

Rotary Connection

A Badge, a Home Town and 1,100 Cars

Club Meeting Highlights • Wednesday 16 September 2026

Acting President Jim Dillon was in the chair at the Geraldton Golf Club at 7.00 am. Ian Taylor gave the invocation and the toast to Australia. Leni Tenwinkel arrived in time to receive her club name badge and then take the floor as guest speaker — a tour of Norden, a tournament horse called Hollywood Hawk, East Frisian tea, and a folk sport that is half bowls and half a long walk with friends.

Meeting at a Glance

- Jim Dillon in the chair; Sergeant Bob Urquhart; invocation and toast by Ian Taylor.
- Guest and speaker: Leni Tenwinkel. Apologies: President Bob Hall and Di Gilleland.



President-elect Clare McElhinney with inbound exchange student Leni Tenwinkel
[ED Note: Nominated for Photo of the Year-Thanks Ian (Doc) Taylor].

- Leni received her Rotary Club of Greater Geraldton name badge.
- Hugh on Northampton Show parking: about 1,100 vehicles, 12 volunteers, a day the club will repeat.
- Russell spoke with Bob Hall on the Orkney Islands — rain, and a raised eyebrow at Geraldton's 32 degrees.
- Grant: RYLA still open; Christmas 12 December; Gold Polio 23 October; Northam Rotary's 80th on 1 November.
- Heads and tails won by Barry Dring. Dockers supporters and a few others found the box.

Opening the Morning

Ian offered the familiar blessing on the food and the fellowship, and led the toast to Australia. Jim again asked members to register early. A rush of late replies does not help the caterers, and next week already has two known apologies — Ian will be in Melbourne.

Barry's On This Day marked independence for Mexico and for Papua New Guinea, which, as he put it, escaped from Australia on this date in 1975. It was also the day in 1620 that the Mayflower sailed for the New World. Thought for the day: a good friend will help you move house; a true friend will help you move a body.

From the Secretary's Desk

Grant kept the three standing dates in front of the room. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards remain open until the end of November for applicants aged 18 to 28 — after grand-final week, he suggested, members might look again at the younger people in their workplaces. Christmas is Saturday 12 December at Tarts & Co. The Gold Polio dinner is Friday 23 October at Royal Perth Golf Club.

Polio dinner bookings: trybooking.com/DPIZB

A new date sits beside those. Northam Rotary, in the Avon Valley, is marking 80 years of service and 60 years of hosting Rotary Youth Exchange. The celebration is Sunday 1 November at 11.30 am at the Northam Recreation Centre, on the right as you leave town east along Great Eastern Highway. Anyone who would like to go should let Grant have a name so he can pass numbers on.

Northampton — approx. 1,100 vehicles and a day worth repeating

Hugh had expected five volunteers. Twelve turned up. Don Rolston, Terry Stewart, Jim Dillon, Hugh, Bob Urquhart, Barry Dring and Leni were among them, with Julie Urquhart “particularly helpful” and Peter Sukiennik in the supervisor’s chair. Peter brought Vicky and friends Cheryl and Graham from Port Gregory and Lynton Station. The shift ran from about 8.30 am to 2.30 pm.

Jim spent the day marshalling cars into reverse parks. Three fairways filled. Hugh’s estimate was around 1,100 vehicles and three to four thousand people — a strong turnout and a useful return for the club. Everyone who was there said they would do it again next year. “We’ll all be a year older,” Hugh said, “but it’ll be more fun.” Wheelchairs were nominated as optional extra kit.

A short masterclass in reverse parking (Cameo Storytellers; Jim, Grant and Barry)

The parking itself became the morning’s second topic. Jim remembered a crusty police sergeant whose job was to tour stations teaching officers how to park — never drive in, always reverse in. It takes two and a half times more space to get out of a bay you have driven into, and reversing out into a thoroughfare you cannot control is, on that sergeant’s figures, 73 per cent more dangerous, especially after a couple of quiet ones. The most embarrassing version is a patrol car reversing, lights and sirens, into another patrol car.

Grant sat his 1969 test in Ongerup with Sergeant Bob Jackson — “Jacker” — in a Land Rover. The town was empty. Jacker asked him to imagine vehicles either side and reverse park anyway, then found a hill start on the gravel mound at the old CBH siding.

Barry’s field notes from Saturday were simpler: indicators on almost any vehicle, old or new, do not work; a surprising number of women arrived on their own with children; and one husband walked up the hill while his wife got three children out of the car, including a nappy change. Jim directed her toward the red flags. She was, he said, most happy.

A Call from Orkney

Russell had never taken a phone call from the Orkney Islands before. President Bob Hall rang from there last night. It had been raining for most of the holiday, with a hint that it might stop soon. All was well — except that Bob, sitting in twelve degrees, was less than impressed to hear Geraldton was heading for 32. Russell himself had driven to Landor on Monday afternoon and to Perth and back on Tuesday, which is why parking was on his mind as well.

A Badge for Leni

Before the guest spot, Jim presented Leni with her Rotary Club of Greater Geraldton name badge. “It’s always lovely to see your face and hear all about what you do,” Clare said, and handed her the microphone.

Guest Speaker — Youth Exchange: Leni Tenwinkel (Germany) Norden, Holger and a Cup of Tea You Do Not Stir



Leni is seventeen and turns eighteen on 7 June. Home is Norden, a town of about 25,000 on 106 square kilometres in north-west Germany, close to the North Sea. The market square and the old church are the landmarks. From there the ferry runs out to the East Frisian Islands, among them Norderney.



