

HORIZONS

February, 2026



Rotary Club of
Greater Blue Mountains

Seeing the
community
in 2026



JENNIFER
Jennifer A. Scott

BARRY TAYLOR
Barry Taylor

MICHAEL
Michael

Project Success

Money raised - Cribs ordered



Comin' up

Stuff you should know about

Greater Blue Mountains

Rotary



<https://www.facebook.com/centralbluerotary>

Welcome

Welcome to the new year which is looking to be just as busy as last year.

The Rooming-in-Cribs project for Katoomba Hospital should be finalised by the end of this month.

We have ordered four cribs, which are currently in transit from Italy.

When they arrive a hand-over ceremony will be arranged.

This is a great start for our combined club which quickly raised \$12,000 for three cribs.

Central Mountains Men's Shed has joined our project and contributed enough to purchase the fourth crib. I thank them for their kind donation.

The work doesn't stop. Our board agreed that our next major project will be providing a wheelchair accessible Orbit spinner to be incorporated into the upgrade of play equipment at Melrose Park, in Katoomba.

The total cost of the equipment is just over \$28,000.

This will be a RAWCS registered project, allowing the club to apply for a Rotary Australia Compassionate Grants (RACG), but we will still need to fundraise \$14,000.

Great fundraising opportunities coming.

Barry Taylor
President
2025-2026



Greater Blue Mountains Service Projects

International

Sustainable Cambodia
Timor (winding up)
Asha Home for Girls
The Rotary Foundation
Polio Plus
ShelterBox

Fundraiser

Music festival
Blackheath Golf day
Barbecues
Christmas raffle

Personal Giving

Centurion

Youth

RYPEN, RYLA, Youth
Exchange, MUNA
MYST; Mountain of Youth;
Love Bites
School prizes

Pride of Workmanship

Annual expense shared
50% with UBMS

One-off Projects

Sustainable Lanka
Accessible Spinner
playground – half funded
Megalong water tank – on hold
Fire Danger Meter - funded
Cancer Wellness Centre
garden - funded
Cribs – completed
Wellness weekend - \$1000 club/
\$1000 Bendigo Bank grant

Community

Grant Funded

DeCaf

Lawson school breakfasts

Foodbank

Mental Health First Aid

Rotary Community Corp

Club Funded

Brigid Justice

Palliative Care Garden

Men's Health Van

Statues

Indigenous Health Scholar

Club funded - Grant funded - Special fundraiser

Special Induction Night

On Wednesday 25 February, we will be having a new member induction night at the Grand View Hotel when members of our newest Spoke, Rotarians for Planetary Health, will be formally inducted into Rotary.

Please indicate your attendance on Trybooking (free!) even if you are not having a meal, as it helps us secure the right size room for the evening.

<https://www.trybooking.com/DJMNZ>



Rotarians from Districts 9660 and 9685 are invited to unite in Newcastle, NSW, on Friday, 20 and Saturday, 21 March 2026, for the "Together for Tomorrow" conference—a dynamic event designed to inspire, connect, and empower Rotary members across both districts.

For more details and to register, visit: <http://www.togetherfortomorrow.com.au/>

In case you missed it

Around \$3,000 raised for Sustainable Lanka project



GIA, the Sri Lankan Restaurant, in Leura, was filled to capacity, on Sunday, 8 February, with Rotarians and guests, including several from Sydney; even a couple from Bathurst came to the event.

It is expected the evening will generate around \$3,000 for the Sustainable Lanka Project, to clean about 120 water wells.

Chef Chathun Perera, who trained in Michelin Starred restaurants, in Dubai, certainly demonstrated his skills in preparing delicious and satisfying meals with numerous curry dishes and accompaniments.

Guests with special dietary requirements were also delighted with their meals.

The occasion was to raise funds to support people in Sri Lanka severely affected by recent floods.

Specifically, the money will go towards cleaning water wells impacted by flood waters, thereby giving people access to clean water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

Haran Ramachandran, District 9865 District Governor Nominee and member of the E-club of Greater Sydney, along with Past District Governor Ian Scott, is driving Sustainable Lanka, a project based on the well-documented and successful Sustainable Cambodia.

