

# COMBINED DISTRICTS 9815 & 9830 CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2025



Rotary  
Districts 9815 & 9830

PEOPLE of ACTION

13 – 15 March 2026



## **Be Inspired in Hobart – Early Bird Prize & Growing Excitement!**

Time is ticking away and our combined District 9815 & 9830 Conference in Hobart, 13–15 March 2026 is getting closer every day. The excitement is definitely building!

Recently, DG Peter Behm, Conference Committee member Wil Cornelissen and myself spent four days travelling around Tasmania, visiting many Rotary Clubs to promote the Conference. The response we received was overwhelmingly positive. Clubs are genuinely enthusiastic – not just about the Conference program, but also about the chance to spend time together in Hobart and hear from some truly inspiring speakers.

Whether you've attended many Conferences before, or this will be your very first, you can be confident that Hobart 2026 will offer something special. Each Conference brings something new, and our team is working hard to ensure this one is memorable, meaningful and a whole lot of fun.

If you haven't booked yet, now is the perfect time. Early Bird pricing is available until 31 December 2025. As an added incentive, everyone who registers during the Early Bird period will go into the draw to win a FREE Conference ticket. One lucky registrant who has fully registered by 31 December will have their Conference ticket reimbursed, with the Winner announced early in the New Year.

So if you've been thinking "I'll get around to it soon", this is your friendly nudge – book now before the price goes up and you miss out on the free ticket draw!

See the newsletter for a Care Pack Opportunity.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work, creativity and commitment of our Conference Committee. Behind the scenes, they are investing countless hours to ensure that you will have the best possible Conference experience – from the speakers and sessions, to social events, logistics and all the little details that make a weekend run smoothly.

I am especially grateful for the opportunity to Chair this Conference and am thoroughly enjoying the experience so far. Working with such a dedicated team, and seeing the enthusiasm from Clubs across both Districts, has been incredibly rewarding.

We can't wait to welcome you, your partners, family and friends to this special combined District Conference.

Book your Early Bird tickets, support the Care Pack project – and we'll see you in Hobart!

*Monique Smith (RC Boronia), Conference Chair*

# Introducing our host District, District 9830!

I'm proud to be part of Rotary Tasmania, where 950 members across 41 clubs deliver local and global impact through service, leadership, and fellowship. We support mental health, homelessness, youth, and the environment; globally, we contribute to clean water, malaria eradication, and health outreach. Tasmania launched Food Plant Solutions and Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM). We connect socially through trivia nights, pub dinners, and golf days.

I am super excited to welcome District 9815 members to our 2026 Hobart joint Conference—where speakers like Rob Pennicott, Dr Kirk Williams, and Saroo Brierley will inspire fresh thinking and purpose. Add to that a chance to experience not just Rotary inspiration, but Tasmania's legendary hospitality, wild beauty, and rich culture. Tassie will leave you smiling long after the conference ends!

DG/DGE Craig Perkins



## Introducing District 9815!

What an extraordinary year it has been so far. Our district is truly on the move, energised by fresh ideas and bold initiatives that reflect the very best of Rotary.

From the launch of our new marketing department supporting clubs with modern websites and dynamic communications, to engaging podcasts featuring prominent voices, to our first-ever District 9815 cinema advertisement reaching the wider community – we are showcasing Rotary with pride and purpose.

We are also making a profound difference through our men's health project, bringing vital prostate cancer awareness and screening opportunities to communities across our district. And with improved signage and the DG's video communications, our message of service continues to shine brighter than ever.

One of the most exciting milestones ahead is our upcoming District Conference at the Grand Chancellor in beautiful Hobart, Tasmania – a special shared celebration with our sister district, 9830. This will be a remarkable opportunity to connect, to learn, and to enjoy a well-deserved staycation surrounded by friends who share our passion for making a difference. Our program is filled with captivating speakers who will inspire, challenge, and entertain. And of course, Saturday night's Gala – a vibrant "Nautical Night" – promises to be a highlight you won't soon forget.

Rotarians who have attended past conferences often tell me that the memories stay with them for decades. We want you to be part of those memories – to experience moments of joy, fellowship, and inspiration that you'll carry forward in your Rotary journey.

Our Conference team, led by Monique Smith and supported by the dedicated talents of Keels Vandenberg, DG Craig Perkins, PDG Heather Chong, PDG Una Hobday, and an exceptional group of volunteers, is working tirelessly to create a truly unforgettable event.

