

## **President Lynette's Christmas Speech**

*For those who couldn't join us at our Xmas dinner, or those who struggled to hear, below is an abridged version of my Xmas dinner notes:*

During the recent months we have been very busy with a variety of activities:

“Thank you” to everyone who has participated in so many ways towards the operation of the Hot Dog van, including towing and maintenance – it really is a team effort, including past members and friends, with Jess Hewitson “Chief Co-Ordinator”.

I have had the pleasure of working alongside the “Wood crew” for the past few months, and for the first time in a while, we emptied the store of wood (momentarily, as it's stacking up again, much to Tony Hendersons relief.) as there have been some records broken with the number of bags distributed to those in our community who need it most.

With not meeting each week, there are some members, who still meet in the “off” weeks for a meal together, and we have scheduled in more “fun and social events”, i.e. a bike trip to Geraldine, with Jenny & Lance, a visit to CPlay, for an insight into the stories behind the creation of the playground, 3 x themed Beer & food tasting events with Master Brewer Gary Rushworth, a Mystery destination car trip to and around Oamaru with John Rushton, Tony Henderson has taken us to the Theatre for a couple of shows, we went to the Movies with Altrusa, and we also enjoyed a quiz night with Altrusa with Co-Quiz master Jenny Ensor.

We were the first public to walk on the new Fraser Park turf during our visit pre-opening, we enjoyed a visit to the Eco-Centre at Redruth, which included members from the other local Rotary clubs, and a recent “Weeding” morning to clean-up and clear weeds around the trees our club planted as a “Centennial project”.

We welcomed visiting Rotarians Anna Leslie from the Rotary club of Newport-Balboa, California, and Gavin Green, on numerous occasions, from the Rotary club of Howick, and Raj Gautam from the Rotary club of Kathmandu.

Tony Henderson, Lionel & myself attended Conference in ChCh, Lionel & I also attended Rotary International World Conference in Singapore, and Julie Dockrill, Jess Wooffindin, Lionel & I attended Zone 8 Rotary New Zealand and South Pacific conference in Queenstown.

We have welcomed John Rushton, Shayne Broughton and Peter Jordan as new members since last Xmas, who are already participating in club activities, with John taking leadership in the organization of some of our social activities and recently being elected as a Director of the Club of 2025-26 Rotary year. We also welcomed the return of Robyn Peterson and Gilly Oppenheim into the club, after a short break.

We supported Julie Dockrill & Jess Wooffindin as they saw their “Thaplung Women, Children’s and Community Health Project in Nepal come to fruition, and then, recently, members and their families welcomed Raj, a co-organizer on the Nepal end, when he visited last month., and shared experiences with him, around South Canterbury. We also assisted community partner programmes, RYDA, Colourfest, Illuminate, Sth Canty Rural Support Trust, Toot for Tucker & the Xmas Parade, and supported, via Charitable Trust funding, 1 student to attend the National Science & Technology forum, refurbishment of a room at the Mokihi Hauora Trust building, and assistance with the running of the RYDA programme. With Bill Mackay funding, we have assisted with the rebuild of Fraser Park and Funding from the RJ & CF Moyes Trust enables us to ensure all babies born in South Canterbury receive their first book at birth. The Eric Hall Trust funds have also been utilized in ensuring the continuation of delivery of RYDA in South Canterbury for 2025.

We presented a Paul Harris fellowship to Ashley Milliken, a Community Service award to “Friend of Rotary” Dave Darling and Honorary membership to Bruce Borrell. Greg Sugrue succeeded Bev Slooten as chair of the Charitable Trust,

Our club was awarded a Rotary International “Citation” for “helping Rotary create hope in the world”, and D9999 “Bill Boyd Significant Impact” award for the Thaplung Women, Children and Community Health Project, recognizing the impact this has had on grassroots health education in Nepal, with a Maternal Child Health Focus.

So, as we review this past Rotary Calendar year, I am sure you will agree with me, that we really have been a very active club on many fronts, and we really appreciate the work of our club “friends” (and I include partners here), past & honorary members, who contribute in so many valuable ways and it is great to see so many of you here tonight also.

We look forward to enjoying more “fun and social activities” together in the next year, and I wish you all “Good luck and best wishes” as Xmas approaches and that you have some opportunities to create some “special memories” together with family and friends.

A Huge THANK YOU for your support, and I wish to also acknowledge, the support of my “Rock”, Lionel, who has taken the slack for me when the pressure has been on.

I said it last year, but the message is still the same:

***You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.*** Jane Goodall.

