

ROTARY CLUB OF SOUTHPORT

# 70th Anniversary



1945 to 2015





*June and Des Roberts 2005*



*Barb Overell PHF 1995*



*Sally and Tony Pritchett, 1980*



*Rotary Park*



*Australian Grand Prix Circuit, 1954*



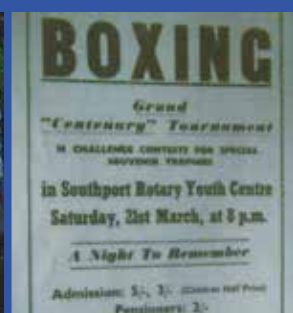
*Lisa Locke*



*Southport Hotel 1890*



*Youth Exchange tree Planting by Ira Puspita*



*Boxing at the Rotary Youth Centre 1959*



*Southport Rotary Float*



*Peter Overell & the Year of the Rooster, 1985*



*Lea D'Almeida and Annie Dorian Induction 1999*



*Kay-oni Suchi (Japan) and host families, 1987*



*Fishing. Frazer East*



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# INTRODUCTION

## BY PRESIDENT LEA RICKWOOD

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You hold in your hands a document that represents more than the 70 years of history of the Rotary Club of Southport. It is also a very interesting insight into the beach resort town of Southport and the people who were instrumental in forming the oldest Rotary Club on the Gold Coast. Rarely am I excited about history, but the first few pages certainly captured my imagination. Further reading did not disappoint. Michael Irving provides substance about the men and women who have contributed, inspired and worked tirelessly to make life better in our community and abroad.

Sadly the values and ideals of "service above self" are undervalued in today's busy world of instant gratification, win at all costs and

money is god. This book reflects a different set of principles and a philosophy that impacts worldwide in a quiet, dignified and sometimes unnoticed way.

As the current president of the Rotary Club of Southport, It is my honour to thank Michael Irving for his inspiration, dedication and perspiration in making this book something to be treasured by future generations. I trust that you will be as serious about reading it as Michael was in writing and researching Southport Rotary - 70 Years of Service above Self.

**Lea Rickwood**

*President*

Rotary Club of Southport 2015 - 2016

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# FOREWORD

## BY MICHAEL IRVING

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Rotarians are quiet achievers in our society, as they do not seek publicity for the good that they do in the world through the fellowship of Rotary. What is not widely appreciated is that Rotarians do much outside their Rotary commitments to assist their local, national and international communities. Southport Rotarians have made major contributions to the development of the Gold Coast, and it has been an honour and a pleasure to chronicle some of these as part of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the chartering of this Rotary club. In writing this history, I

am conscious that I have not been able to mention all of the activities undertaken by Southport Rotarians over the last 70 years. This is not to imply that those contributions were not valued, and we recognise with gratitude the many selfless contributions of all Southport Rotarians. I hope that when you read this history, that you, like me will be proud of your involvement with Southport Rotary.

**Michael Irving**

*Past President*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I must express my gratitude to the following Southport Rotarians who have recorded the history of this club over the last 70 years: Denny Ridgeway, Norm Watts, John Rootes, Don Cummins and Murray Prior. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Gold Coast City Council Local Studies Library for the use of digital images and archived newspaper reports, and the Rotarian and Trove in the National Library of Australia for published articles on Southport Rotary. Historical information was also obtained

from "Southport: Images of Yesteryear 1880-1955" by John Longhurst and "1882-2010 Southport" by Kevin Litfin. I would also like to thank the many Rotarians who willingly recorded their memories of their early days in Rotary, and to Peter Overell, Lionel Perry (Jnr), Lea Rickwood and Roz Irving who helped edit this manuscript.

**Michael Irving**  
*Past President*



*Changeover, 1981*



## Chapter 1

# SOUTHPORT ROTARY THE EARLY DAYS

By 1884, Nerang Heads, later named Southport, was Queensland's beach resort for the "establishment", and many grand Victorian homes were built for holidayers. The mouth of the Nerang River was near the current location of Southport Lifesavers Club at Main Beach, and Marine Parade was a surf beach. Mrs. and Miss Davenport established the Goy-te-lea school (now St Hilda's School) for the upper five-hundred ladies of Queensland, and the shanty huts that had provided goods and grog for inland timber cutters and sugar plantations were soon replaced with emporia catering to the needs of the genteel visitors to Southport. The railway from Beenleigh to Southport was completed in 1893, and Southport became the holiday capital of Queensland.

Southport had boom and bust cycles, which were further compounded by cyclones and floods, and it was not until 1925 when the Jubilee Bridge across the Nerang River was completed that vehicular traffic could easily access the beaches south of this river. By this



*Chelmsford Guest House*

time, the build up of sand in the mouth of the river caused the formation of the Broadwater, and Southport became very popular because of its safer, still waters. The increased access to Southport by motor vehicles meant that Southport became the administrative and service centre for the hinterland. Theodore's Café, the Regent and Pier cinemas, the Pacific hotel, Symonds bookstore and Birkbeck's Jewellers were all examples of the 1930's buildings.

*Carey's Corner,  
New Year Celebrations 1954*



The formation of the Rotary Club of Southport resulted from conversations between Cec Carey from Southport and Brisbane Rotarian Cec Sweetman as they traveled by train from Brisbane to Rockhampton in 1944 to attend a grocer's conference. Cec had a mixed grocery business on the corner of Nerang and Scarborough Streets known as Carey's corner. This was the same site where some thirty years later Rotarian Peter Hobart located his real estate business. In October 1944, the Southport Rotary club charter committee wrote

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*Theodore's Café 1950's*

to the Governor of Rotary District 56 seeking permission to form a Rotary Club at Southport. The District Governor visited Southport and indicated that if a minimum of 15 charter members could be confirmed then he would approve the establishment of the Rotary club of Southport. The Southport Rotary Club held its first provisional meeting in May 1945 in the Hotel Cecil, and the club was admitted to Rotary on the 20th of August 1945, with the sponsoring club being the Rotary club of South Brisbane. The club received its charter on the 8th of November 1945, with over 350 Rotarians and dignitaries attending, and at this meeting the club's first community service project, a bookcase and library, were given to the local boy scouts. The Charter indicates that Southport Rotary was the 6069th Rotary Club chartered in the world. Sadly the practice of numbering Rotary Club charters was discontinued in 1951.

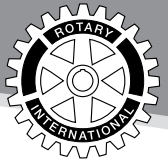
Southport Rotary Club soon became the focus of fellowship for the business community of Southport. By early 1946, the club had grown so much that it moved its meetings to the Pacific Hotel and then to Theodore's Café in Nerang Street. Theodore's Café was the home for Southport Rotary for many years, and consisted of a shop-front milk bar, an internal café, behind which was a meeting room. Meetings were formal affairs, and suits and ties were mandatory,

and Rotarians were not permitted to remove their coats at meetings.

After chartering Southport Rotary, the Rotary Club of South Brisbane participated in many joint club meetings, some held at Southport and some in Brisbane. In 1947 there was a joint meeting at the Southport Golf Club, and members from both clubs had afternoon tea with the Coolangatta Rotarians. All three clubs also had joint meetings with the Murwillumbah club, and joint meetings between Brisbane, Southport and New South Wales clubs were a common feature of Rotary life until new District boundaries were implemented in the 1960's.

The 1947 census recorded 8467 residents in Southport, but life was not all beach and fun. Building materials were scarce, there was no sewerage, and most houses relied on tank water. Lionel Perry recalls that when his father was appointed health surveyor to the Southport Town Council in 1946, their first home was a tent on a block of land in Marine Parade. School children at the Southport Primary School would walk down Scarborough Street to the South Coast Dairy, and pay a penny for a half pint of fresh milk. Southport was a town providing services to the hinterland rural communities as well as tourists.





## Chapter 2

# SOUTHPORT ROTARY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOLD COAST

After the end of World War 2 more people were attracted to live permanently on the coast for lifestyle reasons. Consequently many new businesses were established to cater for the permanent residents as well as the growing numbers of tourists. Southport Rotarians played major roles in establishing many new businesses.



*Cec Carey 1960*

Many of the foundation Rotarians were retailers. Foundation Club President Cec Carey had a mixed goods business on the corner of Nerang Street and Scarborough Street, and he was the State member for Albert from 1960-1969. Another retailer,

Joe Allison developed a reputation as an international Rotarian visitor who brought back to the club new ideas from overseas clubs. The Rotarian, Rotary International's magazine recorded in its December 1951 issue *"Route Record?? When business took Joseph Allison away from his home club of Southport, Australia, it didn't take him away from Rotary. Though he was gone for year, he attended 53 meetings in 46 Rotary clubs in 8 countries. Is this a record?"* Was he the first 100% attendee in our club? Arch Thams was a newsagent who was the treasurer of Southport Rotary from 1946 to 1985. Alan Hollindale joined the club in 1954. Alan was involved in establishing the Gold Coast Dairy Co-operative in Labrador and was a leading figure in the amalgamation of the Southport and Oxenford Race clubs to form the Gold Coast Turf Club. He was elected Chairman of the Club and helped establish the Magic Millions race. In addition he was an alderman in the Gold Coast City Council. Cedric Birkbeck, who was the founding treasurer of the club, was an optometrist and jeweller. Jock Rutherford was a well-known magistrate for many years. Wonder Wood was involved in freight transportation, and he drove the first truck with relief supplies into the flood-affected areas in the Hunter Valley in 1954. His trucks were willingly donated for many purposes including square dance calling and the provision of a Rotary Float in the Melbourne Moomba procession. Mal Burke was a retailer who organized the road races at Bundall and the boxing tournaments at the Rotary Youth Centre.

