

Rotary Connection

A Library That Works, and a Caravan That Didn't

Club Meeting Highlights • Wednesday 14 October 2026

President Bob Hall was in the chair at the Geraldton Golf Club at 7.00 am. Jim Dillon gave the invocation and the toast. Sergeant Bob Urquhart had the box. Trudi Cornish was the guest.

Meeting at a Glance

- Bob Hall in the chair; Sergeant Bob Urquhart; invocation and toast by Jim Dillon.
- Guest and speaker: Trudi Cornish, Big Sky Readers and Writers Festival.
- Apologies: Di Gilleland, Barry Dring, Leni Tenwinkel (Ibex).
- Landor: thirty went, \$20,000 coming, Golden Goose to Jim. Sixteen already for 2027.
- Radio Auction: Flow Vitality, Saturday 10 am. About \$20,000 under.
- Heads and tails to Hugh Lavery. October fines to RFDS.

Opening the Morning

Bob thanked Peter Sukiennik for the Landor email, and for the work that got the weekend there, weather and all. It is a big job. A fuller report sits later in these pages.

Thought for the day was left to the Sergeant. The morning supplied its own.

Announcements

Global Citizens — Grant Woodhams

Grant had an email from the President of the Rotary Club of Perth. Global Citizens is coming to Western Australia, and Rotarians will have priority access to the forum in Perth. There is no date on the note yet. Grant will send the email to the membership when he gets home, and the website will do a better job than he did at breakfast.

Radio Auction — Bob Symington

Di is due back this Friday afternoon. She wants the group together while there is still work to do.

Saturday morning, 10 o'clock, Flow Vitality in Gregory Street, so she has a chance to catch her breath. If that does not suit, Bob is open to another time soon.

Guy tells him the pledges are about \$20,000 under previous years. Russell handed in one for \$1,450, which helps. Blank forms were on the table. Anyone who can find another name in the next week or so is welcome to it.

Landor — Peter Sukiennik



Peter Sukiennik, Rotary fundraising administrator for the Landor Races.

Thirty travelled. Six Rotarians and twenty-four friends, from Esperance and from Perth, couples and younger travellers among them. The fellowship around the fire pit was the thing. Rotary is the only camp up there with power, and the club is spoiled by it. The roster is regulation now. A couple of shifts were busy, the crowd a little down, and the thanks from the workers were steady. Sixteen have already put their hands up for 2027.



Landor Rotary Club Volunteers 2026.

The East Gascoyne Race Club will donate \$20,000. Peter will ask for thoughts on where some of it should go. Past years have supported Crawford House, the RFDS, Meekatharra School of the Air, Palliative Care, and the East Gascoyne Gymkhana prizes for the children. He would like Crawford House to continue. The Golden Goose goes to Jim Dillon, a past winner and a likely future one. Michele, you need to come.

A fuller note from Peter, and the photographs, are in the Landor story. (attached)

Guest Speaker — Trudi Cornish

A library that works

Trudi Cornish, Manager, Libraries, Heritage and Gallery, City of Greater Geraldton.

Grant introduced Trudi Cornish from the City of Greater Geraldton. Trudi's portfolio includes the Geraldton and Mullewa Libraries, Geraldton Regional Art Gallery, Public Art, Heritage Services and the Visitors' Centre. Trudi was originally the City's Heritage Services Coordinator and the projects that matter to her still come from the community: groups looking to preserve a story, or to shine a light on something significant.

An important thing that happened to the Geraldton Library, she believes, was the move out of the Council offices and into its current home, an old supermarket on Chapman Road. Temporary then. Still temporary, in the way these things are. The move opened the doors to a much wider slice of the town. The Library now has about 6,500 visitors a month.

Bob Hall, who was on Council at the time, confirmed the purpose-built facility was swapped for the old Bylo store. Tony Brun, the CEO, had the foresight, and took up the land around it. It was the greatest move the city made, for accessibility alone. Andrea Selvey, former City Librarian, set it up and got it running. One of those decisions that drew brickbats, and worked.

A three-dimensional mural is being painted at the Chapman Road entrance. Heritage projects still come across her table. If one is yours, she said, come and see her.



Big Sky

Her major responsibility is the Big Sky Readers and Writers Festival, now in its 21st year. It is funded mainly by the City of Greater Geraldton and Lotterywest. One of the major local sponsors is Eastman Poletti Sherwood Architects. Hats off to them.

Trudi Cornish presenting to the club, programme booklet in hand.

This year's theme is Future Forward. The dates are Friday 23 to Sunday 25 October. Most of the activity is at Queens Park Theatre, with sessions also at the Geraldton Regional Library, the Art Gallery, and The Geraldton Club. Bookings are essential.

One special guest is Li Cunxin, who has written a sequel to Mao's Last Dancer. The new book is The Lucky Son. He will be interviewed at Queens Park Theatre by Geraldine Mellet. Geraldton's Holden Sheppard is there too, for Yeah The Boys, the follow-up to Invisible Boys. Bruce Pascoe opens the Saturday.

There is a Cluedunnit evening at The Geraldton Club, a book fair in the library car park on Sunday 25th, and a Kids' Sunday Funday. Trudi distributed the programme booklet.

