist, including political tensions, security risks and access issues, and the lasting effect of the pandemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Despite these challenges, we are making progress. Poliovirus strains are diminishing, as is the number of affected regions where polio once prevailed. A new vaccine we have introduced reduces the incidence of the circulating vaccine-derived virus type 2.

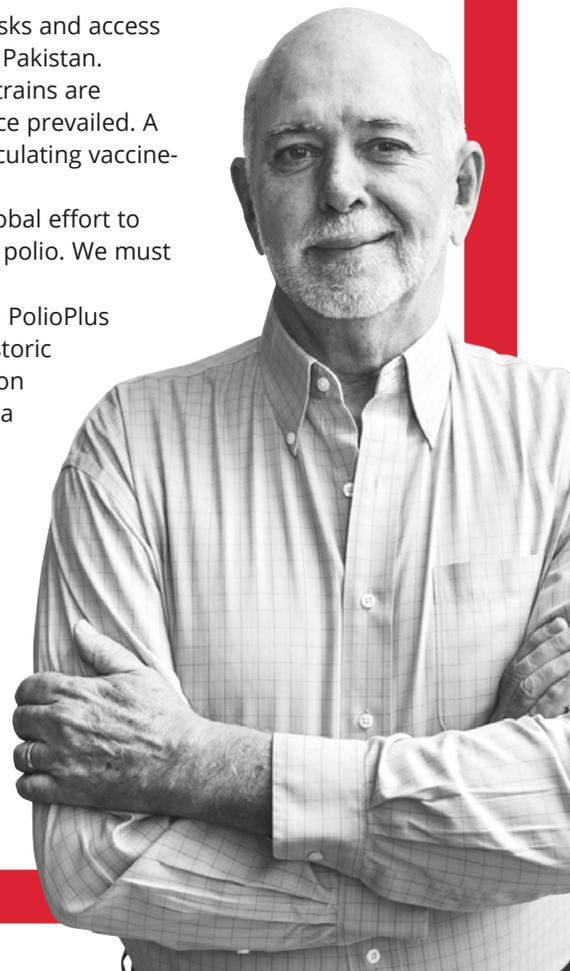
Rotary is the organisation that had the audacity to take on a global effort to protect children everywhere from disability or even death due to polio. We must have the tenacity to see it to the finish line.

What can you do to help us get there, you ask? Join or initiate a PolioPlus Society in your club or district and engage all members in this historic moment. And don't forget that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation continues to amplify Rotary's donations to polio eradication with a 2-to-1 match for every dollar.

You can also advocate the cause of polio eradication with governments to secure political and financial support and promote Rotary's leadership role in all media.

Like Miss Marjana marching up the mountain, we have our goal in sight, and we will keep going until we get there.

By PRIP Barry Rassin
Foundation trustee chair



The final push: Together we end polio

POLIO is the world's forgotten disease, which should be in history books. It is a paralysing and potentially fatal disease that still threatens children in a few corners of the globe, but is now on the brink of eradication.

Our Rotary community has been at the forefront of this battle since 1985 through the *PolioPlus* program. The number of polio cases has plummeted by over 99.9 per cent, from 350,000 cases in 125 countries to just a few in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We should be proud that this monumental feat would not have been possible

without the relentless work of Rotary members who have contributed not only financially but also countless volunteer hours to immunise more than 2.5 billion children.

Today, we are closer than ever to making history, and we must not slow down our efforts. While World Polio Day is October 24, I am sure we can do more than amplify our message for one day. So, this year, as a way to highlight polio for at least one month, for all of October the Public Image team and I will be walking for those who can't. We are challenging ourselves to collectively walk or run 300km throughout the month and raise vital funds that will help eradicate and prepare us for a polio-free world. Please do support us to help end polio via www.rotarywalkwithus.org/fundraisers/zone8publicimageteam

As always, if you need any help with public image please do contact the Zone Public Image team of Darryl Iseppi, Ros Teirney, Malini Raghwan, Liz Courtney, Wayne Milnes, Barry Antees, Sandi Fulcher, Nicole Shanks and myself. Our contact details are on the Rotary Zone 8 website (www.rotaryzone8.org) under the Public Image tab. We'd love to hear from you. **RDV**



Sarita McLean
Public Image
Coordinator,
Zone 8



FOUNDATION MOMENTS

Quick insights into *your* charity — The Rotary Foundation

WHAT ARE ROTARY'S AREAS OF FOCUS?