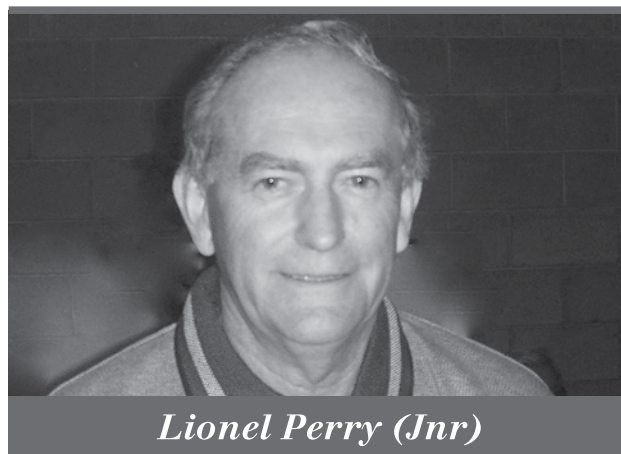
# 70th Anniversary



*Jack Cronin*

J.D. (Jack) Cronin was largely responsible for creating the Gold Coast that we know today. Jack was appointed engineer in charge of the Southport Town Council in 1947 and when the Southport Council and Coolangatta Council amalgamated in 1948 he was appointed engineer-in-charge of the new Council, which later became the Gold Coast City Council. He joined Southport Rotary in 1949 and was President in 1956-1957. He was responsible for the construction of roads, storm water drainage, land subdivision, water supply, sewerage, beach erosion, bridges and canals. He was a pioneer in the field of beach erosion when he supervised the construction of a rock wall from Narrow Neck to Main Beach in 1954, and again in 1967 after Cyclone Dina. He initiated the pumping of sand from the Broadwater onto the beaches to replace sand lost in storms. He supervised the construction of dams for water supply in Tallebudgera Creek, Little Nerang and the Hinze dam, along with major treatment works. He also supervised the construction of the Gold Coast, Tallebudgera Creek and

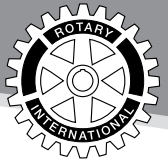
Currumbin Creek bridges, and he had to alter the design of the Gold Coast Bridge so that the Queen's barge could pass under it. His first sub-division was Rankin Estate at Main Beach and using sand pumped from the Southport Yacht club basin, Mackintosh Island was filled for the new Gold Coast Highway, which bypassed Narrow Neck. The R.Q. Oates sub-division at Lands End was the first canal sub-division, and Jack provided the guidelines for the many successful canal subdivisions that followed. Jack retired in 1979, and was a dedicated Rotarian until he died in 1998. Jack's legacy is the quality lifestyle infrastructure that we all enjoy today in the sixth largest city in Australia.



*Lionel Perry (Jnr)*

Lionel Perry (Senior) and Lionel Perry (Junior) have been stalwarts of Southport Rotary since 1953. Lionel Perry (Snr) was appointed the health inspector of the Southport Town Council in 1946. Included in his responsibilities were parks and gardens, and he and Mick Shamburg developed most of the parks and gardens in the Gold Coast City. A keen orchid grower, Lionel (Snr) regularly exhibited orchids at the Brisbane Exhibition. A park at the end of Ferny Avenue in Surfers Paradise commemorates his dedication to parks and gardens. However it was his and his wife's commitment to establish and run Southport Meals on Wheels, which is their lasting legacy on the coast.





Lionel Perry (Jnr) commenced work in 1952 as a 15-year old switchboard operator for the South Coast Town Council. Over the next 50 years he moved from department to department, working in every section except rates. He held the position of Chief Health Surveyor, and was in charge of beaches and foreshores, but it was his involvement with civil defence, which later became the State Emergency Services that saw him take on the role of managing disasters such as floods, cyclones and beach erosion. Lionel was, and still is known as the man of four words. If there was a problem, Lionel's response was always "leave it to me".



*Barb and Peter Overell,  
40th Changeover*

"Overells" was an iconic chain of Queensland clothing stores started in 1893 by Peter Overell's great-grandfather. In 1955 the last of the Brisbane stores, located in the Valley was sold and in 1956 Jim Overell decided to open a shop in a burnt-out café in Nerang Street. It was a general mercery and drapery shop but quickly grew when Jim secured the rights to sell the school clothing requirements for The Southport School and St Hilda's schools. Jim joined Southport Rotary in 1959, and had a distinguished career in local government becoming Deputy Mayor where he was highly regarded for his integrity. Peter boarded at The Southport School from 1956-1959 and worked in Brisbane before coming back to Southport to manage the shop when his father became ill. He was active in Jaycees before joining Southport Rotary in 1979.

Ron Burling joined the club in 1965 when he was establishing his architectural practice. He remembered the formality of Southport Rotary club meetings and he was disappointed to be required to resign when he relocated his practice outside the boundaries for the Southport Rotary club. Ron subsequently became Rotary District Governor in 1977-1978. In 1972 Ron and Darrell Brown founded Burling Brown & Partners Ltd, which has an international reputation for the design of high-rise residential buildings and private and public schools. Darrell Brown was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Southport to be a member of a Group Study Exchange in 1972 to southwest Pennsylvania, and he has been selected to be District Governor in 2017-2018.



*Darrell Brown and Ron Burling,  
Rivage Royale 1990*

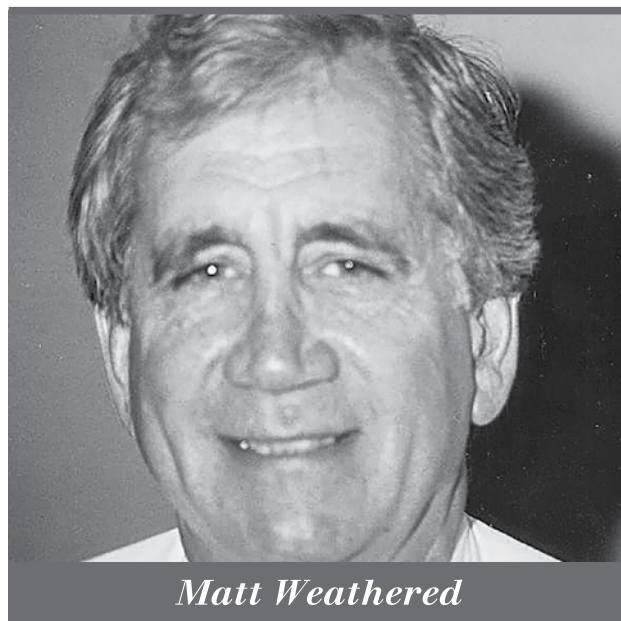
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Peter Hobart grew up in rural Queensland being at different times a pineapple farmer, grazier, shearer, officer for the United Graziers Association and eventually national manager for Amalgamated Chemicals which was a major fertilizer and pesticide supplier. In 1973 Peter and Jenny decided to leave Melbourne and establish a real estate business on the Gold Coast. Peter soon became one of the leading real estate agents in the Gold Coast. He fondly remembers the friends that he made in the early days, many of whom



*Peter and Jenny Hobart 1975*

were Southport Rotarians, and the schooling experiences of his four boys, firstly at Miss Ernaut's kindergarten under the large fig tree in the now Australia Fair and subsequently at The Southport School. In addition to his successful real estate business, Peter and Jenny played many leadership roles in developing education in the Gold Coast, and in 1995 Griffith University honoured Peter with a Doctor of the University in recognition of his contribution to education. Peter was the Regional Director for the RACQ from 1986-2005, and was the State President of the RACQ from 2000-2003.

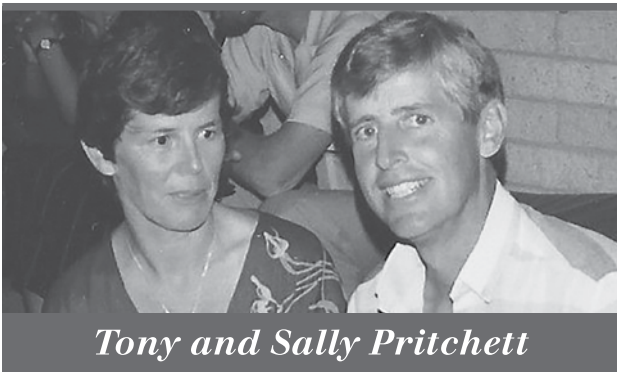
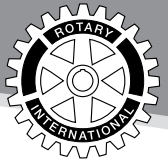


*Matt Weathered*

Matt Weathered initially worked as the Gold Coast partner of Anthony Tod and partners before he launched his own engineering practice in 1978, which evolved to become Weathered and Howe. He supervised the engineering for Kinkabool, the first high-rise building in Surfers Paradise. He was also involved in the construction of Conrad Jupiters and the Treasury casino and was one of the first Gold Coast firms to be involved in offshore projects such as the Hua Lien Theme park in Taiwan. His company purchased and refurbished the old Ambulance Station in Nerang Street. Sadly he died from leukemia aged 65.

