

Central Blue Mountains Rotary Club

2017-2018 President's Report



The expression 'if I only knew then what I know now' very ably sums up my year as President of Central Blue Mountains Rotary.

It has been a tremendous learning experience made all the easier for the support crew who gently guided and assisted me and acted as my sounding board.

It has been the greatest honour to serve with such a competent and enthusiastic board and I wish to thank them for their hard work through the year – Ray Wiles, Ava Emdin, Lora Stopic, Steve Cookson, Jennifer Scott, Ian Scott, Kevin Schreiber, Tom Hickey and Steve Gillett .

I look back with amazement at the many activities and events Central Blue has undertaken this year. It has been a busy year. The community and fundraising events bear testament to the commitment, dedication and enthusiasm of all our members. Community director Ray and fundraising director Kevin did a mighty job co-ordinating our many and varied activities.

I would like to pay tribute and extend my sincere thanks to the partners of our members. Often they would be helping at these events side by side with their Rotarian "other half" and also thank you for supporting your "other half" in all they do at Rotary.

The loss of the Grand View Hotel markets for our monthly sausage sizzles has made a dent in our fundraising capabilities short term but with the revamp of Home Hardware to Mitre 10 we have been trying out this new venue. Home Hardware has been very generous to our club with support for our various raffles.

There are several stand out events and moments this year including the Australia Day breakfast, Pride of Workmanship our club hosted, the Breakfast Club at Lawson Public School, the inaugural Pink Ball and our club visioning workshops.

The Lawson Public School Breakfast Club is an ongoing community project that is proving extremely rewarding both to the school, students and our members. Each Friday morning our Rotary members assist with providing breakfast to students.

It is alarming that many children in our local area do not for various reasons eat breakfast before they leave for school, which can negatively affect with their learning abilities.

I would like to thank our youth director Ava for the tireless effort she puts into making this wonderful initiative so successful.

The inaugural Pink Ball was a sparkling affair raising funds for two of our international projects, Sustainable Cambodia and Astha Home for Girls. Our own Steve Gillett donated his pride and joy, his long hair, to a good cause. Additionally his hair will be donated to make wigs.

As this was our inaugural ball plans are to make this an ongoing annual event raising funds for other Rotary projects.

Importantly, our club engaged the district visioning team to look to our club's future drawing on member's thoughts and opinions to set our values and strategic direction for the next five years.

Over a few sessions our members embraced the process and were able to input into the final result to determine what our club will look like into the future.

We looked at what our meetings should look like, what direction we should take in relation to our avenues of service and crucially what our values and mission statement will be.

The value of the visioning was that our members determined our directions ensuring member ownership of the process and the results. I would recommend this to any club which feels they need a new boost of energy.

I encourage you to read the directors reports for a more fulsome overview of our club's activities.

I am looking forward to Rotary retirement and know that the next Rotary year is in good hands with

our two incoming Presidents Ava Emdin and Steve Cookson and their Board. I know they have many exciting plans for this next year to make Central Blue and our local and international communities a better place.

Roza Sage

President 2017-2018

MEMBERSHIP

2017-18 has been a year of consolidation. We started the year with 41 members and will finish the year with 38 members. Our goal was to maintain our numbers at 41.

We welcomed Ann Montague to the club in September 2017. We farewelled John Read, when he transferred to the Rotary Club of Narrabri.

Due to health, Julie Madgwick and Michael Cousley have been unable to be involved in Rotary activities this year. The club, however, values their contribution and both have been made honorary members.

Due to family commitments, Graham Trevena also left the club. We wish him well.

In April 2018, we held an information evening with four prospective members attending. Over the next 4-6 weeks we will be inducting Anthony Steel, a solicitor from Lawson, Rhonda Steed, manager, Mitre 10, Katoomba, and Justine Murphy, strategic change manager at Scenic World.

This year we developed a mentor system to ensure each new member received ongoing support.

In early 2018-19 we will deliver a mentor training programme. We have also encouraged new members to work together and develop a local community project which once approved by the club board, can be financed by club funds. Membership engagement outside the club has been quite active this year. Some of the committee chairs have been active in engaging with chairs from other clubs and have encouraged joint activities.

Some members are actively engaged in Chambers of Commerce and other NGOs in the community. A few members are involved in Rotary Actin Groups and Rotary Fellowships. This is a great way to connect your areas of interest with Rotarians around the world.