We concentrate our efforts in order to maximize our local and global impact. Our most successful and sustainable projects and activities tend to address these causes, and all humanitarian projects, scholars, and vocational training teams funded by The Rotary Foundation's global grants work toward specific goals in these areas of focus:

- **Peacebuilding and conflict prevention:** Rotary encourages conversations to foster understanding within and across cultures. We train adults and young leaders to prevent and mediate conflict and help refugees who have fled dangerous areas.
- **Disease prevention and treatment:** We educate and equip communities to stop the spread of life-threatening diseases like polio, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. We improve and expand access to low-cost and free health care in developing areas.
- **Water, sanitation, and hygiene:** We support local solutions to bring clean water, sanitation, and hygiene to more people. We share our expertise and work alongside community leaders and educators to make sure our projects succeed in the long term.



How do you want to get involved in the causes you're most passionate about? Other areas of focus to follow next month.

< Visit my.rotary.org/donate

The
Rotary
Foundation





A Country Vet Christmas
 Alissa Callen, Lily Malone, Penelope Janu, Stella Quinn and Pamela Cook
 HarperCollins
 RRP: \$32.99

A heartwarming collection of five brand-new festive stories from favourite Australian authors about country vets, love and small-town Christmas charm.

Snowy Mountains Mistletoe by Alissa Callen:

After losing his

fiancée, orthopaedic vet Trent has found peace in small town Bundilla. But when a smart-talking city girl goes out of her way to avoid him and all things festive, perhaps this holiday season it's the time to give his heart a second chance.

The Countdown to Christmas by Penelope Janu:

For small-town vet Amber, Christmas is everything money can't buy. For infuriatingly attractive big-city blow-in Jasper, it's simply a season of commerce. But when Jasper joins the fight to save the town's medical centre – and promises to take Christmas to heart – Amber is forced to take

stock. Could Jasper be all her Christmases come at once?

A Cattle Dog for Christmas by Stella Quinn:

Travelling vet Elliot comes to Hanrahan as a Christmas locum. If hardworking supermum Sandy had time for a bloke (which she doesn't) she'd be choosing a keeper, not some charming rogue who has a lifelong habit of never sticking around. But a seemingly untrainable cattle dog just might bring them together.

A Country Music Christmas by Lily Malone:

No one in the small town of Chalk Hill would know that

For your chance to win a copy of *A Country Vet Christmas*, email giveaways@rotarydownunder.com.au with 'A Country Vet Christmas' in the subject line. Please include your contact details, including delivery address.



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IN MEMORIAM 2022-23

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Past District Governor H. Mitchell (Mitch) Clarke. Mitch, who was a member of the Rotary Club of Proserpine, Qld, was district governor in 1969-70, in what was then District 255. He passed away on October 13, 2022.

Unfortunately, we only became aware of Mitch's passing following our In Memoriam listing in the August edition of *Rotary Down Under*.



10th October

LIFT THE LID
on mental illness

Rotary
Districts of Australia

www.australianrotaryhealth.org.au

the new vet in town is actually a famous country music star. Jolene has spent most of her life trying to outrun scandal, but if she keeps running this Christmas, will she lose her chance for love?

A Christmas to Remember by Pamela Cook:

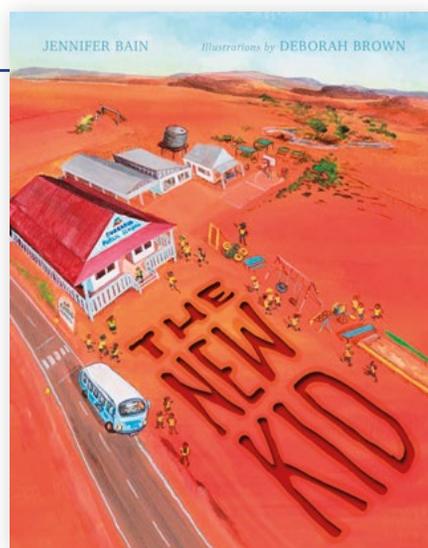
When runaway vet Darcy returns to Australia to see her aging parents, she has no intention of staying. But a dangerous fire threatening the town and the strangely charismatic wildlife refuge director Chad have her thinking twice.

The New Kid **Jennifer Bain** **Illustrated by** **Deborah Brown** **Woodslane Press** **RRP: \$27.99**

When the students of Burraroo Public School skipped through their dusty red playground and into class, they saw the most gobsmacking thing. Starting at a new school can be hard, but imagine if you are a bunyip! Set in a fictional outback Australian

school, this is a story about being accepted, finding a place to belong, the value of kindness, and how important it is to say sorry.