Tony and Sally Pritchett immigrated to Australia in July 1980 after deciding there were insufficient opportunities in New Zealand. Tony and eldest daughter Debbie flew to Sydney two weeks before the rest of the family to find a town or city on the east coast that offered better employment prospects. They drove north from Sydney, and arrived at Point Danger at dusk where Tony was excited about the potential for the building industry here. The next day Debbie obtained employment as a dental receptionist

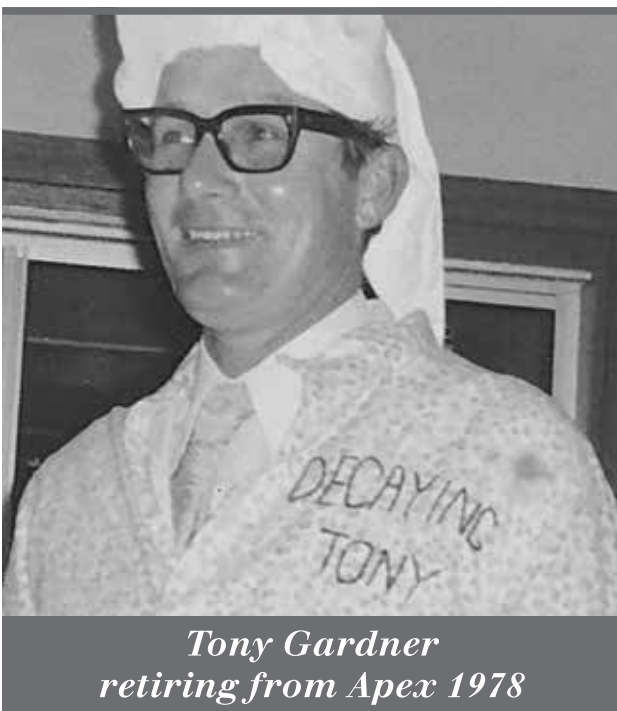




*Tony and Sally Pritchett*

in Southport, and so the family settled in Southport. Tony soon found employment as an architectural draftsman, and subsequently specialised in the design and construction of pole houses. Sally ventured into real estate and in 1992 Sally and Tony purchased Nerang Real Estate. Sally and Tony built up this real estate business until they retired in 2007. Their story is typical of many Southport Rotarians who came to the Gold Coast, saw an opportunity and prospered.

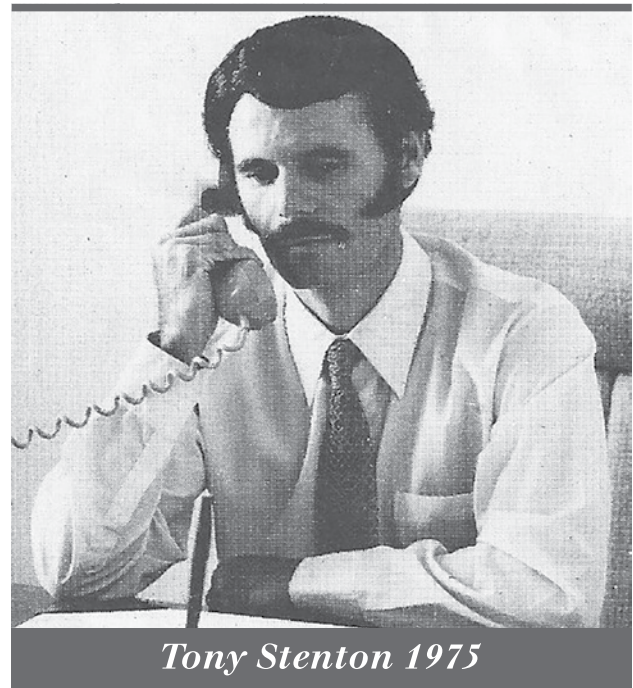
Tony Gardner arrived on the Gold Coast in January 1963 to open the first government dental clinic. His clinic was across the road from the hospital in a flat above a shop with a large sign "Butcher". Soon after, Tony and Mira built their home in Deauville Street. In those days, Ferry Road ended at Bundall.



*Tony Gardner  
retiring from Apex 1978*

Tony joined Southport Rotary after he had to retire from APEX at the age of 40. Tony subsequently formed the Surfers Paradise Dental Centre at Benowa and after retiring he taught dental students at Griffith University.

Tony Stenton was a "Ten-Pound POM" from Sheffield who arrived in Melbourne in 1964. He quickly found employment as a carpet installer, but after a visit to the Gold



*Tony Stenton 1975*

Coast in 1967 sold his home in Melbourne and set up a carpet shop in Miami. He had ambitions to expand his business and after importing a second-hand tufting machine he established the first carpet-manufacturing mill in Queensland in Christine Avenue. He was then offered a four-acre site at Molendinar where the Queensland Government assisted in the construction of a purpose-built factory, which was opened by Premier Joe Bjelke Peterson in 1972. Steady growth of the business resulted in over 50 staff being employed and Tony repaid his debt to the government within four years. In 1986 he sold the business and soon found that he wasn't ready to retire. After dabbling with various ventures such as a hotel in California, oil and gas wells in Kentucky, yarn spinning in

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Victoria, a timber mill and Queensland's first underlay plant he returned to the industry that he knew best and established World Carpets in 1988. This business is one of Queensland's largest independent floor-covering suppliers and currently employs four of his children and three of his grandchildren. He recently handed the running of this successful family business to his daughter who has been with World Carpets since its founding days.

David Randall moved to the coast after serving in the RAAF for eleven years as an engineering officer. Whilst looking for engineering jobs he accepted a position in the National Safety Council offices in Brisbane. Safety was a new word in the building industry, which became a legislated requirement in the Workplace Health and Safety Act of 1989. After two years working in Brisbane as a safety trainer he was appointed manager of the Gold Coast branch of the NSCA. After five years in this position he left to establish David Randall and Associates with clients in



*David Randall 2008*

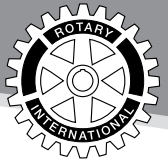
Brisbane, Gladstone and the Gold Coast. The business expanded to include workplace health and safety assessments and training for the Gold Coast City Council, Village Roadshow theme parks and many private schools, construction companies and major hotels. A close friend with a civil engineering background, Steve Penfold, accepted a partnership and directorship in the company, which was renamed DRA Safety Specialists in 2008. The company continues to thrive and the three of the consultants in the company are members of Southport Rotary.



*Murray Bertrand*

Murray Bertrand has a long association with Rotary. He was a member of the Auckland East Rotary Club before, at the age of 60, deciding to relocate to the Gold Coast. Matt Weathered introduced Murray to Gold Coast businesses, which soon supported Murray when he set up a printing business in Broadbeach. He met his partner Denise on a Rotary cruise on the Broadwater, and together they turned Styleprint and Paradise Printers into one of the largest and most respected printing businesses on the coast employing 32 staff. After some time in Broadbeach Rotary, Murray transferred to Southport Rotary where he has generously supported youth and homeless programs.





Murray greatly values his association with Rotary, for the friends and fellowship and the high ethical values of Rotary enunciated in the Four Way test.

The contributions of Southport Rotarians have not gone unnoticed by the Gold Coast Community with a number of parks and buildings named after our Rotarians, which include:

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Akes Avenue at Southport  
 Mal Burke Car Park at Southport  
 Carey Park at Southport  
 Carey Ward at the  
 Gold Coast Hospital  
 Cronin Avenue Main Beach  
 Cronin Island  
 The Jack Cronin Rotary Park at  
 Southport  
 Helen (Cronin) Park at Main Beach  
 Dux Family Oval at Labrador  
 Hobart House at  
 All Saints Anglican School  
 Hollindale Park in Main Beach, the  
 Hollindale Stand and the Hollindale

Stakes at the Gold Coast Turf Club  
 Bob Huth Park in Bundall  
 The Graham Jones Building  
 (Information Centre) at Griffith  
 University, Gold Coast Campus  
 James Overell Park in Southport  
 Lionel Perry Park in Ferny Avenue  
 Lionel F Perry State Emergency Service  
 Building in Southport  
 Jock Rutherford Park at Bundall  
 Thams Park in Southport  
 Matt Weathered  
 Leukemia Lodge in Brisbane  
 Woodroffe Park in Southport

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Southport Rotarians Alan Hollindale (OBE), Cyril Richarde (AM), Lionel G Perry (OAM), Lionel F Perry (OAM), Peter Hobart (OAM) and Graham Jones (AM) have all been invested as members of the Australian Honours Awards.

*Concluding Comments:* These are just some examples of how Southport Rotarians have contributed to the development of the Gold Coast. Establishing a business on the Gold Coast was very different from establishing a business in Brisbane. There was no

manufacturing industry, tourism had its boom and bust cycles and there were few branch offices of government departments on the Gold Coast, and limited financial services. This, by necessity, led to the entrepreneurial spirit of the Gold Coast business community, often reviled and often viewed with great envy. It should also be mentioned that Southport Rotarians helped each other in establishing their businesses, and business networking was a key feature of Southport Rotary.

## Chapter 3

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### SERVICE ABOVE SELF

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Southport Rotarians have served their country with distinction in the armed services. Alan Hollindale, Lionel Perry (Snr) MM, Bob Huth, Harry Hugall, Jim Overell and Keith Robson DFC served with distinction in the Second World War. Jim Scotte and David Randall saw service in the RAAF and Lionel Perry (Jnr), Don Dinneen and Peter Hobart were national servicemen. Special mention should be made of Keith Robson. Keith was an air force navigator who flew 24 missions in 467 Lancaster Squadron, and he was awarded the DFC. On his 14th mission his aircraft was hit and he was forced to bail out over France. After being housed by the French resistance he made his way back to England, where his wife to be, Thelma, thought that his absence was due to him enjoying the sights of Paris! In 2000 Jim Scotte organised for Keith and Thelma to visit Felcourt in France where Keith bailed out during the war.

Southport Rotarians have always been committed to assisting youth. In 1945 the first moves were made to establish a children's playground in Southport. Queen's Park was chosen as the site, and a fund-raising drive commenced. Because of shortages of building materials following the war, the project was finally completed in 1951. The September 1956 edition of the Rotarian noted *"if you are alert as you drive through the sun-splashed sea coast town of Southport, you will note a Rotary Wheel mounted atop a slender pipe stuck up at a children's playground. It signifies that Rotarians of this small city on Australia's east coast provides the sturdy equipment you see there"*. High praise from RI!