...Eric Cantor



Bushland picnic strengthens friendships

The District 9685 Annual Picnic, at Fagan Park, Galston on Sunday, 1 February 2026, brought together Rotarians, partners, families and Rotary Youth for a relaxed and enjoyable day of fellowship. "Surrounded by bushland, the picnic was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen friendships, celebrate our Rotary community and simply enjoy time together outside of meetings and projects," District Governor Michele Ellery said.

President Barry Taylor and his family represented Greater Blue Mountains Rotary. He said It was a pleasure to join with Rotarians from across our district, enjoy their friendship, and just discuss life.





Kevin Schreiber's Decades of Community Service

Eulogy presented by Ian Scott AM
December 29, 2025

Woronora Memorial Park,
Sutherland

I met Kevin in 2014 when he transferred to the Rotary Club of Central Blue Mountains after he and Adrienne moved up to Leura.

Kevin had been a Rotarian for 18 years by that time, having joined the Rotary Club of Port Hacking on 1 May 1996.

He was President of Port Hacking in 2001/2002 and later joined Cronulla Rotary Club and was a member there for seven years. He joined Central Blue Mountains Rotary in September 2014

Kevin transferred to honorary membership with Central Blue twice to deal with health matters and after moving to Penrith he left us and joined the Rotary Club of Penrith Valley at the start of 2025, where he was a member until his passing.

Kevin gave 24 years of active community service in nearly three decades of Rotary membership.

In Rotary, donations to our Rotary Foundation are recognised by naming a person as a Paul Harris Fellow, Paul Harris having founded Rotary in 1905.

Here in Australia, we have a tradition of using that recognition as an award for exceptional Rotary service and Kevin received his first PHF from the Rotary Club of Cronulla in 2011 and his PHF plus sapphire from the Rotary Club of Central Blue Mountains in 2019, testament to his impressive years of dedicated service.

I have to report though, that if there was an award for cooking sausages, Kevin would not have got it, but if there was an award for taste testing a Rotary sausage, he would definitely have got that one.

While I cannot relay tales of Kevin as a Rotarian in Sutherland Shire, I do know that he visited Banda Aceh in 2006 to do follow up work after the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami.

It is an example of how deeply Kevin felt for and served the community, both overseas and at home, but perhaps at home nothing is more a symbol of Kevin's heartfelt service than this fluffy ram.

At the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show, Kevin met Phillip Charles, a Rotary District Governor classmate of mine, selling toy Fergie Tractors to raise money for the Central Western Queensland Drought appeal.

The story of the drought touched Kevin and he was compelled to do something to help – and he did.

Kevin organised Central Blue Rotary to purchase fluffy toys – mainly rams and lambs, but also pigs and cows – and they were sold from stalls at markets and in shopping centres to "Save the Farm".

The initial effort, with help from some other rotary clubs but mainly through Kevin's personal drive and efforts to hit every weekend market personally, raised \$21,000 for much needed drought relief. Adrienne was on hand on a number of those occasions.

Later adding bilbies and Rural Fire Service bears, near \$10,000 more went to rotary drought and fire appeals, including \$3900 to the Rotary Club of Forbes in 2019, after Kevin urged club members to visit and support the region.

Kevin was a passionate supporter of community, and was always looking for ways to help others; he saw an issue, he developed ideas, he connected people, and he acted.

Kevin exemplified Rotary's motto of Service Above Self; now may he rest in peace.

Kevin Schreiber worked tirelessly in the area of local government for 30 years, first in Sutherland Shire, and then as an elected member of Blue Mountains City Council for two terms, representing the residents of Ward 1.

He died peacefully at Nepean Hospital on 12 December, 2025, aged 82, after a long illness.

Prior to becoming a Blue Mountains councillor, Kevin devoted 21 years as an elected representative of Sutherland Shire Council.

Commencing his service in 1995, Kevin was mayor from 1996 to 1999 and again from 2004 to 2006, as well as deputy mayor from 2012 to 2013.

He was mayor at the time of the Sutherland Shire riots, in 2005.

In recognition of his outstanding service, Kevin was awarded the title of Emeritus Mayor by Local Government NSW in 2006.

He served as an Executive Member of Local Government NSW from 1999 to 2013 and as Treasurer from 2009 to 2011.

At the LGNSW Conference in November, 2024, Kevin was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his exceptional contribution to local government.