This is a great book to share with kids who are anxious about



starting a new school. It features multi-racial children in an Australian outback setting. And it offers children a springboard to finding out about the Australian mythical creature known as a bunyip.

For your chance to win a copy of *The New Kid*, email giveaways@rotarydownunder.com.au with 'The New Kid' in the subject line. Please include your contact details, including delivery address.



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Contact us for a FREE program guide Ph: 0444 565 780 or E: orders@pride-of-workmanship.com

Exploring Hidden Sydney



RIGHT: Trevor McAlister, of the Rotary Club of Epping, NSW, takes groups on unique walking tours around Sydney offering little-known insights into the city's hidden secrets.

RETIREMENT in 2006 began as a challenge for Trevor McAlister, of the Rotary Club of Epping, NSW.

"I needed useful ways of filling the space recently vacated by teaching," says Trevor. "I wanted to find an activity that would absorb at least the next 30 years."

Trevor joined a Sydney bushwalking group called The Bush Club and soon began leading walks; not along bush tracks where scrambling over slippery rocks and across leach-infested creeks was part of the adventure, but

on Council laid pavements where cappuccinos and slices of carrot cake were never more than a block away.

To make these comfortable walks more interesting, Trevor began researching some of the places the group passed along the way and then pointing out things others may not have noticed.

There was a tiny James Barnett exquisitely carved into the sandstone above the 'Italy' keystone on the GPO colonnade, a bullet hole in the marble adjacent to Platform 1 on Central Railway Station, a cathedral that had been built facing the wrong way, and numerous tiny cat footprints leading in the direction of 'Trim' outside the Mitchell Library. Each detail had a hidden story to tell.

"Some made me smile... others horrified me," says Trevor. "I hoped I might share these with others, and it seemed to work."

"My walks proved popular, and my audiences grew. My repertoire of material also grew. People told me about things. Google filled in the details for me. It all expanded into *Exploring Hidden Sydney* – a book of over 700 features in and around Sydney's CBD."

Having been a Rotarian since 1998, Trevor decided that if a publisher was willing

to publish his stories and pictures, then he would donate any proceeds to The Rotary Foundation.

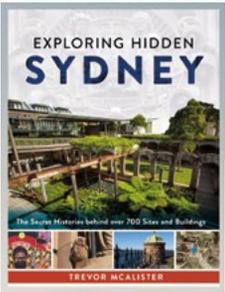
"It was a charity I knew helped a great many people and maybe Rotary might help my publisher to sell a few books as well."

The journey proved an exciting ride; it opened a great many opportunities for Trevor to engage with walking groups, historical societies, Probus clubs, U3A groups, and many Rotary clubs as well.

The book has been a great success, with close to \$10,000 raised for The Rotary Foundation to date.

The unique local guide is full of Trevor's photos, maps, and clear directions, and makes a compelling reference for anyone wanting to find out about some of Sydney's secret histories and places.

To contribute to Trevor's growing list of hidden places or for (free) speaking engagements, contact Trevor via trevormcalister7@gmail.com



Raising funds for The Rotary Foundation

Exploring Hidden Sydney by Trevor McAlister is available from all good bookstores and online from woodslanepress.com.au. *Rotary Down Under* readers are entitled to a 15% discount through the Woodslane Press website, simply enter the code EXPLORE15 at the checkout (note delivery costs apply). For all orders specific to this promotion The Rotary Foundation will receive 20% of net sales.

ROTARY AT A GLANCE



Rotarians: 1,178,368 in 36,971 clubs in 528 Districts in 221 countries/geographic areas.

Rotaractors: 165,686 in 11,203 clubs in 504 districts in 181 countries/geographic areas.

Interactors: 326,554 in 14,163 clubs in 486 districts in 144 countries/geographic areas.

Rotary Community Corps members: 200,615 in 13,087 clubs in 267 districts in 101 countries/geographic areas.

As at August 31, 2023, there are 22,762 Rotary members in 985 clubs in 15 districts in Australia, and 6,415 Rotary members in 249 clubs in five districts in New Zealand and the Pacific. In addition, there are 723 Rotaract members in 57 clubs in Australia and 297 Rotaract members in 17 clubs in New Zealand and the Pacific. Australian and New Zealand districts include Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, where there are 568 Rotarians in 36 clubs and 224 Rotaractors in 12 clubs.

OBJECT OF ROTARY



The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

- 1 The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- 2 High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- 3 The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business and community life;
- 4 The advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

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