In 1950 the club supported a proposal by Rotarian Dr. Wal Mackay to fund three-months of physiotherapy treatment in Brisbane for a

young Southport girl with polio. In subsequent years the club funded the treatment of more Southport children suffering from polio, and in addition, organised bus trips for crippled children in Brisbane to enjoy a day at the coast. Cyril Richarde organised many of these trips and he persuaded Brisbane City Council bus drivers to donate their services. The Club was an early supporter of the Musgrave Special School, and we continue to support this school today. Peter Overell, with the assistance of Barb Overell and Gail Dinneen have for many years been volunteers at Gold Coast Sailability, providing sailing experiences for disabled children and adults. Many Southport Rotarians and Rotaryans are willing volunteers and Southport Rotary has provided funds for the purchase of four dingys as well as life jackets for all sailors and crew.

Southport Rotarians soon realized that there was an urgent need for an indoor sports hall for the youth of Southport, and planning for the Southport Rotary Youth Centre commenced in 1950. Over the years, Southport Rotarians organised fetes and raffles, clay pigeon shoots, boxing tournaments and cinema benefits to raise funds. They brought The Australian Boys Choir from Melbourne to perform at the Pier Theatre in 1952, and in 1954 they staged the Australian Grand Prix, which was watched by over 60,000 people. The following year they organised a motorcycle carnival, which attracted the best riders in Australia. In 1957 the club sponsored Lionel Perry's sister, Ferryl, as the Youth Centre Queen in the Gold Coast Festival of Spring competition. Ferryl was crowned Queen and raised £1500 for the Youth Centre. The second Queen was Margaret Cronin. There were also bequests where several people





*Southport Rotary Youth Centre, The Rotarian January 1960*

donated the sale of their family home to the centre. Initial estimates for the construction of the Youth Centre were £1000 with final construction costs being £13,000. Two Rotary International Presidents visited the Rotary Youth Centre during its construction. On the 29th of November 1955, RI President A.Z. Baker laid the Foundation Stone and in 1958 RI President Clifford Randall inspected the nearly completed centre and told a subsequent State Reception that the Southport Rotary Youth Centre was one of the finest Rotary Projects that he had encountered in Australia.

On the 22nd of November 1958, the Queensland Treasurer Mr. T.A. Hiley opened the Southport Rotary Youth Centre. The South Coast Bulletin reported that "he asked how such a magnificent building cost as little as £13,000, and he praised the efforts of the Rotarians who built the building". It was a day of great celebration in Southport with the Gold Coast's biggest youth parade marching from Convent Hill on the Esplanade to the Rotary Youth Centre. Southport Rotarians conducted a "Mile of Pennies" from the BCC store in Nerang Street to Martin's corner and from Dalton's to Carey's corner and from the Cecil Hotel to Davidson's in Scarborough Street. A fete was held in the afternoon and in the evening a Persian bazaar with dancing and singing.

The Youth Centre was the first indoor basketball court in Queensland, and was a popular boxing centre with boxing tournaments being organised by the Rotary Club. Over the next 50 years Southport Rotarians managed the centre for a number of sporting groups. However, by 2010 the building required major repairs, which were too expensive for the Rotary Club to undertake. The lease was returned to the City Council who demolished the building. It is a sad reflection that the Council did not, as it has on other sites, construct a new youth centre, as there is an acute need for such a building with all the high-rise residential development in Southport.

Community Service was an early club objective. In 1949 the club raised £310 for the Food for Britain appeal, which they continued to support in the 1950's, and in 1959 the club sponsored and found employment in Southport for a British migrant family. Closer to home, in 1949 the club established a "Poor and Needy" fund which over many years was used to fund a range of Australian humanitarian projects. One of these projects was the distribution of Christmas hampers to the poor and elderly in their homes. It was then realised that there was a need to provide meals for the elderly in their own homes so that they were not forced to move into retirement homes.



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A Meals on Wheels service existed in South Brisbane, and a committee of Southport Rotarians sought advice on how to establish a Meals on Wheels service in Southport. Rotarian Russ Gibbons designed a purpose-built kitchen, which could also be extended to include a Senior Citizens hall, and an application was submitted to the Council for a suitable site in Southport for the hall. Southport Rotarians raised the funds necessary to build the kitchen, and the first meal was served to the Mayor, Bruce Small in May 1970. Lionel Perry's mother, Olive, was the first chef providing hot meals five days per week. Southport Rotaryans and Southport Lions members delivered these meals to the elderly, whilst Southport Rotaryans undertook the cleaning of the kitchen for many years. Southport Rotarians and Rotaryans have played major roles in administering and operating Southport Meals on Wheels since its inception, with special

mention to the Perry family for their selfless contributions over many years.

The club has a long tradition of sending relief to victims of cyclones and floods starting with cyclone relief to Mackay families in 1950, but the 1960's and the 1970's were the decades of floods and cyclones on the Gold Coast. Peter Overell recalls one flood where there was over a metre of water in his Nerang Street shop. All the clothes had to be sent to Brisbane by truck for dry-cleaning and he vividly remembers watching the dye running out of the truck as it left Southport. To compound matters, the Overell family had to go to Brisbane to remove all the labels from the clothing before they could be dry-cleaned. However, the bridge over the Logan River was under water, and so the family had to charter a light aircraft to fly to Brisbane. In 1967 Cyclone Dina devastated the Gold Coast and a massive community and military



*Meals on Wheels John Hamilton, Lionel Perry (Snr), Ron Condon, Olive Perry and Russ Gibbons*



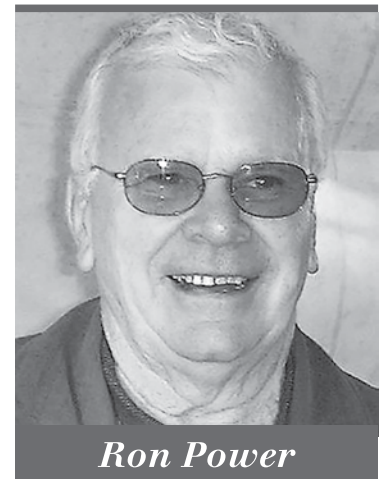


*1967 Cyclone Dina Erosion*

effort was needed to prevent many beachside homes going out to sea. The Southport service clubs worked together to provide assistance. The Jaycees filled sandbags at the Spit, which were used together with car bodies to prevent further erosion. The Southport Lions provided food for all the workers and Southport Rotarians provided food and accommodation for those families forced to leave their homes. Lionel Perry (Jnr) also delivered meals to flood-bound residents by boat. The 1974 flood was the biggest experienced on the Gold Coast. Southport Rotarians were involved in organising home-accommodation for flood victims. Rotarian Ivan Stevens provided free movies in his Mermaid Beach cinema for flood victims.

Ron Power was a Brisbane-born electrician who arrived on the coast in 1959 as the maintenance electrician at the new Lennons Hotel in Broadbeach. His initial contract was for three months, which then extended to three years. In 1962 he established his own refrigeration and electrical service business and joined Southport Rotary in 1982. In

1989 District Governor Alan Still chaired a public meeting to discuss how Rotary might assist youth unemployment on the Gold Coast. Ron was nominated Chair of the Steering Committee and after a shaky start Bridging the Gap Job Help Gold Coast Incorporated commenced operations. The temporary Steering Committee was replaced with a Board of Rotarian Directors including Ron as Chair, and Southport Rotarians Keith Robson, John Saunders, Robin Ramsbothom and Don Dinneen as well as Rotarians from Runaway Bay, Broadbeach, Southport-Broadwater and Surfers Paradise Rotary clubs as well as government officers. Barbara Carlow was the coordinator who soon had strong support from the local community as well as state and federal governments.



*Ron Power*

# 70th Anniversary

In 1992 Lea Rickwood was appointed as Vocational officer coordinating the job advisor service and Aussie-Host programme. By 1998, Bridging the Gap employed 30 staff at Southport, 10 at Nerang and 4 at Palm Beach, and coordinated programmes for all unemployed Gold Coast persons. Eventually most of the Bridging the Gap programmes were subsumed by government bodies and Bridging the Gap ceased operations in 2002. Ron and other Southport Rotarians saw a need and established programmes to help others help themselves.

David Woodhouse was a metallurgist who worked in the mineral sands industry on the Gold Coast in the 1960's and returned to manage the Blue Nursing Service (now Blue Care) when he joined Southport Rotary in 1980. Southport Rotary undertook a major fundraising project to provide a hydrotherapy pool in the Blue Nursing Garden Settlement in Labrador. In addition, club working-bees provided paths with wheelchair access to the pool as well as landscaping areas for dementia patients. Southport Rotarians also assisted the Endeavour foundation. Tony Pritchett designed and supervised the construction of a residential facility for disabled men using unemployed building apprentices. This building is now in use by Paradise Kids and is known as Hopewell Hospice. Mervyn Powell was for many years the Diocesan President of St. Vincent de Paul Society. He oversaw the construction and management of 27 units of independent accommodation to assist homeless parents with children. Southport Rotarians contributed to the landscaping of these units.

Don and Gail Dinneen deserve special mention for their tireless support of many Gold Coast charities. Don was on almost every community board and through his extensive business connections and in conjunction with



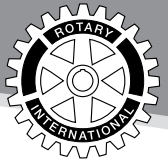
*Gail and Don Dinneen*

Val Jones of the Gold Coast Sun he organised the Southport Rotary monthly Community Awards to selfless people supporting many Gold Coast charities. This was a tradition first started by Southport Rotary in 1966 as the Southport Courtesy Award.