Kevin's passion for community extended beyond local government, having served as a member of Wanda Surf Life Saving Club, Cronulla Chamber of Commerce, and several Rotary clubs.

A funeral service for Kevin Schreiber was held at Woronora Memorial Park, Sutherland on 29 December, 2025.

It was attended by members of the Sutherland-Cronulla business community, friends, colleagues, Rotarians, and former Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Kevin Schreiber leaves a remarkable legacy of leadership and service.

Engaging young minds with robotics and STEM

Rotary 360
8 January 2026



Students learn robotics and computer coding through hands-on experience.

By Kadam Bhambari

As a professional educator, I have always felt at home in classrooms. I've spent years designing lessons, nurturing curiosity, and witnessing that spark in a child's eye when a concept finally clicks.

But in 2022, I felt a deeper calling — to take my experience beyond textbooks, beyond schools, and into the community.

I initiated something I called "Hour of Code with Rotary," carrying laptops, lesson plans, and a heart full of enthusiasm into multiple government and private schools.

We reached 10–12 schools, introducing students to computing in a joyful way — by letting them create.

There's one memory from working with the students that sticks out. A student wrote his first little block of code, hit run, and the computer obeyed. His face lit up, and he said with pure wonder, "Ma'am, the computer is listening to me now!"

That sentence affected me deeply. It was proof that when children experience learning, not just hear about it, something shifts. They feel empowered.

Learning through laughter
Gradually, the initiative grew. I introduced coding, AI, and robotics workshops, using my experience as an educator to keep sessions simple, engaging, and friendly even for first timers.

Not every workshop was perfect — and that's the beauty of growth. We had days when computers wouldn't boot, robots lost wheels, and students had to share devices.

Yet rather than give up, the students collaborated, problem-solved, and celebrated every tiny win.

Chaos often turned into creativity, and laughter became part of learning.

To scale up our efforts, I started seeking support from different companies, organizations, and technology partners.

Over time, several companies believed in the cause and extended resources, tools, expertise, and kits.

Their support helped us deliver Robotics bootcamps, AI starter sessions, 3D printing demonstrations, and hands-on STEM activities at a much larger scale.

With partnerships, our workshops didn't just grow — they became more interactive, more accessible, and more memorable for students.

This year was special. Rotary Club Chandigarh Midtown received the District Monthly Award (August 2025) for the Most Innovative Project for our Robotics Workshop.

When I heard the news, I had to smile; not so much because the award defines success, but because it honours all the behind-the-scenes efforts including preparing kits late at night, transporting robots across the

city, training volunteers, and the many joyful "Ma'am, it ran!" moments.

Multiplying impact

Recognition like this reminds me why I began this effort and encourages me to continue. It pushes me to think bigger — to take STEM learning to more schools, more children, more communities. I am actively working to develop new associations and collaborations, because when industries and educators come together, the impact multiplies.

As we move forward, I'm excited to introduce Digital Literacy, Creative Computing, Internet Safety, and Future Skills programs, ensuring learning is not just an activity — but a lifelong empowerment.

Rotary has taught me that when we contribute even a piece of our professional skill, we create meaningful changes.

My skill is education. Yours might be music, business, finance, healthcare, or art. Whatever it is, someone out there can benefit from it.

The small steps we take today help build a future shaped by innovation, empathy, and curiosity.

Have you used your professional skills to give back to the community?

Kadam Bhambari is a STEM Educator and the spouse of Jeeten Bhambari, past president of the Rotary Club of Chandigarh Midtown, Chandigarh, India.

Ian Scott says:



Did you know there is a Rotarian Code of Conduct?

Where does a code of conduct fit in with other guidelines?

The Values of Rotary are those core principles that are important to all Rotary members: Leadership, Integrity, Diversity, Fellowship and Service.

These values are what bring us together from all parts of the world to do community service.

The Four Way Test is an ethical guide for personal and business relationships, and at its core is about

honesty, fairness and fostering good relationships. It has four simple questions for self-reflection on our thoughts and actions:

Is it the Truth; Is it Fair to All Concerned; Will it Build Goodwill and Better Friendships; Will it be beneficial to All Concerned.

The Rotarian Code of Conduct builds on these to help Rotarians act and conduct themselves in accordance with our values and our motto "Service Above Self".

It sets out clear guidelines for acceptable, professional behaviour, covering areas such as our interactions with Rotary and Rotaract colleagues, those we partner with, and those we serve.

