

HORIZONS

Central Blue Mountains Rotary

We live here - We work here - We give back

Rotary District 9685 - Australia

Wednesday, June 05, 2024



image: Viv Byrnes

Comin' up

Stuff you should know about

Pride of Workmanship, 2024



Fearless Leader



All awardees, nominators and Club Presidents



Ian with President Caroline Moses and Treasurer Cedric Moses from the Wentworth Falls Tennis Club, nominated for their outstanding leadership and volunteering



Chad Adams, Rebecca Field, 1st Hazelbrook Scouts nominated for her dedication and passion as a Scout leader, Ruth Vambuca District Vocational Director, and Ian Scott

Hi Friends,

The 2024 Pride of Workmanship Awards went really well on 21 May with 103 people attending a great dinner at the Katoomba RSL...right: see images supplied.

The RSL did us proud. The table settings, wine and food was terrific. Our nominations were very pleased to receive the awards and I want to thank the nominators, Viv Byrnes and Chad Adams, and all the Blueys that attended.

Later the same week, around 14,500 Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors and families and friends gathered in Singapore for the Rotary International Convention to celebrate the year's achievements with RI President Gordon McNally and his wife Heather.

There was a stunning line up of speakers, performances and breakouts, and the Rotary Village (House of Friendship) was terrific.

I urge you to visit My Rotary and check out the stories there. I particularly recommend watching the videos of the interviews with Graça Machel, humanitarian, and Tayyaba Naheed Gul the polio health care worker; the first with a very blunt message on supporting women and girls, and the second with a powerful story that makes it almost impossible not to support the eradication of polio.

A big congratulations to Jennifer, International Convention Chair for 2024, for putting together an outstanding convention.

This week, we will have a presentation on defibrillators from Chris Djekic from RC Springwood. This will be a great opportunity to learn more about life-saving defibrillators, as we are starting a project to provide two defibrillators in the upper mountains.

Cheers, Ian.

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Remembering Tom Colless OAM

Saturday, June 01, 2024

Our Rotarian colleague and good friend, Tom Colless OAM, died today, after a period of illness, and battling pneumonia. He was 93 years-of-age. He will be sadly missed.

As a lifetime resident of Leura, "Old Tom" will be remembered as a successful Blue Mountains businessman and a passionate Rotarian, who donated his time, money, experience, skills, and talent to help create a better world.

To his wife, Nancy, and the Colless family, members of Katoomba and Central Blue Mountains Rotary Clubs and, in fact, all Rotarians and friends who enjoyed Tom's companionship and exuberance, extend their sincere condolences. May he rest in peace.

Tom Colless, Rotarian, was a Paul Harris Fellow, and proud recipient of a Medal of the Order of Australia.

He was a businessman, a philanthopist, and an enthusiastic advocate for the progress and prosperity of the Blue Mountains. He was named a Freeman of the City for outstanding civic service by Blue Mountains City Council on November 1, 2012.

"Old Tom" was Managing Director, and proprietor of Colless Foods, Katoomba, a wholesale distributor of fresh, frozen and dry goods, supplying the hospitality industry in the mountains and beyond.

He joined Katoomba Rotary Club in 1975 and, later in life for a short time, transferred his Rotary membership to Central Blue Mountains Rotary club, before returning to Katoomba.

As well as Rotary activities, Tom was involved with the Rural Bushfire Brigade, BM Tourism, Leura Village Association, and the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal.

Born in Katoomba...he attended Leura public school and Katoomba High....and I could go on about his earlier life as a cane cutter in Queensland, his career as a blond surfer, a salesman for the National Cash Register Company, and his entry into the wholesale chicken business....but, we have run out of space.

Instead, this tribute written by local journalist Jennie Curtin, and published in the Blue Mountains Gazette, On September 15, 2022, just before Tom's 92nd birthday, and the closing of Colless Foods, really tells the story of Tom, his work ethic, and his desire as a Rotarian to do good in the world.

...PGH

"The fleet of Colless Foods trucks have been plying the streets of the Mountains for well over half a century, delivering stock to hospitality businesses, but finally, with his 92nd birthday just around the corner, owner Tom Colless is calling it a day.