Norden, north-west Germany: about 25,000 people on 106 square kilometres, close to the North Sea.

In her free time she rides, bakes and cooks with friends, and goes to dance classes — waltz and the other steps. Ski holidays come three times a year and have done since she was small; her father is still teaching her to ski better, and the dream is a ski instructor's licence. The horse is Holger, tournament name Hollywood Hawk 86. A close friend is looking after him while she is here.



Leni with her "About Me" slide — Norden, skiing, Holger, baking and the waltz.

Family is parents, an older sister, the sister's boyfriend — now counted as family — and, at the moment, a Brazilian exchange sister staying in the house in Norden. That sister's dream was London. The family took her there as a Christmas present. Leni showed the front of the house, a garden of trees and flowers, and a pool that is lovely in summer and cold the rest of the time.



Family: parents and older sister, with a Brazilian exchange sister and a Christmas trip to London.



The house in Norden — front path, garden and a pool that is lovely in summer and cold the rest of the year.

Two traditions from the region travelled well across the room. Boßeln is a North German folk sport: part bowls, part cross-country, part a long winter walk with friends. Two teams throw or roll a heavy ball along a marked route of about seven kilometres. The side that finishes in the fewest throws wins.

East Frisian tea is taken seriously, especially around three in the afternoon. A strong Assam blend goes into the cup over a lump of white rock candy — Kluntje. The tea is poured hot enough that the sugar cracks. Heavy cream is laid at the rim with a special spoon so that it sits like a small cloud. The golden rule is not to stir. You drink through three tastes: the cool cream first, then the bitter tea, and the sugar last.



Boßeln, East Frisian tea, kale and sausage, and New Year waffles — from Leni's slides.

New Year brings thin, crisp waffle cakes. The plate on the table at home is potatoes, sausages and kale. Leni has been vegetarian since she was fourteen — she never liked the smell or the taste of meat or fish — so she eats the kale and the potato and leaves the sausages to the family.

She has not ridden here yet. It is hot, the saddles are not the western style she uses at home, and in any case she came to try things she does not already do. Jim, whose family runs racehorses and ponies, offered a gentler introduction after polo cross at Mullewa. Clare thanked her, and the talk is on film for anyone who missed a slide.

Coming Up

Wednesday 23 September

Geraldton Golf Club, 7.00 am. Guest Speaker **Dr Paul Blackwell**. Repairing (crumbling) Historical Buildings in Geraldton. [Register here](#)

Wednesday 30 September,

Geraldton Golf Club, 7.00 am. Guest Speaker **Rosie Vlahov (OZ Fish)** Sea Grass Restoration in Geraldton

Friday 2nd October – 5th October – Landor Races Fundraiser

One of our major fundraisers where volunteers and Rotarians provide the Hospitality Services (at the Bar) during the Races. More volunteers gratefully embraced, please [Register here](#). Contact **Perter Sukiennik (0418 939 0130)** if you can help out.

Friday 23 October — End Polio dinner

Royal Perth Golf Club. Keynote Professor Barry Marshall. Members make their own arrangements.

Bookings: trybooking.com/DPIZB

Sunday 1 November — Northam Rotary 80th

11.30 am, Northam Recreation Centre. Eighty years of the club and sixty years of hosting Youth Exchange. Names to Grant.

30 November — RYLA applications close

Ages 18–28. Inquiries to Grant or ryla@rotarywa.au.

Saturday 12 December — Christmas function

Tarts & Co. Grant is keeping the list.

Fellowship and Fines

Heads and tails came down to Robert Mosel and Barry Dring. Barry took the bottle and undertook to put a word in for Conn's Liquor, who supplied a dozen at wholesale.

Sergeant Bob then called the Dockers supporters — he has an anchor in front of the house, he said, and is prepared to have it painted purple, white or left black if anyone wants to bid. Barry Dring (Rotarian of the Year 1987–88) and Ian Taylor (1991–92) were produced from the honour boards Bob had found in the sea containers; neither name, he observed, has been back on the list. Those leaving without Rotary insignia put in. Hugh marked sixteen weeks since his bypass and, while he had the box, fined Ian for the photography that does not get thanked enough — the taking, the editing, and the sizing that gets the pictures into this newsletter each week.

Jim was charged with becoming a second guest speaker, and again for a birthday on 18 September. Hugh fined Bob for letting Julie step into a sprinkler hole at Northampton while the two of them sat in easy chairs and could not get up in time. Don was put on notice that Jenny Rolston's birthday is coming and he will need reminding. Russell invited the room to weigh car keys. Barry's ring — caravan, front door, Prius, Prado, garage, Aldi trolley, back door and a bottle opener — was judged the heaviest.

A Word of Thanks

Thank you to Jim for the chair and the badge, to Ian for the invocation, to Clare for introducing Leni, to Hugh and everyone who stood on a Northampton fairway on Saturday, to Russell for the call from Orkney, and to Leni — for the talk, the slides, and a cup of tea you are not allowed to stir.

[ED note: Special thanks to the Extraordinaire twins, Grant (notes) and Ian(Doc) for his photos)



Immediate Past President Hugh Lavery, Leni Tenwinkel and President-elect Clare McElhinney.

— Rotary Club of Greater Geraldton —