It reinforces our commitment to youth and to service, and asks us to foster a respectful environment in our clubs, on our projects, and any time we are seen as a Rotarian - and, Isn't that all the time?

Rotarian Code of Conduct

As a Rotarian, I will:

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians
5. Help maintain a harassment-free environment in Rotary meetings, events, and activities; report any suspected harassment; and help ensure non-retaliation to those individuals that report harassment

Remembering Rob Nickl



Robert Ronald John Nickl, known by his family, friends and associates as "Rob" joined Central Blue Mountains Rotary Club in the early 1980s.

He was president in 1990-1991. He also served as a director of community service and vocational service. He was a Paul Harris Fellow.

Rob died on 16 January, 2026, aged 80 years.

A funeral service was held at Our Lady of the Nativity Church, Lawson, on 30 January.

Rob was generous, kind, and active president, helping to grow the club to about 30 members in difficult times.

He was said to be always positive, no matter what difficulty life presented.

Tom Hickey Memorial Bench



To honour Tom Hickey, who died 25 February, 2025, the Hickey family have donated a bench, in his memory, overlooking the 18th green at Wentworth Falls Golf Club.

Apart from his Rotary membership, Tom was a keen golfer and a member of the golf club for many years. He could be seen most Saturdays enjoying a round of golf on the course.

He also served as a board member and worked regularly in the pro shop.

Sitting on the bench:

Matthew Hickey (Tom's son) and Isabelle, granddaughter.

When flood water disappears Life Stops



Clean water means fewer sick days, more time at school, and a childhood protected.

In November, 2025, when Cyclone Ditwah swept through the rural villages of Kekirawa and Palagala, in Anuradhapura District, Sri Lanka, floodwaters destroyed homes, livelihoods and something even more essential: safe water.

For these farming communities, household wells are not a convenience. They are life itself.

After the floods, more than 2,400 wells were left filled with sewage, chemicals, mud, and animal waste, forcing families to choose between unsafe water or no water at all.

Without clean water, families cannot return home. Children fall sick. Farming stops. Life stands still.

A simple solution that saves Lives

Rebuilding water systems takes years.

Cleaning existing wells takes days and restores life immediately.

This project restores 500 contaminated wells every month, using trained local teams who:

- Pump out toxic floodwater
- Remove sludge and debris by hand
- Disinfect each well using approved treatments
- Ensure the water is safe for daily use

With four teams working in parallel, all 2,400 wells will be restored by April 2026.

That's real impact, right where it's needed.

Each cleaned well means:

- A family can drink, cook, and bathe safely
- Children return to school instead of clinics
- Farmers can grow food again
- 100,000 people will benefit from this focused intervention

Extraordinary impact for a modest cost

- Cost per well: approximately AUD \$25.50
- Total project value: approximately AUD \$61,150

Sustainable Lanka

A Rotary-led humanitarian initiative dedicated to rebuilding lives and strengthening communities across Sri Lanka through clean water, sanitation, healthcare, education, livelihoods, and disaster recovery.

Sustainable Lanka operates under Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS), meeting Australian governance and compliance standards. Donations are managed responsibly and converted directly into measurable outcomes for vulnerable families, schools, and health facilities.



Be part of the recovery

Learn More

Website: <https://www.sustainablelanka.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/SustainableLanka>

Your support turns polluted wells into sources of life, hope, and resilience

Donate securely via RAWCS:

<https://donations.rawcs.com.au/39-2025-26>

One donation can restore clean water for an entire household.

Need More Information:

Rtn. Haran Ramachandran OAM

M: 0419 980 529 E: rotary.haran@gmail.com



RAWCS Project 39 of 2025-2026
Sustainable Lanka

Healthy People, Healthy Planet

Planetary Health Wellness Weekend

Saturday 28 February - Sunday 1 March

The Planetary Health Centre has partnered with Greater Blue Mountains Rotary and Blue Mountains Interfaith Group to host an inspiring Planetary Health Wellness Weekend that brings together two annual events: Planetary Health Day and the Blue Mountains Interfaith Gathering. The event is being sponsored by the Katoomba and Upper Blue Mountains Bendigo Community Bank.



Over the weekend (28 Feb -1 March) explore physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health in a weekend of nature and community connection with talks, workshops, stalls and delicious food.

