

DISTRICT 9815 CONFERENCE

NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2025



28 – 30 March 2025



The Final Countdown

With less than a month until our inaugural Conference and less than two weeks until bookings close we are delighted to share the final 2025 District 9815 Conference newsletter featuring the remaining optional activities and most of the remaining guest speakers yet to be showcased. Also check out the useful nuggets of knowledge and Rotary expo exhibitor list.

Just as Bendigo was an area of discovery and riches, your Conference will enrich you with greater connections, knowledge, tools and inspiration to do good in the world. If you are still unsure on the value of attending, this Conference has the potential - in the words of our RIPPR, Bharat S. Pandya, - '[to help] make ourselves Better Rotarians, so that we can make the world a Better place'.

Avoid FOMO ('fear of missing out') and ensure you book your tickets by the end of 14 March 2025.

If you are aware of someone (e.g. Rotary alumni, new member, prospective member, disengaged member, sponsored youth, Rotaractor, pensioner) who may benefit from a Conference experience but may not be able to afford to go or who may not have considered the value in attending worthwhile perhaps consider sponsoring or gifting a ticket. The return in your investment could be momentous and one that keeps on giving.

We and your Conference Committee and Conference volunteers look forward to welcoming you to Bendigo and our inaugural Conference. If you require any assistance during the Conference please see one of our friendly Committee members in a **Royal Blue** polo or volunteer in a **volunteer** vest.

For any last minute accommodation bookings or tourist planning [Bendigo Tourism](#) are happy to assist.

Safe travels and see you soon in Bendigo,
Wil Cornelissen (RC Waverley), Conference Chair & Kehela Vandenberg (RC Mount Waverley), Conference 2IC

BOOKINGS CLOSE
14 MARCH 2025
FOR
CONFERENCE &
ALL OPTIONAL
SESSIONS

BOOK NOW - CLICK THIS LINK

01/08

Over 400 Registrants Booked
So far – don't miss out!

Message from our District Governor

Our first District 9815 conference in Bendigo promises to be an inspiring and energizing event that brings Rotarians together like never before. As the first conference following the merger of our Districts, it marks a significant moment in our Rotary journey -one where we celebrate our shared purpose, strengthen new connections, and embrace the theme “We Belong: We are Better together”.



Set in the heart of Bendigo, a city rich in history and community spirit, the conference will feature dynamic keynote speakers, including Rotary leaders, community changemakers and experts in various fields. They will challenge and inspire us with stories of leadership, service and innovation.

The conference will be a platform to recognise the incredible contributions of clubs and individuals across the District. We will also open our House of Friendship to the people of the Bendigo Community to showcase the incredible work Rotary does locally and internationally.

The entertainment program and Gala Ball will be key highlights of the weekend, bringing Rotarians together for an unforgettable social experience.

This conference will be a celebration of everything that makes Rotary special. Its an opportunity to learn, grow and be inspired as we step forward together into an exciting future.

Don't miss out – join is us Bendigo for an unforgettable weekend!

DG Colin Byron (RC Greater Dandenong and Endeavour Hills)



Activity Highlight

Golf & Bowls Competitions

Friday 8:30am & 10am

The 2025 Conference sees the launch of our new annual friendly District 9815 Golf and Bowls Competitions. Both events will be followed by a lunch and participants will receive participants treat bags along with the opportunity to win a range of prizes.

Golf will be held at the premier Bendigo Golf Club as a stableford competition commencing at 10:30am.

Bowls will be held at the White Hills Bowls Club commencing at 10am with the bowlers to join the golfers for lunch at the Golf Club at 1:30pm.

If your partner is not interested in one of these Competitions, they may instead be interested in the morning tea at the Bendigo Art Gallery or High Tea at Fortune Villa.

Book via this [link](#) to reserve your spot.



Presenter Spotlight

Dennis Shore

Dennis is a Trustee of the Rotary Foundation and Vice Chair of Rotary Foundation Australia. He is a Major Donor, Bequest Society member, member of District 9800 Paul Harris Society and a recipient of the Rotary Foundation Distinguished Service Award and the Citation for Meritorious Service.

Dennis has a large Rotary resume. He is a past District Governor, past Assistant Governor and has served as the District Foundation Chair, District Council on Legislation & Resolutions Representative, District Secretary, District Governance Director, District Finance Committee Chair, Global Grant Scholar Committee Chair, Club Vision Chair and District Chair for Leader Training. He was Vice Chair of the Melbourne RI Convention Host Organising Committee and Promotions Director. Dennis was Endowment and Major Gifts Advisor for Zone 8 from 2019 to 2022.

Dennis was a chartered chemical engineer and a senior executive, culminating in international business development and management for Australian Paper Manufacturers (later Amcor) in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. He established his own consulting business before retiring.

Presenter Spotlight

Cr Andrea Metcalf

Cr Andrea Metcalf is the Mayor of the City of Bendigo. Andrea became a councilor in 2016, Deputy Mayor in 2020 and has been Mayor since 2021.