Southport Rotary first provided beach holidays for children from country areas in 1962 when the club sponsored children from Mt. Isa to spend a fortnight at the coast. In 2010 and 2011, Michael Irving and Rotarians from Rotary District 9780 organised a beach holiday for children from drought-affected regions of Victoria and South Australia. The club has also had a long tradition of supporting the education of indigenous Australians, which is continued today by Leanda Cooper, Sue Dux and Helena Knight at the Yalari Centre.

Southport Rotarians have a close association with the Gold Coast hospital. In 1964 the club constructed the first covered bus shelter outside the Gold Coast hospital. In 1978 the Minister for Health named one of the wards after the Charter President of Southport Rotary, Cec Carey. For many years, Michael Irving was a member of the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation and David Childs and Beth Dermoudy were executive officers of this foundation, which raises funds for improved clinical services at the hospital. Southport Rotary still continues this support and in 2015 donated \$30,000 to provide a Lightwriter to assist patients with communication difficulties, and an Accuvein, which illuminates veins for easy cannulation.





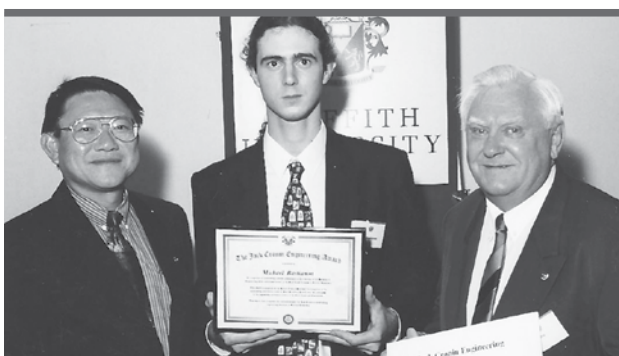
## CHAPTER 4

# EDUCATION

As early as 1948 the club had allocated £25 for Youth Education. Bursaries for the best results in the State Scholarship examination were awarded to Southport students and these bursaries continued until the Scholarship examinations were abolished in 1962. Southport Rotary was the first club in District 265 to sponsor Youth Exchange students with Roberta Escandel from Pennsylvania being our inbound student, and Kay Donnan hosted by the Rotary Club of Sharon Pennsylvania and Margaret Anning hosted by the Pauls Rotary Club of Oklahoma were our outbound students. In 1988, Michael Irving persuaded the club to recognise the outstanding contributions of Jack Cronin to Rotary and the development of the Gold Coast. Funds were raised for the perpetual award of the Jack Cronin scholarship for the top first-year student in Civil Engineering at Griffith University. In 2011 the club endorsed a recommendation that funds be raised to recognise the contributions of Peter and Jenny Hobart to education, and the club

both of these scholarships all report how these scholarships have enhanced their careers and they are most grateful to Southport Rotarians for supporting them.

Southport Rotarians have played a major role in the development of education on the Gold Coast. In the early days, the Council "loaned" Council equipment on weekends to charitable bodies constructing schools and parks. On weekends, a Council grader and dozer were used to assist the landscaping of Aquinas College, using fill provided by the Council. Jack Cronin was a founder of Aquinas College, and Peter Hobart, Michael Irving and Ron Burling all served on the governing bodies of The Southport School and All Saints Anglican School. Peter Hobart, Peter Overell and Graham Cooper were guarantors when All Saints School was established. Greg Dux is a descendent of one of the earliest settlers in the Labrador-Southport area. They were a well known oystering and fishing family, and the Dux family has held a professional fishing license for over 100 years. Although he was not born in Southport, Greg returned to his ancestral roots when he was appointed Deputy-Principal of Southport High School in 1983 and in 1989 as Principal of Nerang High school until his retirement in 2001. Greg continued his love of science teaching at Bond University for some years and joined Southport Rotary in 2003. Rotarian Alan Ware was a Master at the Southport School, and for many years he organized boys from that school to door knock for the Salvation Army appeal with Southport Rotarians providing transport for the students.



*Jack Cronin Scholarship 1999.  
Professor Yew-Chaye Loo,  
Michael Bastionon and Cliff Rix*

established the Peter and Jenny Hobart Medical Bursary for medical students at Griffith University. The successful recipients of

The 1980's were the decade when the Gold Coast came of age. With more and

# 70th Anniversary

more people residing on the coast, there were sufficient employment opportunities for professionals who were used to, and demanded, quality education for their children. Schools such as All Saints and Somerset College quickly became leading academic schools in Queensland, much to the surprise of the Brisbane establishment. In addition to TAFE, there was a similar need for higher education as the number of year 12 students rapidly increased, and Gold Coasters were not prepared to have to send their children to Brisbane for higher education.



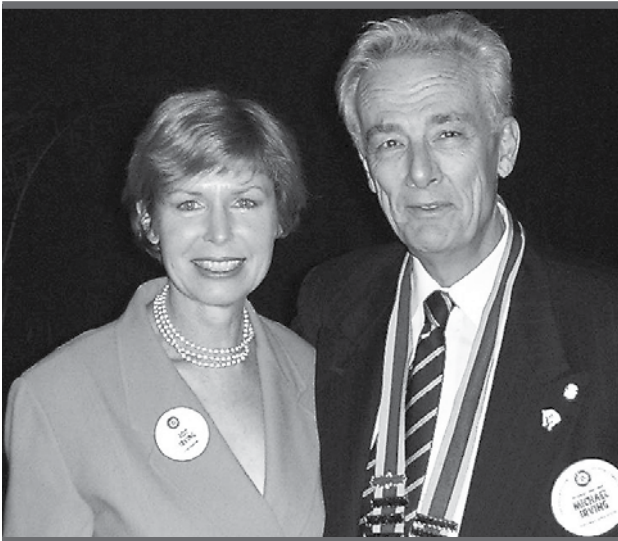
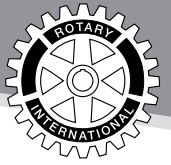
*Graham and Marion Jones 1987*

In 1985 the Queensland Government agreed to legislate for the establishment of the first Gold Coast institution of higher education titled The Gold Coast College of Advanced Education. Dr Graham Jones, Dean of Education at the Brisbane College of Advanced Education was appointed Director of the College and Rotarians Peter Hobart and Ken Smith were inaugural members of the College Council. Initially there was some confusion as to the location of the site, which was adjacent to the Parklands complex at the end of Smith Street. The government decreed that teaching must commence in 1987, and as it would take at least two years to develop a site plan and construct new buildings, the Queensland Government allowed the College to use the former Surfers Paradise Primary School where the Mantra-Legends hotel now

stands. With toilets built for primary school children and low ceilings under the buildings there were many challenges, including no provision for a library. Graham managed to borrow \$120,000 from the Brisbane CAE and The Queensland Board of Advanced Education (chaired by PDG Bill Hamilton from South Brisbane Rotary) to fund much-needed library purchases. Southport Rotarian Neil Russell was appointed the foundation Dean of Education. The College also used the Surfers Paradise movie theatre as a lecture venue from 7am to 10am. Government planning and funding for the new College left much to be desired, but finally in 1989 the College moved to its current campus at Parklands where two new buildings had been completed. In 1988 the Federal Minister for Higher Education decreed that all Colleges of Advanced Education must amalgamate with an established University. Graham, Neil and Peter then spent many long hours traveling to Brisbane to negotiate with a number of Universities, and eventually an amalgamation with Griffith University was finalised. The amalgamation process was complex and difficult, primarily because Brisbane-based universities had no rapport with the aims and aspirations of Gold Coast residents. In 1991, Graham resigned to take a Professorial appointment at Illinois State University at Normal. He continued to publish prolifically in his field of mathematics education and was an active member of the Rotary Club of Normal until his return to Southport Rotary in 2002.

In 1992, Michael Irving was appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director to succeed Graham Jones. Michael had been a senior lecturer in the School of Science at Griffith University, before being appointed foundation Dean of the School of Applied Science at the University of Canberra. Over the next six years, he worked closely with Peter Hobart





*Roz and Michael Irving 2002*

to ensure equitable funding for Gold Coast students and strove to increase the number of campus buildings. With demographic help from Rotarian Alan Midwood he demonstrated that Gold Coast students were the most disadvantaged in Australia in terms of access to tertiary education, and as a result of lobbying the Federal Government directed major growth funding to the campus. Full-time student enrollments rose from 2000 to 6,200 and new buildings worth in excess of \$50 million dollars were constructed. Michael also focused on academic teaching and research on the campus and as Pro-Vice Chancellor

Health he lobbied to have a medical school on the campus. The Gold Coast campus of Griffith University is now a comprehensive university campus with over 20,000 students with internationally recognised research centres such as the Glycomics Institute and the Menzies Health Research Centre. As Peter, Graham and Michael predicted, within 25 years, the Gold Coast campus became the biggest campus of Griffith University not only in terms of student enrollments, but also research.

Southport Rotary has funded Year 12 Gold Coast students to attend the National Youth Science Forum in Canberra since its inception in 1983. In 2008, we sponsored Sarah Don from St Hilda's school. Sarah was one of two outstanding students at NYSF to be offered a six-week research internship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which is one of the top three universities in the world. On completion of her Year 12 studies, Sarah was awarded an undergraduate scholarship to this prestigious university, and has now commenced a Doctorate in Nanotechnology. She learnt to operate a research nuclear reactor before learning to drive a car, and she is most grateful for the contributions of Southport Rotary to enhancing her career.