- Deep Listening immersive field workshops
- Mental Health First Aid
- nature journaling
- mindfulness
- creativity
- (Em)power(ing) tools
- Ikebana
- Shared Reading
- Tai Chi and Qigong
- Chair Yoga
- exercise, sleep and your health
- how to share loss and grieving for and with animals
- and a celebration of the many faith-based groups in the Blue Mountains focused on healing our land, healing ourselves.



Nature walks each morning:

Each morning, you have the chance to join Andrew Skeoch, renowned wildlife sound recordist and author of 'Deep Listening to Nature', for an immersive workshop and walk to hear the intricate conversations happening in the natural world around us.

Food and community stalls:

will be running throughout the Saturday. Come for a session or stay for the whole weekend — and be part of a growing community caring for planetary health, together.

Learn more...

<https://events.humanitix.com/planetary-health-wellness-weekend>

The event is free to attend, with some paid sessions.
Registration is encouraged to help with planning.



Greater Blue Mountains

Rotary



PLANETARY HEALTH WELLNESS WEEKEND

Healthy People, Healthy Planet

PLANETARY HEALTH DAY & INTERFAITH GATHERING

SAT 28 FEB & SUN 1 MARCH
PLANETARY HEALTH PRECINCT & PARKLANDS

33-39 Acacia Street Katoomba

Explore physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health in a weekend of nature connection, talks, workshops, stalls, delicious food, community connection and wellbeing.

Find more info and register to attend here



MORE INFORMATION

Contact Freya on 0475 822 862

Community Bank
Katoomba & Upper Blue Mountains

Bendigo Bank

Rotary
Greater Blue Mountains

Rotarians for PLANETARY HEALTH



BLUE MOUNTAINS PLANETARY HEALTH INITIATIVE

blue mountain City Council





The School
of St Jude

Opportunity for International Volunteers



Following an overwhelming response from volunteers to participate in a spoken English Immersion Program and experience Tanzanian culture, Gemma Sisia is now launching a new program.

Called the SASA Program (Sasa is a Swahili word for now) the Skills, Action, Service, and Adventure program will run from 28 November to 12 December.

Applications are being invited now from people who feel they could take on a role as Team Leader or as a volunteer, with expertise in one of the SASA categories.

The requirement is a 15 hour contribution supporting students in at least one of the designated categories.

The Adventure category requires planning an overnight adventure, most likely involving camping and hiking.

This second volunteer opportunity will be loosely based on the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and offered to our Form 3 students, who are approximately 16 years old.

There will be 200+ students overall, and so you will be supporting students in small groups.

Volunteers should be reasonably fit, willing to take part in the wider program, and it would be wonderful if you could also join the overnight hiking and camping adventure.

Gemma says: If you would like to be considered as a volunteer or as a team leader for December 2026,

Gemma Sisia OAM is an Australian humanitarian who founded The School of St Jude in Tanzania in 2002. The school provides free, high-quality education scholarships to over 1,800 of the brightest and most deserving Tanzanian children, with boarding for its 1,400 secondary students.



Please email me at:
gemma.s@schoolofstjude.co.tz

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until we find our team of volunteers so please send in your application as soon as possible."

You will need to include:

- A detailed cover letter explaining how you can either teach or assist with coordinating at least one of the SASA categories below and why you would be a good fit:
- 15 hours teaching a skill
- 15 hours coaching a sport
- 15 hours helping to coordinate a service project
- Help with organising the overnight adventure
- Ideally, a copy of your CV
- Any other relevant experience or attributes that would help you contribute to the wider program

Please note that detailed planning will begin once a Team Leader has been appointed (hopefully by mid-February 2026).

In the meantime, the information below outlines what the school can and cannot provide so you can make an informed decision.

What the school will provide:

- Free accommodation and airport transfers from either Kilimanjaro or Arusha Airports
- A Team Leader and a school team to support you with planning and teaching
- An unforgettable experience with eager-to-learn students and fellow volunteers
- The chance to share in genuine Tanzanian school and community experiences that most visitors never get to be part of

What you would need to cover:

- Return flights to Tanzania
- Tanzanian Business Visa (US\$250)
- Three meals per day at the school (US\$25 per day)
- Personal medical and insurance costs
- Cost of some optional visitor activities