The origins of Colless Foods go back to Tom's grandfather, who ran a market garden out of Marmion Road, on the Leura-Katoomba border, and his parents, Chas and Gwen, who had a fish and chip shop on Leura Mall in the 1940s, but then moved into mobile catering, providing food and drink for balls, weddings and other grand events.

Tom Colless said his job as a youngster was to make coffee at the events.

"I would get a 10 gallon churn of milk and put a gas ring under it. I'd hang coffee grounds inside mum's old stockings into the milk. It was the best milk coffee you could get."



Libby, Tom and Nancy Colless (and Pearl) in front of one of their trucks at Colless Foods, Woodlands Road, Katoomba... image Jennie Curtin

In the 1950s, his father ran a poultry abattoir at the rear of 156 Leura Mall (where Woolworths now sits) until council eventually said: "Mr Colless, you can't kill chickens in the middle of Leura Mall."

He shifted the business to refrigerated foods, driving his one truck to Bathurst, Orange and Mudgee for two-day trips, sleeping in the van on his overnight stops.

Mr Colless said he and his wife Nancy are probably workaholics.

"Nancy [aged 86] gets up at 4.30 to see the butcher [who processes meat for the deliveries]. I get up at 6am," he said.

"I've been in business for 67 years - it's time to go... It's time for us to enjoy our retirement and to do some other things."

And for many years, he and a small group of volunteers worked tirelessly to clean graffiti from buildings, fences, and roadways in the Mountains.

Tom is a Mountains man, born and bred. His first days were spent in Katoomba hospital's nursery, then located where the motel is on the highway at the top of Woodlands Road.

"My father once said to me if you make a living in the town and community you live in, you should give something back. That had a big impression on me."



Story by Etelka Lehoczky and John M. Cunningham

After five days of friendship, excitement, and cultural connections, the 2024 Rotary International Convention, in Singapore, ended with a focus on the future.

Speakers emphasized Rotary’s continuing mission to promote peace and goodwill, and previewed next year’s gathering in Calgary, Canada.

Rotary International President Gordon McNally emphasized Rotary’s long-standing commitment to building peace, and noted that the topic has been a key interest almost since Rotary began.

“Our dedication to building a more peaceful world has its ups and downs,” McNally said, “but it has been a critical part of how we define ourselves, going back even before the First World War.”

“From our earliest days, we have always had a vision of our organization as something more than just the people we see right in front of us, and the direct results of our service projects.”

As the 2024 convention ended, people began thinking about when the global Rotary community would gather again to share experiences, get ideas, and connect with friends.

“There are few moments more magical in Rotary than attending a convention,” said Bryn Styles, chair of the 2025 Calgary Convention Committee and a member of the Rotary Club of Barrie-Huron, Ontario, Canada.

Calgary is home to people of more than 240 ethnicities who speak 165 languages, Styles said. He also touted the world-famous Calgary Stampede, which will begin several days after the convention ends.

Bryn Styles added: “We hope to see you all in Calgary, next year, it will be a great convention.”



RI President Gordon R. McNally addresses the closing general session of the 2024 Rotary International Convention, in Singapore



images: Viv Byrnes

Getting together, making friends, and doing something for the environment

Story and photo by Belle Butler

Mid Mountains Local News
published by Blue Mountains
Planetary Health Initiative

Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains is part of a global, grassroots movement replacing single-use plastic bags with sustainable recycled fabric alternatives.

On the first Saturday of every month, long-standing volunteers and newbies gather at Korowal School, at Hazelbrook, to sew reusable bags out of recycled fabric for Boomerang Bags.

“We are tackling two problems at once: plastic bags and textile waste,” said Maria De Luca, who joined the local initiative in 2017, and became the group’s coordinator in 2019.

Founders of the original Boomerang Bags, at Burleigh Heads, Jordyn De Boer and Tania Potts, realised that by diverting textile waste from landfill and giving it another life, in the shape of a bag, they could also drastically reduce plastic bag waste.

Community sewing bees were formed and, so began what is now a worldwide initiative that has diverted an estimated 180,000 kilograms of waste from landfill since its inception in 2013.