As our theme suggests, you will be inspired – and you'll do it in style, with your brand-new complimentary Rotary polo shirt, ready to wear proudly as you explore one of the most beautiful places in Australia.

We can't wait to welcome you. Together, let's create memories that will last a lifetime.

DG Peter Behm

# Making a Difference: City Mission Care Pack Project



As Rotarians, we're committed to making a positive impact in our communities – and that includes the communities hosting our Conference. Throughout the weekend in Hobart, we'll be running a Care Pack Packing Project in support of City Mission Hobart and Launceston.

City Mission supports people doing it tough, providing practical help, care and dignity. To lend a hand, we'll be packing reusable tote bags filled with basic toiletries such as: Shampoo and conditioner, toothpaste and toothbrush, Hairbrush or comb, Sanitary items, Shaver and soap, Hand towel/face washer, Socks & Deodorant.

Each bag will be labelled with the contributing Club's name as a visible acknowledgement of your support. Clubs are being invited to contribute a minimum of \$50 towards the cost of supplies, with any surplus funds being donated directly to City Mission. A representative from your Club will pack the bag during the Expo. Don't worry if you don't have a Club representative in attendance, we will find someone to pack the bag for you.

It's a simple, hands-on way for all of us to "Be Inspired" and take action while we are together in Hobart – turning our Conference energy into practical service for people in need!

Clubs will be emailed further details and information will also be available on our Conference website.

## Presenter Spotlight

### Captain Sarah Parry of the Tall Ship STV Windeward Bound



Captain Sarah spent her early working years as a member of the Royal Australian Navy. After leaving the Navy, she worked as a joiner, later becoming involved in set design and construction for television and theatre, and eventually became a production designer and art director.

In 1984, she found the plans that would eventually become the Windeward Bound, and began a 15-year construction process with support of a large number of willing volunteers. Windeward Bound, a traditional wooden brigantine: a two-masted sailing ship, was launched in March 1996. For the last 25 years, she has served as the Managing Trustee and Captain of STV Windeward Bound.

The Windeward Bound Trust, established in 1993, is committed to the relief of helplessness, the development of work and social skills and the delivery of personal growth experiences for young people. Windeward Bound, was built by volunteers and is crewed and maintained mainly by its volunteer base. Joining a Youth Development Sail Training Voyage young people aged 14-18 learn the skills to sail a square-rigged tall ship. They will keep watch and take the helm, help in the galley, learn to navigate using the ship's charts and climb the 24-metre mast to set and furl the sails. They will learn how to work in a team and learn that teamwork and communication can overcome all obstacles.

Sarah was awarded International Sail Trainer of the Year in 2017. She was a finalist for Tasmanian Senior Australian of the Year in 2020, has received a Paul Harris Fellowship Award (District 9830) and in 2021 was awarded Member of the Order of Australia.

## Presenter Spotlight: Robert Pennicott

Robert Pennicott is a celebrated Tasmanian eco-tourism pioneer, conservationist and Rotarian, known for blending adventure with environmental impact.

Robert Pennicott founded Bruny Island Cruises in 1999, which evolved into Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, a multi-award-winning tourism company showcasing Tasmania's natural beauty. A former fisherman, Robert's deep love for the ocean inspired him to create experiences that support local communities and promote sustainability.

In 2007, he launched the Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund, which helped eradicate feral cats from Tasman Island, saving over 50,000 seabirds annually. His philanthropic reach expanded with the Pennicott Foundation in 2011, supporting global conservation and community initiatives. Its first project, Follow the Yellow Boat Road, in which Robert circumnavigated Australia in a 5.4 metre inflatable dinghy, raised \$300,000 for environmental causes and Rotary International's polio eradication efforts. Robert has also helped to restore ecosystems, clear beaches and oceans of plastic and donated money to help bring back Tasmanian Aboriginal artifacts from overseas. Named Tasmanian of the Year in 2012, Robert continues to champion eco-tourism and conservation, proving that small actions can lead to big change.

*Pennicott Wilderness Journeys have kindly offered delegates 15% off Tours undertaken in March 2026.*



## Activity Spotlight: Historical Storytelling Experience & Morning Tea

Friday, 9:30am – 11am

Learn about Hobart's rich history via a stationary storytelling tour before meeting and catching up with fellow Rotarians and friends of Rotary prior to the Conference over a delicious banquet of sweet and savoury morning tea treats and a selection of

teas and expresso coffee at The Story Bar within the Waterfront Hotel, MACq 01. Meet at the entrance of the MACq 01 Building at 9:30am (if raining meet at the Story Bar).