*NYSF Graham Jones, Sarah Don and DG Brian Wheatley*





## Chapter 5

### INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

Although Southport Rotary focused on fund-raising for the Rotary Youth Centre in the 1950's they also were involved in a number of international humanitarian programs. Colombo Plan university students were invited to address the Rotarians, two English families were sponsored and employment found for them in Southport and books were sent to the Rotary Club of Surabaya.

In 1962, President Cyril Richarde, his wife Tess, Jack and Joan Cronin commenced "in kind" and later financial assistance for Sister Veronica Hollis of the Convent of the Sacred Heart who was a missionary educator in the Gilbert Islands, now known as Kiribati. Southport Rotarians and Rotaryans supported schooling as well as construction

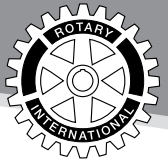
projects including a sea wall to prevent flooding during high tides. Four of her former pupils became Prime Ministers of Kiribati and another is a Professor at the University of the South Pacific. Sister Hollis retired in 2002 and the club recognised her life-long achievements with the award of a Paul Harris medal.

Cyril Richarde was a national pioneer in international Rotary humanitarian service. Cyril and his sister were orphaned during World War 1 and were sent to a number of foster-care homes, and his sister subsequently contracted poliomyelitis. This period in their lives profoundly influenced Cyril who committed all of his adult life to assisting disadvantaged children. Cyril

*Joan Cronin, Cyril Richarde and Sister Hollis, 2003*







was a carpenter who came to Southport in 1957 where he constructed a motel opposite the Southport Yacht club, and he joined Southport Rotary in 1958. In 1962 Cyril was elected President, and this coincided with the club being incorporated into a new Rotary District, 265, which included a large number of Rotarians in New South Wales. President Cyril and members of Southport Rotary and their wives accompanied District Governor Vern Thurect (a former Southport Rotarian) to Moree for his induction. This involved a 402-mile drive on Saturday for the induction, and the Rotarians drove home the next day. It was through this meeting that Cyril befriended PDG Keith Hopper from Inverell Rotary, and together they agreed to provide teams to visit Indonesia to assist in building schools and hospitals. As a builder, Cyril had a keen eye for the needs of communities, and what could be constructed using local materials. He designed brick moulds for Indonesian workers to construct bricks on-site. To obtain subsidised transport of materials from QANTAS, a project title was needed, which became "Fourth Avenue in Motion" FAIM. Cyril undertook 23 tours of duty to supervise FAIM projects in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

Cyril's billy was first circulated to Southport Rotarians in 1965, and each week members donate loose change to the billy. Initially funds from the billy were used to defray costs of powdered milk for FAIM projects. When visiting Java, Cyril observed that many children were not attending school, as their parents could not afford the costs of schooling. He returned to Australia to establish a program of scholarships, and within a short time Rotarians across Australia raised sufficient funds to enable the education of 400 Indonesian children. Educating children is still a project of the Rotary Club of Southport, and the contributions from Cyril's billy and the Southport Rotaryans support this project. In 1985 Cyril's eyesight became impaired, and he realised that the blind and vision-impaired people of the Gold Coast needed a meeting hall. Within two years he had obtained a grant of land and raised \$140,000 to construct the meeting hall with Rotarians donating their professional services to the project. Cyril celebrated his 100th birthday and 55 years as a Southport Rotarian before passing away in 2013. He exemplified the values of -

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## *"Service above Self."*

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In 1997 Tony Pritchett volunteered to join a RAWCS project to complete the construction of an extension to the hospital on Malaita on the Solomon Islands. A team of fourteen worked for two weeks to construct the extension and in the process trained local apprentices in the use of power tools, many of which were donated by the team members. In May 2007 Tony and Sally and Michelle Wachter participated in a RAWCS team constructing a prefabricated classroom and playground for a pre-school in Thailand. The region had been devastated by the tsunami of 2004. It was extremely hot and humid work! In 2003, Rotarian Murray Prior commenced a project

collecting pharmaceuticals, which were then transported for use in Rarotonga. Over a period of four years he arranged to send 78 packages whose value was in excess of \$900,000. These donations were gratefully received and acknowledged by the Cook Island government for assisting in improving the health for the people of Rarotonga.

In 2002 District Governor Ross Smith requested that instead of giving him a gift when he visited Rotary clubs, he would prefer to receive a "Literacy Kit" which could be sent to overseas communities to assist their education programs. Southport Rotary

# 70th Anniversary

donated 43 Literacy Kits, which were supplied at cost by Mervyn Powell and were sent to overseas schools. In 2008, President Lea Rickwood decided to implement the donation of Literacy Kits in lieu of gifts presented to guest speakers. President Andrew Middleton subsequently refined the kits by using a foundation that he helped to establish in South Africa, which prints books that are culturally relevant for Africans. Each year over 40 literacy kits for students and teachers are sent to Tanzania. In addition, in 2014, Southport Rotary sent a container of school materials including refurbished computers to schools in Tanzania. Rotarians in Rotary District 9780 also contributed funds to establish a dedicated computer laboratory, which is well used today.

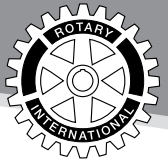
Closer to home, Helen Moorfoot persuaded Southport Rotary to support the Bairo Pite clinic in Timor Leste. This clinic provides free medical services to over 200 outpatients daily, but has limited facilities. In 2014, Southport Rotary received permission to salvage clinical equipment from the Gold Coast hospital, which was soon to be demolished. The usual working-bee volunteers soon collected sufficient equipment to fill a shipping container with equipment requested by the clinic. Southport Rotary then provided funds to purchase and transport the container to Timor Leste. Again through in-country Rotary connections, all items in the container safely reached the clinic. Southport Rotary is also participating in a multi-Rotary club project to provide safe drinking water in Bairo Pite.



*Collecting for PolioPlus*

It would be remiss to complete this Chapter without mentioning PolioPlus. Southport Rotary has been supporting Polio patients since its earliest days. Following intense lobbying by the Australian Rotary International Past-President Clem Renouf, in 1985 Rotary International agreed to support a worldwide project to rid the world of Polio by vaccinating all children in the world. Southport Rotarians have been willing contributors to the PolioPlus fund, which has raised over one billion dollars, and at the beginning of each Sergeant's session at Southport Rotary meetings, all members and visitors are asked to donate at least \$2 to this fund. We are hopeful that the goal of a Polio-free world will be achieved well before the 80th anniversary of the chartering of our club.





## Chapter 6

# WOMEN IN SOUTHPORT ROTARY

Women were not permitted to join Rotary clubs until 1989. However the wives and partners of Southport Rotarians have been always been active in supporting Rotary

causes. In the early days of the club the wives organised street stalls and social occasions such as balls. The South Coast Bulletin reported on 1 October 1949 -

### *... Rotary Ball Friday Night ...*

*The ball organised by the Southport Rotary Club in support of the Food for Britain appeal to be held next Friday at the Pacific Hotel Ballroom gives promise of being a big success.*

*The proceeds are for the Food for Britain appeal and the parcels will be sent to residents in Southport England to tide them over a lean period.*

Southport Rotary also donated a commemorative bench in the sensory garden of the Southport (England) botanical gardens with a plaque written in English and Braille recording the links between Southport Rotary club and the citizens of Southport (England) .

Joan Cronin formed the Southport Rotaryanns in 1956. She recalls that during those early years, the Rotary wives or Rotaryanns, had little or no opportunity of getting to know each other, as the club held a "ladies night "about three times each year. It was apparent that there was a potential for good friendships and charity work in such a caring group, and so Joan formed the Rotaryanns during Jack's Presidency. Wives of new members were

visited and invited to morning teas, which were a monthly get-together. So friendships were established and cemented, and after more that sixty years, she looks back with pleasure as she remembers many happy reunions.

*"There was no formality, no membership fee, but when FAIM came into existence and Cyril and Tess Richarde visited Indonesia, we decided to adopt an underprivileged child and pay for his/her upkeep and education. Tess undertook to set this in motion, and for many years administered the fund that we established. It became apparent that we should have a bank account, and this brought a membership fee, President, Secretary and Treasurer. A little formality was creeping into the group! To raise money we held "Bring*

# 70th Anniversary



*and Buy" street stalls, raffles and theatre nights, and in later years very successful garage sales. Our profits were distributed to the Children's Hospital, St Vincent de Paul, the Salvation Army, The Blue Nurses, and to any special need that was presented to us."*

The Rotary Club frequently relied on the help of the Rotaryans and their families in many of their projects. One particular project was that one Sunday each year was devoted to the care of crippled children from the Xavier home at Coorparoo in Brisbane. It was definitely a family affair as each family was allocated a child with some children mobile (just) and some in wheel chairs. *"It was our privilege and pleasure to give our chosen child a wonderful day, with food, gifts, games etc. Our own children enjoyed it immensely and were no doubt thankful that God had blessed them with strong bodies."*

The induction of women into Southport Rotary had a long gestation, and it was not until July 1999 that Lea Rickwood (d'Álmeida) and Annie Dorian were the first women to be inducted. Ron Power had sponsored Lea, and she had previously addressed the club on her work in Bridging the Gap. Her two children Skye and Zaac were Rotary Youth Exchange students, and soon more women were welcomed into Southport Rotary. Together with Ron Power and Richard Ham, Lea introduced the club to A la Carte in the Park (and Beach), which were major fundraisers as well as great events for Rotary fellowship. The presence of female Rotarians brought about subtle changes in club meetings. The jokes became less ribald, which was a challenge for some members, and Rotarian wives felt more comfortable in accompanying their husbands to those meetings that were not designated ladies nights. Pauline Armstrong was the first female club president in 2005/2006, followed by Lea Rickwood in 2008/2009







*Pam Woodhouse*

and Marion Jones in 2014/2015, and Lea was the first Southport Rotarian to be elected President for a second time. The selfless contribution of Marion Jones needs special mention, as she spent many years supporting her DG husband before volunteering to lead our club. Leanda Cooper is our long-serving Secretary and second generation Rotarian, and Beth Dermoudy has provided excellent links with other women's service clubs. Lisa Locke was for some years a dynamic Youth Director, and she was responsible for the establishment of the Southport Rotaract Club in September 2011. Most of our recent members are women, and we welcome their enthusiasm as we strive to enhance the good work of Rotary in our club.