Boomerang Bags now has over 1,100 volunteer communities around the world, including the Blue Mountains group, which supplies bags to the Cancer Wellness Support Op Shop, North Katoomba, Terry White Chemmart, Wentworth Falls, and the Food Co-op in Katoomba.

The Blue Mountains group is hoping to supply more shops as they enlist more volunteers.

“Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains is about getting together, making friends, socialising, and doing something for the environment all at the same time... and feeling good about it!” – Maria De Luca said.



Supporting the environment is a Rotary Area of Focus

Alison Cameron and Maria De Luca: dedicated volunteers at Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains.

Contact Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains - 0450 164 692

Maria explained that Boomerang Bags takes a nuanced approach to the carry-bag problem, noting that other alternatives such as paper bags or newly made reusable bags have their own negative impacts on the environment.

Using, and importantly reusing, as many times as possible, a bag made locally from diverted textile waste, drastically reduces environmental impacts.

At Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains, all material has been donated by individuals or local op shops, and is put to maximum use.

“We get as much out of the material as we can,” said Maria. “Even if the material is threadbare, we still use it by screen printing the labels on it, to minimise waste.”

Leftover scraps are collected and used for filling other projects.

Most volunteers are so dedicated to the cause, that they sew bags at home as well as during the monthly sewing bees.

Often leaving small, individualised marks on their work, they find great joy in spotting their bags being used by the community.

“Sometimes I find myself looking around the shops for my bags,” said Alison, “then I get really excited when I see someone using one of them.”

Key Points:

- Single-use plastic bags and textile waste are two major environmental problems being tackled by grassroots movement, Boomerang Bags.
- Boomerang Bags Blue Mountains meets at Korowal School on the first Saturday of the month to turn discarded fabric into usable carry bags.
- The monthly sewing bees are a great way to learn how to sew, make friends, and do something for the community and the environment.

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Gov't grant boosts services at Junction 142

A recent \$50,000 Community Grant from the NSW government has been of great assistance to Junction 142, the Katoomba-based community service provider.

Junction 142 provides services to homeless, and those in need, and in recent months has been able to expand its services for the first time post-Covid.

Manager Stephen Bradley says: "Our expansion has also been due to great community support and consistent fundraising."

"This scenario has led to an expansion of the free shower and laundry service from three to four days per week, now including Tuesdays, which coincides with Junction 142's Open Table food services.

"The Open Table continues to provide a hot breakfast and food hamper service on Tuesdays and Thursdays, supporting approximately 35 people at each sitting. It also acts as an important social hub where people can meet, socialise, and exchange information.

"A major development for Junction 142 has been our hosting of the Link Wentworth organised Community Hub, which takes place in the Junction 142 Church, the first Tuesday of every month.

"A one-stop-shop of services can be accessed from representatives of: Link Wentworth Housing, Thrive, NSW Health, Belong, Flourish, Moneycare, NDIS, Platform, The Gender Centre, Aboriginal Housing Office, and MYST. This activity continues to expand as more organisations join.

Another important event has enabled Junction 142 to be more effective. "Our successful application for grants, resulted in the purchase and signwriting of a new van," Stephen Bradley said.

"The Caddy, pictured above, is used for food rescue from companies such as Woolworths, The Food Co op, Bakers Delight and Mountain High Pies. These products are sorted by volunteers into hampers, and distributed at the Open Table.

Stephen Bradley added: "Junction 142 continues to be well supported by a skills-based, pro-bono Board, and a group of dedicated volunteers but, as always, there is a desperate need for more willing helpers."

If you would like to help at Junction 142, contact Stephen at: Office@junction142.org.au



The new Junction 142 van, Manager, Stephen Bradley, and local signwriter, Rowan Wilson, who provided the artwork (left). image supplied



The Open Table provides a welcoming, inclusive environment where people can enjoy hot food, and receive food hampers in the company of others...images supplied

Junction 142 is an activity of Leura Uniting Church and the Community

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Grove of Trees to honour Dudley Mercer

The Rotary E-club of Greater Sydney is proposing to plant a Grove of Trees as a memorial to honour its former president, Dudley Mercer, who died earlier this year.

The trees will be planted in and around the Tea Gardens/ Hawks Nest region where Dudley and Marilyn spent many happy years.