Several members have graduated for Rotary Leadership Institute which is a valuable course provides the opportunity to network and develop a deeper understanding of how Rotary works on every level. District training was very well attended this year. Thank you to the membership committee for your support.

Jennifer Scott

Membership Chair 2017-2018

ROTARY FOUNDATION

Paul Harris Fellow recognitions 2016-2017 were not reported in last year's annual report as that would have given the game away. For the record they were given to Mark Jarvis of the Carrington Hotel for his support of community groups and charities and Julie Cooney in recognition of her indefatigable provision of musical support to multiple Rotary clubs and other community groups in the Mountains.

The board approved modest goals this year for The Rotary Foundation giving to the Annual Fund and End Polio Now Fund of US\$8,000 and US\$3,000 respectively.

As at the end of May we are on track to meet those goals and hopefully exceed them; as most contributions made are personal giving, not club giving, please consider making your own donations to the Foundation and Polio.

Our information stall held at Leura Woolworths for World Polio Day on 23 October 2017 was a success with awareness raised in the community as well as \$690.50 raised through donations and selling a few fluffy toys. Thanks to Ray Wiles for organising the logistics of the stall and thanks also to those who staffed it.

We had a good turn-out for the Bi-District Rotary Foundation Dinner at the Blacktown Workers Club on 20 November 2017 and our members enjoyed the opportunity to meet Past RI

Vice-President Jennifer Jones. Jennifer and Ian Scott went on a self-funded trip to Mongolia in

March 2018 to conduct a community needs assessment for Family and Community Conflict Resolution training, and the confirmed need will result in a Global Grant application for a Vocational Training Team to travel to Mongolia in late October.

I attended the District Assembly Foundation Seminar on 29 April 2018 and submitted out Club Memorandum of Understanding with District; this qualified the Club to apply for District and Global Grants.

Shortly thereafter the Board approved an application for a District Grant (Australia) for a project to install signage and fencing at the Peace Park in Leura seeking \$2,000.

As many clubs now apply for District Grants, our application will be in competition with others.

Thank you all for supporting our Foundation – you are Doing Good in the World!

Ian Scott

Foundation Chair 2017-2018

YOUTH SERVICE

The now well established partnership with Upper Blue Mountains Sunrise, Blackheath and Central Blue Mountains Rotary Clubs once again resulted in the pooling of resources to ensure young people in our community were able to participate in exciting projects which most decidedly widened their horizons and opened their eyes to new possibilities.

Sally Gorman became our Club's 2018 'RYLARIAN'. A childcare worker and a graduate student working towards a Masters' Degree in education, Sally made the most of the experience of being a recipient of the 2017/18 Rotary Youth Leadership Award. Sally visited the Club on her return from camp to share her experiences with our members and has maintained her friendship and interest in our Club.

Two students attended the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment. Rhys Schmold from Blue Mountains Grammar School participated in the summer camp at Narrabeen while Luke Stathakis, a member of Hazelbrook Scout Group attended the winter camp in Springwood. Both young men reported on the fun and friendships they enjoyed as well as the unique opportunities to develop leadership skills they believed would serve them well as they make their way in the world.

For the first time Central Blue Mountains Rotary Club part sponsored a student from Blue Mountains Grammar School to attend the Honeywell Engineering Summer School. Samantha Mai joined 100 Year 11 students from NSW and the ACT who all wish to pursue Engineering as a future career. Samantha had the opportunity to visit the engineering faculties of five NSW Universities and undertaking site visits at ANSTO, Cochlear and Blue Scope Steel. The experience solidified Samantha's desire to follow her dream of undertaking tertiary studies which will take her on the path to a career in engineering.

With the 2018 World Rotary Peacebuilding Conference being held in Sydney Central Blue decided to offer attendance to three high school students.

While this opportunity was offered to a number of schools, Blue Mountains Grammar School took up the invitation and nominated three students to join a group of Club members at this outstanding event.

All three young women, Leila Harris, Alexandra Michielsen and Ailsa Seex believed this unique experience was one to be long remembered.

Our support for Hazelbrook Scout Group and Days for Girls continued with donations and attendance at working bees.

A new feature of the year was our involvement in the Lawson Public School Breakfast Club. Partnering with Mid Mountains Outreach Community Services, this joint project crossed both the Youth Avenue of Service and that of Community Service. Our weekly term-time breakfasts are popular with the both the students who happily tuck into the nutritious food and Club members who thoroughly enjoy the delightful interaction with the children and staff.