**Venue:** The Story Bar, MACq 01

**Cost:** \$55 (tour, morning tea and coffee)

**Attire:** casual

**Accessibility:** The venue is access compliant



## Activity Spotlight: Gin Experience Luncheon and Making Connections Dinner

Friday, 12pm & 7pm

Both events will take place at Waterline Lounge Bar & Eatery but will provide very different delectable experiences.

### Lunch with Educational Gin Experience and Optional Tasting

Enjoy fresh, locally sourced produce on the waterfront whilst learning about the Gin making process and how the island's native botanicals make for unique and high-quality Gins. Attendees will hear from one of Tasmania's premier Distilleries, McHenry Distillery and have the opportunity to witness the distilling process and sample their gins.

Cost: \$70 (two courses, initial drink, Gin experience)

Attire: casual

### Making Connections Dinner (Friday Club Dinner Alternative)

An alternative offering to the Friday Club Dinners. Enjoy fresh and locally sourced produce on the waterfront whilst meeting and developing new connections and friendships across our two Rotary Districts. A great opportunity if wanting to form new networks and/or you are the only member or one of a few members attending the Conference from your Rotary Club.

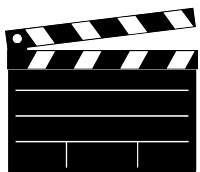
Cost: \$TBC – Registrants order and pay as per menu available on the evening

Attire: casual



## We are available to meet with your Club!

We have enjoyed visiting individual Clubs and groups of Clubs in both Districts, sharing our excitement and the finer details for what will be a unique, inspiring and memorable joint Conference. If you would like a member of our Conference Committee to meet with your members either in person or online please contact Conference Chair, Monique Smith via [Monique.Smith@rotary9815.org.au](mailto:Monique.Smith@rotary9815.org.au). We can provide a presentation to suit the time available, from a short snap shot to a longer 15 minute or so presentation.



You can also watch Conference Chair, Monique, and Conference 2IC, Keels, discuss some of the exciting elements of the Conference and Host State and City via this [video](#) (< click link to view) on the Conference Website.

05/07



# Tasmania - Interesting Facts

The original Tasmanians migrated from mainland Australia across a land bridge an estimated 40,000 years ago

The Aboriginal name for the island is 'Lutruwita' and Hobart is known as 'Nipaluna'

Originally named 'Van Diemen's Land' after the sponsor of the Dutch exploration that 'discovered' Tas

The British occupation in Tasmania consisted of most military personnel and convicts, and a small number of free settlers.

One 5th of Tasmania is a Wilderness World Heritage Area

Tassie has some of the oldest (up to 2000 yrs) and tallest trees (>100m) in the world - the Huon Pine & Mountain Ash

Tasmania has the cleanest air in the world

The "Tasmanian Devil" is the world's largest surviving carnivorous marsupial & can only be found in the wild in Tasmania

The Dunes, Barnbougle's original course, has been ranked the 1# Public Golf Course, Aus, 2# Golf Course, Aus & no. 34# Worlds Best Golf Course

Australia's oldest bridge is in Richmond, 15km from Hobart. Built by convicts & completed in 1825

Australia's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> oldest Cities are in Tasmania: Launceston & Hobart

Hobart is the second driest Capital City in Australia

Tasmania is the world's largest supplier of wild abalone and grows approx. 25% of Australian vegetable exports

Tasmania is the only Australian state free from many major pests and diseases and does not allow the genetic modification of crops

Australia's first legal distillery opened in Hobart & two years before Scotland

Tassie is known as the Apple Isle due to its significant apple industry. Australia's first apples were planted on Bruny Island.

# Thank You

2026

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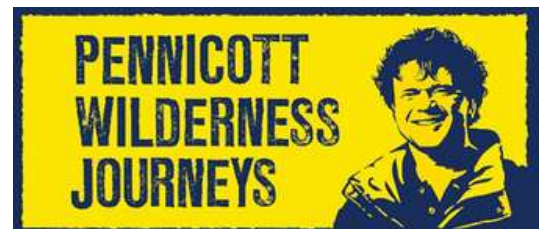
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