A walkway is to be built by the local council along the foreshore of Myall Lakes where the trees are to be planted. The club also wants to install a "Buddy Bench" in Dudley's and the club's name along the walkway.

To help with finance, the E-club's Board is looking for donations from Rotarians and clubs who would like to honour Dudley, and the many wonderful deeds he did.



Each tree costs \$5. Once the trees have been planted, donors will receive a certificate of thanks.

If you would like to participate, please pay money into the E-club's working account, and the Environment Committee will organise the details.

You are welcome to donate as many trees as you wish...BSB 032-553 Charity A/C 114 346

Please put your name and number of trees in the details when you make a donation.



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Crazy Socks for Docs Day June 5, 2024



It may not be on your calendar, but it's an important day for the medical profession.

Held every year on the first Friday of June, **Crazysocks4docs Day** is a flagship event, and all about raising awareness of the mental health of doctors and health practitioners around the world.

No matter who you are, anyone can get involved and enjoy the day. The aims of the day are all about normalising the conversation around mental health and creating a safe place to do it.

This year's Crazysocks4docs Day will continue to raise awareness and promote tangible action about mental health in healthcare workers, and focus on removing the stigma associated with it.

So...if you visit your friendly GP on Friday, wear a pair of crazy socks, and let your Doc know you really care about what he or she is all about, in helping to save your life, and the lives of others. It's a good thing to do.

Your friendly Doc might also be wearing crazy or odd socks, too...check it out!



Mountain Ghost

Well, we're now officially in winter, but let's look back at Autumn. The Ghost thinks there may be something to this global warming theory, because he has spent hours raking up leaves in his backyard.



3. Blackheath – look along any back streets in Blackheath and you will see rows and rows of spectacular trees. While there, you can visit the Rocket at Soldiers Memorial Park. All this is for free.
4. Everglades House and Garden, at Leura, is a must. For many years, this was the Ghost's favourite Autumn place. This National Trust property set on 12 acres of mature gardens also has spectacular views of the Jamison Valley.
5. Wentworth Falls – one of the most spectacular sights in the Blue Mountains is the tunnel of flaming trees (no, the Ghost is not swearing, the trees are flaming good) on route to Wentworth Falls Lake.

AUTUMN IN THE MOUNTAINS

The Mountain Ghost was not always a Mountain Ghost. A long time ago, he was a City Ghost but moved to the Mountains because he loved them.

One of the attractions of the Mountains is that you actually get four different seasons, unlike Sydney which has just summer and winter. Hot and not so hot. Humid and not so humid. But the Ghost's favourite time of year is Autumn.

Well, we're now officially in winter, but let's look back at Autumn. The Ghost thinks there may be something to this global warming theory, because he has spent hours raking up leaves in his backyard.

This time last year, the Ghost was telling his thousands of readers (well hundreds anyway) of the best places to see the beautiful Autumn trees and colours. Well, the best places to see Autumn in the Mountains according to Scenic World, who do know a little about the Mountains are :-

1. Mount Wilson – go to the village, and the streets are lined with elm trees, liquid ambers, and pink cherries. Mount Wilson is also home to some of the best private cold climate gardens in Australia. Many owners encourage visitors to have a picnic among the trees. Some charge a small entrance fee, which usually goes to charity.
2. Mount Tomah – (our Blue Mountains Botanic Garden) to give it its full name is magnificent at this time of year. It covers 252 hectares of beautiful Autumn colours.



Not mentioned, because it is a little way out of the Mountains, is Mayfield Gardens, at Mayfield, near Oberon. The Ghost has written about Mayfield before.

It is recognised as one of the best cool climate gardens in the Southern Hemisphere, and it is getting better each year. If you have not visited Mayfield in Autumn, then you are missing a magnificent sight. Do it soon.

The Ghost is aware that deciduous trees are all from the Northern Hemisphere and the native eucalyptus are all evergreens. These northern invaders, some people call them feral trees, have made the Mountains a much more attractive place to be.

Just as Australia welcomes people from all parts of the planet, so we welcome trees from all over the world, providing they do not create any environmental problem. Anyway, that's what the Ghost thinks, but he has been wrong before....bye for now!

That's all folks