Rotary year 2017/18 built on the strong Youth Avenue of Service in Central Blue Rotary Club, an area of Service I have enjoyed coordinating.

Ava Emdin

Youth Services Chair 2017-2018

DAYS FOR GIRLS

'Days for Girls International' says every girl and woman has inherent worth and dignity, and celebrates this by providing washable menstrual hygiene solutions, and health education to young women throughout the world.

Visiting Cambodia earlier this year, Jennifer Scott had an opportunity to distribute hygiene kits made by Australian volunteers.

COMMUNITY AND FUNDRAISING PROJECTS HELD THROUGHOUT 2017-2018

- Catering for Blue Mountains Grammar School Sports Carnival
- Aboriginal art group donation
- Polio Eradication sales
- DVD Sale - Community Service funds
- Leura Garden Festival - Volunteering
- Leura Village Fair - BBQ Fundraiser
- Hat Night - Fundraiser for Australian Rotary Health
- Graffiti Removal - Volunteering
- Melbourne Cup Trifecta sales - fundraiser
- Assisting Blue Mountains Grammar School with charity fundraising
- Scenic World Sculpture Exhibition - Hosting - Fundraiser
- Sale '*Pudding Lane*' Christmas puddings -Twilight markets
- Social Activities - Christmas Party - Barefoot Bowls
- Special Olympics - Joint Rotary BBQ breakfast for start of Big Car Ride
- Community Raffle - RFS - Girl Guides
- Carols in Park catering for Uniting Church Carols in the Park
- Christmas Raffle Sales - Fundraiser
- Leura Village Association - Assisting with late night Christmas activities
- Australia Day Community Breakfast - Wilson Park, Wentworth Falls
- Nepal - International Projects
- Cambodia - International Project
- Pink Ball - Supporting our two International projects
- Roaring Twenties Event at Hydro Majestic - Volunteering
- Greystanes Golf Day - Organising Committee and Volunteering
- Greystanes Annual Dinner - Attending - Volunteering
- Red Shield Appeal - Volunteering
- RSPCA Million Paws Walk - BBQ Fund Raiser
- Lawson Primary School - Sponsorship and Manpower Community breakfast
- Sale Fluffy Toys - Community fund raiser
- Days for Girls - Donation and working bees
- Donation of fluffy toys to Katoomba Hospital Children's Ward
- Coronation Park - Support with funds for garden upkeep
- Joint Blue Mountains Rotary clubs membership drive at Business Expo
- Contributions to Rotary Foundation & Australian Rotary Health
- Winter and Christmas Hampers - For needy in our community
- Bowel Scan Kits Distribution
- Christmas Giving Tree - Leura Woolworths-Supporting four Local Organisations.
- Catering Van - Fundraising BBQs Leura Public School, Grand View Hotel, Home Hardware
- Aboriginal Cultural Resource Centre - Catering for two Functions
- Rotary 113th Birthday Celebrations with other Blue Mountains Rotary Clubs
- District Conference - Volunteering

- Rotary Centenary Garden - Upgrade
- Waterways Festival - Wentworth Falls Lake - Catering - Fundraiser
- Bullaburra RFS Fun Day, Noble park Bullaburra - Catering - Information day

It has been my honour to serve the club as Community Service Director for the past year.

Ray Wiles

Community Service Director 2017-2018

FUNDRAISING

Over the past 12 months the economic situation has caused local residents to be more prudent with their disposable cash, thus making the charity dollar harder to obtain.

Despite that, we have been able to satisfactorily raise extra money by selling off supplies of soft toys, purchased in the 2016-2017 Rotary year and introducing Melbourne Cup trifecta tickets.

Central Blue Mountains Rotary is registered to fundraise for charitable purposes under the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act. and at all times has complied with relevant sections of the legislation.

Kevin Schreiber

Fundraising Director 2017-2018

TREASURER

2017-2018 has been an exciting and busy year in the management of the financial operations of the Rotary Club of Central Blue Mountains Inc.

Many updates and improvements have been implemented principally to increase transparency for our members.

Following each monthly Board Meeting the Board minutes and financial statement are made accessible for members to peruse on the Club's website.

We've also minimised the administrative expenses with the aim of keeping our members contributions to the operational running costs of the club to a minimum.