Special mention should be made of the work of Southport Rotaryans in supporting Inner Wheel, a Rotary sponsored "friendship" organization open to wives and partners of current and former Rotarians, as well as their sisters mothers and daughters. On the 16th of November 1991 the Inner Wheel Club of Runaway Bay (now known as the Inner Wheel Club of Gold Coast North Inc)



*Ev Scotte*

was chartered with Southport Rotaryans Tess Richarde, Thelma Robson, Lynne Keene, Betty Saunders and Pam Woodhouse being founding members. Ev Scotte and Gail Dinneen subsequently joined this club. Pam Woodhouse has been a tireless worker for Inner Wheel, as President and at the national level, and in 2014 was the only Australian to receive the Margaret Golding Award for her dedication to Inner Wheel, which is now the largest women's club in the world. Ev Scotte has also been club-President and is particularly proud of the support that Inner Wheel has given to Cord Blood research and the provision of "Silky Pillows" for breast cancer patients.

## Chapter 7

### SERVICE TO ROTARY

As Rotary has grown in Australia, the Rotary District boundaries have contracted. In 1945 we were in District 56, in 1948 allocated to District 31, in 1953 to District 35, in 1957 to District 260, in 1962 to District 265, in 1970 to District 263 which was renamed District 963 in 1977, District 964 in 1982 and District 9640 in 1993. Despite the large distances between clubs in some of these Districts there was a strong program of visiting other clubs and driving long distances to attend District Conferences. This is exemplified by the Southport Rotary handover night for 1955-1956, where there were 118 Rotarians and guests with visiting Rotarians from Burleigh Heads, Surfers Paradise, Coolangatta, Murwillumbah, Stanthorpe, Taree, Port Macquarie, Hurstville and Devonport.

Southport Rotary Club has sponsored the formation of eight new Rotary clubs:

Beenleigh	1952
Burleigh Heads	1955
Surfers Paradise	1955
Beaudesert	1957
Southport North	1967
Nerang	1975
Broadwater Southport	1980
Surfers Paradise-West	1984

The club is sponsoring a "satellite club" at Griffith University in 2015, and has sponsored the formation of Interact (1967) and Rotaract (2011) clubs.

The formation of new Rotary Clubs resulted in the loss of membership for Southport Rotary with Southport Rotarians resigning to become

Charter Presidents of the following Rotary Clubs: Ern Heslewood (Surfers Paradise), Lindsay Firth (Burleigh Heads), George Panitz (Nerang), Don Wiley (Broadbeach), Jim Doake (Broadwater-Southport), and Os Eastwell (Southport North).

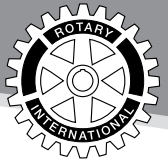
Because Southport was a holiday destination, it was a popular site for District conferences. The first of these was held in August 1952 and was a combined conference and District Assembly. The conference and assembly sessions were divided between the Diggers Hall and the Pier Theatre over six days and included a Rotary Ball, plays and singing. It was major logistical exercise for our club, but as we did such a great job, we were asked to organise District Conferences in 1962, 1967, 1993 (Keith Robson's DG year), 2012 (Graham Jones' DG year) and 2017 (Michael Irving's DG year).

Five Southport Rotarians have been appointed District Governors. Vern Thurect joined Southport Rotary in 1949, before

*District Conference 1962,  
Pier Theatre, Southport*







becoming one of five Southport Rotarians who were foundation members of Surfers Paradise Rotary in 1955. In 1962 he was the first District Governor for the new Rotary District 265, which extended south to Kempsey and west to Burke. In 1966 Vern transferred back to Southport Rotary. Ron Burling, also a former member of Southport Rotary was District Governor in 1997-1998. Keith Robson was District Governor of Rotary District 9640 in 1992-1993. Keith joined Southport Rotary in 1985, having already been a member of the Rotary clubs of Nundah, Lae, Tamworth and Bathurst. Keith had a keen interest in supporting youth, and during his year there were ten active Rotaract clubs and four interact clubs in the District. His conference at the Gold Coast Arts Centre was most successful, and he hosted the Rotary International president, Cliff Dochterman at a dinner attended by over 400 Rotarians at Sea World. In 2011-2012 Graham Jones was District Governor for Rotary District 9640. With his background in academic administration he started to modernize the District administration and moved District communications into the Internet age. His conference was a glamorous affair at Jupiter's Casino with a list of outstanding speakers including "Nobody-John Eales," former Wallaby captain. In 2014, Michael Irving was selected to be the District Governor in 2016-2017, which is the centenary of the formation of the Rotary Foundation.

Southport Rotary has had a significant number of members who have contributed tirelessly for Rotary at club and district level. Southport Foundation member Arch Thams was a servant extraordinaire for Southport Rotary being Club Treasurer from 1945 until 1985. Joan Cronin has been a member of the Southport Rotaryans for nearly 60 years, and at the age of 100 is the oldest member of the club. Peter Overell was heavily involved in the District Youth Exchange Program for ten years, first as Secretary and then Chairman for two years. Tony Pritchett was also District



*DG Keith and Thelma Robson*

Secretary and then Chair of the RYLA committee. In 1989 Sally paid what was supposed to be a two-night visit to the RYLA camp. Soon after she arrived it started to rain, the bridge in the Numinbah valley was washed away and the road to Murwillumbah was flooded. No keynote speakers were able to reach the camp so the organizing committee had to improvise for four days. Sally led a public speaking session, which was so successful that she was invited back to RYLA for the next five years as a keynote speaker. Tony and Sally were co-counselors for several youth exchange students as well as being host parents. Tony and Nancy Stenton also spent several years as camp Mum and Dad at RYLA. Southport Rotary has always strongly supported the Rotary Foundation through club and individual donations. In 1985 donations to the Rotary Foundations by Southport Rotarians were 11-fold greater than the annual target set by Rotary International.

One of the features of Southport Rotarians is that they will always volunteer to undertake Rotary service. Through this shared service in the name of Rotary, great friendships were formed.

## Chapter 8

### 70 YEARS OF SOUTHPORT ROTARY FELLOWSHIP

In 1900, five years before he founded Rotary, Paul Harris was struck by the camaraderie amongst shopkeepers and their customers on the north side of Chicago. It reminded him of growing up in rural Vermont. *"The thought persisted that I was experiencing only what happened to hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other young men who had come from farms and small villages to establish themselves in Chicago... Why not bring them together? If others were longing for fellowship as I was, something would come of it"* And something did come of it-Rotary!

In the early days, Southport Rotary meetings were formal affairs, and it was not until 1971

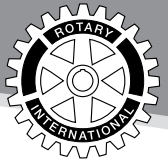
that "members resolved that beer would be served at Rendezvous (where club meetings were then held) between 5:30 and 6:00pm, and no liquor be brought into the meeting". Prior to this momentous decision, all meetings were dry. Suits and ties were mandatory dress, and the vetting of new members was quite rigorous. Meetings were accompanied by singing, and for many years Mervyn Hardy was the club pianist.

Fellowship is what current and former Southport Rotarians most fondly remember. In the early days there were many visits to other clubs such as South Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, Redcliffe peninsula, and Murwillumbah as well as attending charter nights for new clubs as far away as Stanthorpe. These interclub visits were often reported in the South Coast Bulletin. Rotarians traveled huge distances to attend district conferences in cities from Cairns to Mudgee. In recent years, Southport Rotarians have continued the tradition of attending District conferences in large numbers. Richard Ham and Ron Power were the barkeepers for social gatherings after conference sessions, and more recently the Southport Rotary caravaners have ensured that the tradition of great conviviality at District conferences is maintained.

The enjoyment of fellowship was most evident at working bees and fundraising events. The first recorded working bee was in the Queens Park playground in 1950, and there have been hundreds of subsequent working bees where Southport Rotarians rolled up their sleeves to help the community, including painting the refuge for Gold Coast Women in Distress, painting and renovation of the







### *Rotary Fellowship*

kitchen in the Surfers Paradise Anglican Crisis centre, and painting the RSPCA animal shelters (with brown snakes for company!) and the homemakers show at Sundale. Novel fundraising projects included the Queensland Motorcycle Championships, powerboat races, the Australian Grand prix,



### *Australian Grand Prix, Bundall 1954*

clay pigeon shoots, a Jack Davey show at the Pier theatre, guess the weight of the bull as well as selling ice-cream at the Gold Coast show, selling raffle tickets and beer at the Gold Coast Rugby league in 1982, only to be reincarnated with the selling of raffle tickets at the SUNS football matches. In 1977 Nerang and Southport Rotary combined to bring Ashton's Circus to the coast as a fundraiser. The club volunteered to sell copious quantities of wine at A la Carte in the Park and A La Carte on the Beach (although it was difficult at times to ascertain whether the public or Southport Rotarians consumed more wine). Special mention should be made of the Broadbeach Carousel. The carousel was originally deemed to be unsafe, and after public protest the Gold Coast City

Council refurbished the carousel, but they then had a problem of who would operate the carousel. Southport Rotarian showmen Randall, Wachter and Penfold negotiated with the Council that Southport Rotary would

undertake to operate the carousel for six hours per day for every day except Christmas day and Good Friday. Southport Rotary would distribute all funds donated by the public for rides on the carousel to charities, primarily based on the Gold Coast. This was a massive commitment by Southport Rotary to volunteer to man the carousel every day, but not only have we achieved this goal, but in the process more than \$100,000 has been donated to charities in each year of operating the carousel. In addition, our carousel operations are an excellent venue for promoting Rotary, and it is now a tourist attraction with some tourists taking their children for up to 20 rides during a week's holiday on the coast. Well done Southport Rotary!