Questions came from Hugh, Russell, Ian and Grant. Russell's wife Shirley drags him along every year. He finds it interesting, even if she still wants the overseas superstars. The local ones will do.



Russell McKinnon thanking Trudi, and presenting the certificate.

The thanks were from Russell: a certificate, and 200 polio immunisations in Trudi's name.

A longer account, and the links to book, are in the Big Sky story. (attached). The Programme (pdf) is also attached.

Coming Up

Saturday 17 October — Radio Auction planning

Flow Vitality, Gregory Street, 10.00 am. Di back the day before. Those who can help, please.

Wednesday 21 October — Club meeting

Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Shane Rutter, Meekatharra School of the Air.

Friday 23 October — End Polio dinner

Royal Perth Golf Club. Keynote Professor Barry Marshall.

Bookings: trybooking.com/DPIZB

Friday 23 – Sunday 25 October — Big Sky

Readers and Writers Festival, its 21st year. Bookings essential.

Program and tickets: [Humanitix — Big Sky](#)

Library page: [Geraldton Regional Library](#)

Wednesday 28 October — Club meeting

Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Ian Taylor, Iceland.

Sunday 1 November — Northam Rotary 80th

11.30 am, Northam Recreation Centre. Names to Grant.

Wednesday 4 November — Club meeting

Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Grant Russell, Great Northern Football League.

Sunday 8 November — Radio auction

NACC Conference Rooms, 8.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Wednesday 11 November — Club meeting

Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Rob Houwen, Future Automobiles.

Monday 16 November — Club board

In person, 5.30 pm, Mid West Financial Services. Agenda items to Grant before the meeting.

Wednesday 18 November — Club meeting

Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Bob Hall, Scotland.

Wednesday 25 November — Club meeting

Breakfast at Levy Street Hall, 7 Levy St. Rangeway. Guest speaker Rohan Prowse, Levy Street Life and the Friday Circulars.

30 November — RYLA applications close

Ages 18–28. Camp in mid-January. Grant, or ryla@rotarywa.au.

Saturday 12 December — Christmas function

Tarts & Co., 5.30 to 8.30 pm. The list is still thin. Names to Grant.

Register: [Christmas Celebration](#)

Fellowship and Fines

Heads and tails, with the Cook Islands shell coin, went to Hugh Lavery. Then the box. Sergeant Bob Urquhart reminded the room that the minimum is a dollar, and five is easier. October's fines go to the RFDS.



Sergeant Bob Urquhart with President Elect Clare McElhinney, and the box.

Grant, the global citizen. The board has backed his walking. Ten kilometres a day through October, and the club puts a dollar a kilometre to the RFDS through Oceans to Outback. He thought the

announcement might get him off the hook. It did not. The first announcement, the one without a date or a venue, cost him as well. Suki asked whether ex-Speaker Toothpick Woodhams can be trusted to walk the ten. Grant said not at all. It could be twelve, or fourteen, or twenty.

Hugh, for speaking after the bell. An extra dollar for threatening the Sergeant. He will remember.

Clare, for the food. While she was out of the room, Grant was waving flies off her plate. She said that in the old days you spat on it so a brother would not eat it. A joke, from her mother. You can take the girl out of Ireland.

Jim Dillon, and the caravan. He peeled it off the back of the ute twice. The first time was at 90 kilometres an hour, up on two wheels. George from Neeniabba replaced the tongue. The caravan is still on the back of the ute. What happens at Landor stays at Landor. Five dollars, for the length of the story.

Ian Taylor, for the past. The house was started in October 1986, not 2006. Two storeys. They moved in the following February. Forty years ago. Someone said the room should look forward. The Sergeant allowed the reminiscing, within limits.

Buying the box. Don Rolston has become a great-grandfather. His eldest turned 58 on the 10th. The day before that, the son became a grandfather. First time.

Bob Hall, on the city. The Queen came in the bicentennial year, 1988, walked through Queens Park, and declared Geraldton a city. People still call it a town. Ian was the Queen's official doctor for the two hours she was here. Bob, then on council, walked the vulnerable points with the British Secret Service. The old cannon outside the chambers had a powder wipe down the barrel. They called for a Royal Armourer. Stan Grat came, said it had been underwater for 300 years, and the panic was written off. The cannon is now at the airport terminal. There are still bombs in the ground near the short-term car park, from the war.

Clare, again, for the road. She overshot the Landor turnoff and ended up in Gascoyne Junction, a hundred kilometres the wrong way. On the way home she finished in Mullewa, the petrol station closed for roadworks, and ran out of fuel fifty kilometres from Geraldton. No signal. Five hours until the RAC. Luck of the Irish.

Hugh, for the Queen as well. In 1977 he was a student engineer on the harbours and rivers, building No. 5 Berth. The Britannia was coming in early 1978, and sat too proud of the wharf. The PWD built a stairway. Hugh's job was the drawings. He asked a welder what the flag at the top was. It was a section mark. Hugh's flag became famous around the department. He went back to Perth and did not see the Queen.

A Word of Thanks

Thank you to Bob for the chair, to Jim for the invocation and the caravan, to Sergeant Bob for the box, to Peter for Landor and the \$20,000, to Grant for the walking and the email still to come, to Bob Symington for the auction, and to Trudi — for the library, the festival, and the open door on heritage.

— Rotary Club of Greater Geraldton —