In 2023, she served on the Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel and in 2024 she participated in an official visit to Portugal to attend the UNESCO Creative Cities Network conference, representing Bendigo in its capacity as a designated City of Gastronomy

In 2024, Cr Andrea Metcalf was recognised at the Municipal Association of Victoria 2024 Councillor Service Awards, receiving the Mayor Emeritus Award for completing three full terms as Mayor.

Prior to joining Council, Andrea enjoyed a long career with Centrelink.



Presenter Spotlight

Leanne Jaggs



Leanne Jaggs is a past District Governor of District 9920 in New Zealand. Leanne is a 3rd General Rotarian who began her Rotary journey when she spent her 7th form year as a Rotary Exchange Student in Sweden. She became a charter member of the Rotary Club of RC Manukua City Sunrise and acted as a member and Chair of the Rotary International Young PTD Committee, past covenor of the 2024 Zone 8 Conference in Queenstown and currently on the Rotayr International Strategic Planning Committee.

Leanne has worked in sales within the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) industry as a sales rep, Key Account manager, Business Development Manager, General Manager, and managing Director of her company, Alliance Marketing 2007 Ltd.

Leanne is married with two children.



Activity Highlight

High Tea with Optional Tour

Friday 28th March 2025, 1pm

The Historic private residence from the Gold Rush Era, Fortuna Villa, will offer an exclusive traditional high tea and optional tour of the estate for Conference attendees on Friday 28th of March 2025.

Attendees will enjoy a selection of delicious cakes, scones, sandwiches and savoury treats, accompanied with Harriet Teas, a Barista Veneziano Coffee or a glass of champagne, beer or wine. Please note the only dietaries they cater for are vegetarians & gluten free.

Those interested for an extra \$20 will be able to participate in a tour of the historic villa and grounds which feature an ornamental lake, botanic - style gardens, a 'Roman-Bath' and the 'Pompeii Fountain'.

Accessibility: If considering partaking in the tour, please note that although the property is fully restored there is limited disabled access and the tour will include stairs and uneven surfaces.

Presenter Spotlight

Janette Etherington

Janette is the Rotary Coordinator at Interplast, a position she has held for over 5 years. In Janette's own words, this is her dream job - a part-time role that enables her to combine her shared passion for both Interplast and Rotary.

Janette is a Past President of the Rotary Club of Nunawading, and has been a Rotarian for nearly 11 years.

In previous professional lives, Janette has worked in senior management roles in the general Retail and Book-selling sectors, and in the Vocational Education & Training, and Apprenticeship sectors. She has also volunteered as a Director on a number of not-for-profit and community organisation Boards.



Presenter Spotlight

Leanne Byron



Leanne's working career began in a large local American corporation where she gained valuable skills across all areas of the business.

With over 35 years' experience, teaching and coaching swimmers of all ages and abilities, for 25 years of that time, Leanne managed their successful, family-owned swim school.

A highlight of Leanne's aquatics career is a program which she developed and ran for blind children and children with vision impairment, many of them also had other disabilities.

Her Rotary Club helped make this program possible with Rotarians volunteering their time to assist with transportation, providing afternoon tea and spending social time with the parents.

Leanne is also the proud wife of Colin, mother of three sons and one daughter and grandmother of eight grandchildren.



Activity Highlight

Rotary Alumni Networking Lunch

Saturday 29th March 25, Lunchtime

Beneficiaries of Rotary's Youth and Foundation programs and scholarships along with past and current Program Chairs/Teams/Committees and District Youth and Foundation Committees are invited to enjoy a social networking lunch in the Mezzanine Level of the Red Energy Arena . Secure your spot via [this link](#).

Network, re-connect, share stories and mingle with the RIPPR and Alumni Guest Speaker.

Attendees will enjoy a selection of hot and cold lunch items along with tea/coffee/juice.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to pre-purchase & collect an Alumni pin (registrants to be emailed details prior to the Conference)

Presenter Spotlight

Mark Andersen

Mark is the Senior Coordinator, Fund Development for The Rotary Foundation at the South Pacific and Philippines Office in Norwest. Mark is a Rotary Alumnus; beginning his Rotary journey as an interactor followed by being a Youth Exchange Student, Rotaractor, RYLarian and GSE team member to California. As a Rotarian he is a past President, past GSE Team Leader and held numerous District Leadership positions. He is a member of the Paul Harris Society and a Rotary Foundation Major Donor.

Mark had a career in Sales and Marketing and lives in West Pennant Hills and currently a member of the Rotary Club of Beecroft.



Presenter Spotlight

Alma Reynolds



Alma is the current Chair of the District Foundation Committee and has held positions of D9810 District Governor (2020-21), District Secretary, Assistant Governor, Club President, Club Secretary, District Foundation Committee (District Grants), and Club Foundation Chair.

Early in her Rotary journey, the scope and power of the Rotary Foundation (TRF) started to dawn on her, and she became excited about the amazing ways in which she could help to make the world a better place via the Foundation. This encouraged her to become a regular donor to TRF

“It is my hope that the Foundation presentation at this conference will help others to appreciate more fully the amazing TRF and its power to do good in the world.”