Social occasions with the fair sex have been an evolutionary process. In the early days, ladies' nights were limited to three meetings per year. However there were plenty of other Rotary functions involving our ladies. Rotary balls were very popular in the first ten years of our club. Square dancing was for many years organised by Ted Sinclair and Wonder Woods. Joan Cronin formalized meetings of Rotary wives through the Rotaryanns, but



### *Broadbeach Carousel 2010*



# 70th Anniversary

throughout the history of Southport Rotary our ladies have assisted in most fund-raising activities. The induction of female Rotarians has further enhanced fellowship with the wives and partners of Rotarians. Rotary family fellowship was another feature of Southport Rotary with family picnics, egg and spoon races, and Christmas functions for the children of Rotarians.

Southport Rotarians love dressing up. Don and Gail Dinneen were Southport Rotary's most extravagant partygoers. There are many great photos of club changeovers where Rotarians dressed as convicts, Mexicans at District conferences, and who will ever forget Barry Kilmister in his hula skirt. Fun and fellowship are synonymous at Southport Rotary.

Southport Rotarians also enjoyed fellowship through sport. Southport Rotary had regular cricket matches with other service clubs,



*Childrens Picnic 1985.  
Barb Overell, Nancy Stenton,  
Jenny Hbart, Chris Cooper and  
Ralph Chandler*

which were organised by Matt Weathered. Southport Rotarians won the Sports Day Shield at the 1969 annual Rotary day with Jim Boland anchoring the tug of war team. In 1985 the club won the District Golf Shield and Southport Rotary achieved international golf fame when Murray Prior won the Rotary World Golf Championship, Senior Division Best Gross in 1997 and was the runner-up in the same division in 1996. More recently the Boomerang Golf club has been the venue for the club's annual golf day, where the post-match barbeque is of a higher standard than most of the golf played. Tony



*Tree Planting Ira Puspita (Indonesia) June 1998*





Stenton has been a generous sponsor of this event, and Nancy's mother would always donate a hand-knitted rug for the raffle. For many years snooker was played after club meetings, and great fellowship was enjoyed. In Rugby, Greg Dux (Queensland) and Alan Ware (Australia), had representative honours. Fishing has always been enjoyed by Southport Rotarians. In 1974 tag-fishing competitions were held at McIntosh Park, in conjunction with baking a six-foot diameter pizza which was then the biggest pizza baked in Australia. In recent years Ross Cochrane organised great weekend Rotarian fishing trips to South Stradbroke Island. Bob Akes provided sand crabs, and although fish catches were variable, fellowship was unsurpassed.

The strength of a Rotary club can be judged by how many Rotarians remain to enjoy fellowship after the Rotary meeting has concluded. Using



*Murray Prior*



*Party Time. Dio Apostolopoulos, Barry Kilmister and Don Dinneen*

this criterion, Southport Rotary, building on 70 years of great achievements and fellowship continues to go from strength to strength, and we look forward with confidence to celebrating the centenary of the chartering of the Rotary Club of Southport.



*Arline and Bob Akes, Christmas 1985*



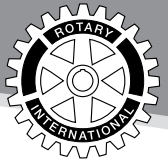
*Fishing. Ross Cochrane and Barry Kilmister 2000*

## PRESIDENTS OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF SOUTHPORT

ROTARY YEAR	CLUB PRESIDENT
1945 - 1946	Cec Carey
1946 - 1947	Norm Watts
1947 - 1948	Dave Carter
1948 - 1949	Joe Allison
1949 - 1950	Ben Price
1950 - 1951	Peter Hartz
1951 - 1952	Mal Burke
1952 - 1953	Len Black
1953 - 1954	Ern Bell
1954 - 1955	Eric Louitt
1955 - 1956	Alf Kretchmar
1956 - 1957	Jack Cronin
1957 - 1958	Alan Hollindale
1958 - 1959	Mick Theodore
1959 - 1960	Jack Oxenford
1960 - 1961	Fred Young
1961 - 1962	Bob Purvis
1962 - 1963	Cyril Richarde
1963 - 1964	Wal Mackey
1964 - 1965	Norm Gampe
1965 - 1966	Don Wiley
1966 - 1967	Robin Johnstone
1967 - 1968	Ted Trickett
1968 - 1969	Don Cummins
1969 - 1970	Russ Gibbins
1970 - 1971	Cec Bloyce
1971 - 1972	Lew Johnston
1972 - 1973	Ted Watts
1973 - 1974	Ted Barnett
1974 - 1975	Ted Pearce
1975 - 1976	John Dill-Macky
1976 - 1977	Les Penlington
1977 - 1978	Des Behne
1978 - 1979	Brian Gordon
1979 - 1980	Peter Hobart
1980 - 1981	Dick Bray

ROTARY YEAR	CLUB PRESIDENT
1981 - 1982	Tony Stenton
1982 - 1983	John Donovan
1983 - 1984	Angus Aird
1984 - 1985	Bob Strelow
1985 - 1986	Peter Overell
1986 - 1987	Ron Condon
1987 - 1988	Ron Power
1988 - 1989	David Woodhouse
1989 - 1990	Bruce Sly
1990 - 1991	Graham Cooper
1991 - 1992	Matt Weathered
1992 - 1993	Tony Gardner
1993 - 1994	Tony Pritchett
1994 - 1995	Bob Cozens
1995 - 1996	Des Roberts
1996 - 1997	Jim Scotte
1997 - 1998	Dick Sayer
1998 - 1999	Cliff Rix
1999 - 2000	Dio Apostolopoulos
2000 - 2001	David Childs
2001 - 2002	Mervyn Powell
2002 - 2003	Michael Irving
2003 - 2004	Richard Ham
2004 - 2005	Peter Eustace
2005 - 2006	Pauline Armstrong
2006 - 2007	David Randall
2007 - 2008	Graham Jones
2008 - 2009	Lea Rickwood
2009 - 2010	Garry Wachter
2010 - 2011	Steve Penfold
2011 - 2012	Greg Dux
2012 - 2013	Andrew Middleton
2013 - 2014	Lambert Wang
2014 - 2015	Marion Jones
2015 - 2016	Lea Rickwood





# PAUL HARRIS FELLOWS OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF SOUTHPORT

YEAR	AWARDEE	PIN
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1975	C Richarde	+2
1978	W.A. Mackay	
1978	A.L. Thams	
1982	E. Trickett	
1982	F. Manning	
1983	E. R. Pearce	
1985	M. Prior	+1
1985	J. Cronin	
1985	V.J. Dippelsmann	
1986	R.W. Bray	
1986	J.M. Donovan	
1987	R.A. Huth	
1987	L.F. Perry	+1
1987	B. Kilmister	
1987	C.R. Gibbins	
1988	A.D. Hollindale	
1988	J.B. Rutherford	
1988	R.W. Strelow	
1988	M. Weathered	
1989	T. Richarde	
1989	E. Watts	
1989	D. Cummins	+2
1989	H.C. Pepper	
1990	R. Johnstone	
1990	R. Purvis	
1991	P. Overell	+1
1991	H. Hugall	
1992	K. Robson	+1
1992	P.W. Hobart	+1
1992	B. Gordon	

YEAR	AWARDEE	PIN
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1993	A. Stenton	+1
1993	R. Power	
1993	Barb Overell	
1993	Barb Carlow	
1993	D. Woodhouse	
1996	Thelma Robson	
1996	T. Pritchett	+2
1996	G. Cooper	
1997	R. Akes	
1997	A. Gardner	+1
1998	R. Cochrane	
1998	D. Dinneen	+1
1998	M. Irving	+2
1998	Joan Cronin	
1999	Gail Dinneen	+1
1999	D. Roberts	
2000	Pam Woodhouse	
2000	J. Scotte	
2000	R. Ham	
2001	Val Jones	
2001	Yvonne Perry	
2001	M. Bertrand	
2002	D. Apostolopous	
2002	C. Rix	
2002	G. Jones	+7
2002	Sr. Veronica Hollis	
2003	M. Powell	+1
2003	P. Eustace	
2004	Nancy Stenton	
2005	Sally Pritchett	+1

YEAR	AWARDEE	PIN
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2005	Andrew Middleton	
2006	Pauline Armstrong	+1
2007	D. Ashmore	+1
2007	D. Knight	
2007	Mira Gardner	
2007	D. Randall	
2007	N. Russell	+2
2008	Sharon Randall	
2008	G. Wachter	+5
2008	A. Gibson	
2008	D. Plastow	+1
2008	Lea Rickwood	
2009	Leanda Cooper	+1
2009	Marion Jones	+1
2009	Michelle Wachter	+3
2010	Ev Scotte	
2011	S. Dillon	
2011	Ann Penfold	
2011	S. Penfold	
2012	Lisa Locke	
2012	L. Wang	+1
2012	Jenny Hobart	
2013	Beth Dermoudy	
2013	G. Dux	
2013	A. Hockings	
2014	Roz Irving	
2014	Helena Knight	
2014	Sue Dux	
2014	R. Chapel	
2014	Ingrid Jewson	



ROTARY CLUB OF SOUTHPORT



70th  
Anniversary  
1945 to 2015