In the Charities area we've implemented a savings program so that any excess funds are placed in term deposits to grow until such time as a suitable worthwhile project presents itself. It is very satisfying to report that currently this savings program has close to \$25,000 invested.

Our Board accepts that in today's world the 'charity dollar' is becoming harder and harder to earn.

We're working towards a situation where, rather than just handing out cash to various organisations we would prefer to give grants to assist individual persons or organisations with specific projects or needs.

For, perhaps, too long it could be said that we were "foot soldiers in another organisation's army". As resources and spare time become harder to find it becomes imperative that we carefully consider how our available resources and time are utilised.

During 2017-2018 we've been able to provide to various organisations and worthy causes financial support and assistance. Some examples of these contributions are:

Days for Girls	\$285.00
Christmas Hampers	\$1,560.00
Polio Plus	\$1,400.00
Therapy and Consulting	\$250.00
RSPCA	\$500.00
BM Grammar School	\$1,030.00
Mid-Year Hampers	\$1,600.00
RYPEN Youth Programme	\$330.00
Astha Home for Girls	\$8,300.00
RYLA Youth Sponsorship	\$875.00

Youth Sponsorship	\$400.00
Sustainable Cambodia	\$7,300.00

At the time of writing we understand that this list may increase before the year closes.

Lora Stopic	John Sim
Treasurer	Assistant Treasurer

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

Rotary's 2017-18 theme, "*Making a Difference*" fits perfectly with Rotary International's six areas of focus: fighting disease; growing local economies; promoting peace; providing clean water; saving mothers and children; and supporting education. Our Central Blue Mountains club's international service this year covered the focus areas through our involvement in two major projects.

Sustainable Cambodia (SC), based in Pursat, includes school education, (from pre-school to university), the "Big Village Basket" (BVB) (developing self-sustaining small farming communities, clean water, schools, a pass-on animals program and families/community training) and a range of associated activities.

Our club member, PDG Jennifer Scott heads SC Australia, which has RAWCS (Rotary Australia World Community Service) status (as does the BVB project) and thus tax deductibility for donations.

In January, Jennifer led Rotarians from Australia (including CBM's Ian Scott and John Sim) to inspect SC's operations and assess the progress of the BVB. Rotarians, partners and friends from the United States also participated.

Next step is applying for a Rotary Foundation Global Grant to develop five villages inspected in January.

Jennifer's organisation of the Pink Ball in May saw great participation by the local business community and raised about \$7,500 for the SC BVB project and \$7,500 for the 'Asthma Home for Girls'. Thank you, Jennifer and the Rotarians who helped, make the event such a success.

Asthma Home for Girls in Kathmandu, Nepal, benefited in two ways from our club's continuing support. We directly fund the accommodation, education and personal development of the girls, particularly Sadiksha, who is now 15 and in year 10.

The RAWCS - approved land purchase and building project also attracted other donations as it builds the funds required to provide a permanent (owned) home and continued education and training for the girls, who have been rescued from likely international sex slavery.

Given the drastic circumstances of the eight girls that we started with (and that of the three additional ones since), it is a remarkable transformation to see them now finishing school, getting professional qualifications and looking forward to being leaders in their communities.

They are now safe, healthy, cheerful, socially skilled, confident young women! RAWCS project leader, PP Peter Carroll visited this project, which is run in collaboration with the Himalayan Patan Rotary Club in Kathmandu.

Vocational Training in Mongolia

A team-based project has been established following a study tour/ needs assessment by Jennifer and Ian Scott in March.

This has now received RAWCS approval and even its first grant, from the Pink Umbrella Foundation! Not only that, an Australian Government Direct Aid Grant has been applied for and a Rotary Global Grant is next on the list. Congratulations Ian and Jennifer!

ShelterBox – nominated for a Nobel prize - has received continuing club and individual member financial support.

Days for Girls has been supported similarly, including through club members raiding local stores to buy elements of the sanitary day-packs that are then provided to girls and women overseas who would otherwise not be able to attend education or work because of social attitudes to their body cycle.

International Toast - We continued last year's innovation, recognising the activities of a wide variety of Rotary clubs overseas. Good fun!

Thank you to our club members and, particularly, Jennifer Scott for her energetic and successful organisation of the Pink Ball in May. Our internationally-focused activities this year certainly contributed to Rotary making a difference.

Steve Cookson

International Service Chair 2017-2018