Rotary Expo (House of Friendship)

Delegates and the public are invited to visit the Rotary Expo of the 2025 Rotary International District 9815 Conference being held at Red Energy Arena. Open free to the public between 2pm – 4pm on Saturday 28th of March in Courts 4 and 5 (same location as Morning Tea and Lunch) of the Red Energy Arena visitors can learn more about our 1.2 million member strong international voluntary service organisation along with a showcase of our diverse range of service projects, scholarships, youth development opportunities, action groups, social groups (fellowships), affiliated programs and organisations along with a selection of speaker stands, sponsor stands and other charity stands. We urge our Delegates to visit the over 30 stalls and particularly those of our sponsors to show our gratitude for their support.

Current List of Exhibitors*

- Australian Rotary Health
- Card Display
- Connected Travel (Sponsor)
- DG Partner Project
- Disaster Aid Australia
- District Youth Services
- Gin Rotary Fellowship
- International Rotary Projects
- Interplast
- Jarad Duncombe Foundation
- Knitted Knockers
- Mercy Ships
- Model United Nations Assembly
- MST Lawyers (Sponsor)
- My Room Children's Cancer Charity
- Operation Toilets
- PingPongathon
- Raffle Ticket sales
- Red Energy (Sponsor)
- Road Safety Education (RSE)
- Rotaract
- Rotarians against Malaria (RAM)
- Rotary Club of Dingley – Jewellery Store
- Rotary Foundation
- Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA)
- Speaker (Book Signing)
- The Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG)
- Wheelchairs for Kids
- Zaparas Lawyers (Sponsor)

*Subject to last minute changes

Please invite /share the
Public Access Expo Event
via Facebook



06/08

See the District Conference
webpage for Conference updates
incl. program & speakers

Useful Nuggets of Knowledge and Reminders

Keep up to date about the Conference via:

- [Conference Webpage](#); and
- [Conference Facebook Page](#)

Please wear your name badge for Gala Dinner entry.

Need help during the Conference? See one of the Conference Committee members in a [Royal Blue Polo](#).

There may be limited taxis/ride shares available following the Gala Dinner, car pooling and responsible drinking is recommended.

Due to OH&S considerations, there will be no golf carts available at the Conference venue to ease access from the parking areas.

If you use a reusable cup for any hot beverage purchased on the 29th and 30th March 25 via the Red Energy Arena Kiosks, you will receive a 50 cents discount.

The average temperature in Bendigo in late March is between 17 degrees and 25 degrees

Delegates will be seated via tables (no stadium seating)

Book Accommodation via: Bendigo Tourism's toll-free accommodation booking number 1800 813 153 or via this [Link](#).

With weekend saver discounts, travel on Victoria's [regional network](#) on weekends with a daily fare currently only \$7.60 or \$3.80 concession. Groups of 12 or more can also get a [concession discount](#) and Seniors can receive 50% discounts, [free travel vouchers](#) and free weekend travel in any two consecutive zones and on regional town buses.

During the Conference, the Bendigo Art Gallery will be hosting the [Frida Kahlo: In her own image exhibition](#). This will increase tourists in the Town therefore ensure you book in attractions and restaurants early.

The Rotary Club of Bendigo is celebrating their 100th Anniversary in 2025. When chartered, it was the 8th Rotary Club in Australia, the 2nd in Victoria and the 1st non-metropolitan Rotary Club.

Reminder of Conference Offerings

- **Winery Tours (see Conference webpage or 1st Newsletter for details)**
- **Golf & Bowls Competitions**
- **Morning Tea at the Bendigo Art Gallery**
- **High Tea with optional Tour at Fortuna Villa**
- **Pre-Conference Welcome Drinks at the MacKeznie**
- **Club Dinners**
- **First timers' Orientation Breakfast**
- **Expo at Red Energy Arena (incl. public access)**
- **Plenary Conference Sessions**
- **Alumni Networking Lunch**
- **Gala Dinner with the theme: "Rotary Rocks"**
- **Foundation Breakfast**
- **Fundraising Walk for the Monash Children's Hospital Cancer Centre, around Lake Weeroona.**

Bookings for Conference and optional events **close 14 March 2025!**

07/08

Registration Desk

Open Times

Located within Red Energy Arena the Registration Desk will be open during the following times:

Friday: 2pm - 5pm

Saturday: 7am - approx. 4:30pm

Those attending optional events on the Friday are NOT required to have their Conference name badges, instead their attendance will be marked off by one of our friendly Conference volunteers.

Rotary Expo Public

Open Times

Saturday 28th March 2025

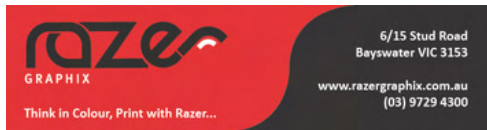
2pm - 4pm

Please invite friends, family, colleagues, persons known to you to the public open times of the Rotary Expo and share/invite to the [Facebook Event](#).

Thank You

2025

District 9815 Conference Sponsors



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Learn more about our sponsors by clicking their logo

08/08