



## Bulletin 18 of 2nd of November 2023

### 50 years of Rotary Service 100% Attendance Richard Turner



It was a special night at Rotary to celebrate Richard Turner, in what must be a rare event for any Rotarian in achieving 50 years of service at 100% attendance. We had number of partners and guests at the meeting.

Richard's daughter Mel spoke about what it was like to have grown up in a Rotary family with a father so intent on being at a meeting every week. Holiday plans, even at overseas destinations, had to be arranged so a make up could be done. Richard is also so committed he once did a makeup in Toronto hospital with a drip still in his arm. Melissa commented on some nice memories of the events she attended growing up with the Rotary members at both Cessnock and then with her kids at Nelson Bay.



PDG Don presented Richard with a special certificate organised by current governor Alyn Miranda, who would have been present, but for unexpected situation at his workplace. Don went through some of the milestones in Richard's time in Rotary.

Inducted to Cessnock Rotary Club  
11th of October 1973.  
International Chair 75,76,93-97.  
Treasurer 77-78 Vice President 83-84 President 84-85  
Membership Chairman 86-87  
Paul Harris Fellow 95.  
27 years 100% attendance.



Inducted Nelson Bay Rotary Club  
8th of February 2001.  
Membership Chair 2007-2009. Historian 2012 -2019  
FAIM trip 2016.  
Paul Harris Fellow Sapphire pin 2016  
Emeritus Member award 2022.  
23 years of 100% attendance.



PDG Greg Bevan spoke on behalf of the Members of Cessnock Rotary Club present. He was able to reflect on some of the names of the past years. He said generally discussions with Richard about Rotary matters were at least 30 minutes long so he needed to sit down and have a coffee ready. He mentioned how Richard was born to be a Rotarian as his father had been a strong member since 1943, as well as a person of note in the community. Richard knew a lot of the founding members in Cessnock Rotary Club as well as knowing many of the originals from Nelson Bay as he visited there to his holiday house.

Richard in reply mentioned the great support he had received from his wife Jenny over the whole period. When he had first joined Rotary there was an expectation to try for a makeup wherever possible. This custom has changed as have many things in the ways of Rotary. Richard commented on some of the marvellous nights he had attended with ambassadors, parliamentarians and VIPS. He thanked also his children and his brother John Turner OAM who had been part of his experience.

### In this Bulletin:

1. Richard Turner 50 years in Rotary
2. 3 minute talk and upcoming speaker information.

### Details for the week following our next weeks meeting

#### Birthdays

Warwick Mathieson on the 9th

#### Anniversary

Ella & John Clarke on the 18th

Heads & Tails: Ella Clarke

#### Next meeting

9th of November  
Club Meeting with report from Board Meeting (8th)

Door: Doug Craike  
Grace Jim Booth  
Toast: Ian Brigden  
Intro Speaker; N/A  
Thank Speaker: N/A  
Bulletin : Don Whatham  
Binoculars Geoff D.

#### Important Dates

16th of November  
Special Guest Speaker: Ruth Wilson  
Adventurer, Author and Aviator  
Please invite partners and friends to hear a very interesting speaker.

AGM 7th OF December

Christmas Party  
This will be held on Thursday  
14th of December. Details will be announced soon.

## Report from The Meeting

### 3 Minute Talk



The talk this week was from Dieter who spoke about a 10 year period living in D.R. of Congo in the middle of Africa. He describes the experience as character building, and he lived in the capital city of Kinshasa. The equator runs through this country and it has very high rainfall.

We rely on his technical expertise at Rotary but now we know why he is so good at it. Dieter working for Phillips at the time, became the technical expert for the dictator, and ruler of the Congo President Mabutu, and was often summoned to the house/palace to fix things electrical, or make the projection happen in his personal cinema. No pressure?

No payment either, until it was mentioned to the Belgian house keeper, who arranged a couple of piles of local currency. The inflation rate meant you could be a millionaire in local currency for a few US dollars. President Mabutu's rule was a relatively peaceful period of about 30 years in this country, which has seen tremendous unrest, as his strong tactics meant uprisings were rare, and swiftly dealt with. His rule had U.S. backing and even CIA support as he stood against communism.

Congo is very mineral rich, one of the richest places on the planet, and most of the world's cobalt is mined there (70%). There is also gold, diamonds, uranium and copper. If the wealth could be spread evenly, the citizens could live in comfort. Sadly it is not, and it has had tremendous inflation at times, such as in 1994, when the inflation rate was 23%. Children are involved in mining for very low rates of pay.

Dieter mentioned the plan to dam and build a hydro scheme which could power a large part of Saharan Africa which has backing from Fortescue mineral boss Twiggy Forrest. It is on a massive scale 20 x more power than the Snowy Hydro scheme in Australia. I hope we hear another instalment on this interesting country and Dieter's experiences there.



## Speaker Ruth Wilson

Guest speaker: 16th of November.

The club is very fortunate to have Ruth Wilson as our guest speaker in 2 weeks time. Ruth has been a key note speaker at some large conferences and will be a speaker with interesting and inspiring stories to tell.

We hope you can bring your partner or friends to this night as it should be one to remember.

### Welcome to Ruth Wilson's life – adventurer, author, aviator

Adopted at the age of 3, a beauty queen at 17, Ruth moved to live in the United States of America, then spent four years in Japan with her next move to New Zealand in 1975 where she unexpectedly came face to face with her destiny – hot air ballooning.

Ruth Wilson is a mother of two sons who embraced her passion to be one of the early pioneers of hot air and gas ballooning in Australia. Ruth has accumulated numerous 'firsts' – first female balloon pilot in Australia to set up her own commercial ballooning company solo in 1976, first national ballooning champion in 1979. A trip to Switzerland in 1985 brought gas ballooning into her life, a rare experience as no gas ballooning happens in Australia. In 1999 Ruth represented her country as pilot competing in the prestigious Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race launching from Albuquerque, USA.

Her love of extreme ballooning drew her back to pilot 'Bernadette' in the 2018 Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon race from Bern, Switzerland. After 33 hours without sleep, little food and water Ruth and her co-pilot Tanys McCarron, landed their gas balloon in an Italian vineyard.

Her corporate work included six years as Chief Operations Officer with the ARC Centre of Excellence for Quantum Atom Optics at The Australian National University in Canberra, also Executive Director for five years for ACRN. For eighteen years Ruth managed her own PR/Media company in Sydney.



*"I have written Conquering Clouds to help me find my biological father, inspire others not to be swayed by age when deciding to embrace challenge, to share my brother Ronnie's story as well and as a legacy for my grandchildren, Tyler and Josie Wilson."*

Ruth Wilson