In this issue:

Darrell’s Discourse

The District Award Winners for 2017/18

Re-Districting: I didn’t ask for this to appear...

Reflections on the District Conference 2018

Malaria Trials are looming large

Rotary takes ordinary people...

But... (yawn) District Conferences are boring!

Pottsville Primary books to Donations in Kind

If you haven’t met Benji, you should

Lifetime Membership to Paul Harris 711 Club

In this issue:

Darrell’s Discourse: April is Rotary’s Maternal & Child Welfare Month

Three mothers and 20 babies die every 5 minutes; the majority of these deaths occur in Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Hold it! I can visualize your eyes are already glazing over...!

The old saying: the effect of an earthquake in Pakistan killing 10,000 people equals that of an accident somewhere in our town with 2 people killed. But neither has the effect on our attention as the neighbour’s kid down the road getting run over. So, let me bring it a bit closer to home: In 2016, in Australia there were over 118,000 marriages celebrated, and well over 46,000 divorces were granted (ABS Statistics). On my turf, Surfers Paradise, 14% of households are single parent, of which 76% are single mothers (the Australian average is worse, by the way). Domestic Violence? Poverty? All are very relevant to Maternal & Child Welfare – right here.

So, what can we as committed Rotarians do? In your community, you can support any agency which has a program on Domestic Violence. Worldwide, Rotary has resources available, including professionals (doctors, nurses, midwives, hospital workers and volunteers) who support effective maternal and child mortality reduction programs. Then there is the International Fellowship of Rotarian Doctors, the Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development as well as a Rotary International Group of Technical Advisers who advise on Rotarian-led Maternal & Child Welfare Programs. You can participate. But most importantly, you can lead by example and foster a healthy, safe family environment in your neighbourhood, your town and your country.

Darrell Brown,
Governor, District 9640

Commonwealth Games volunteering to raise funds: There’s more available!

April will be a very busy month for our District as housekeepers for one third of the Commonwealth Games Village. It involves shifts for 5 team members for a maximum of 8 hours a shift. With the talents of AG David Baguley we have assembled 24 teams of 10 people to allow for reserves over the 10 day period of the Games with each team earning $800 per day. It involves making beds, cleaning bathrooms and vacuuming carpets. We have all done the training and now we are called housekeeping attendants.

Further, our District was offered the task of car parking attendants at 6 sites around the Gold Coast. We have approached Clusters 5 & 7 & this could add another $16,600 into the coffers of clubs to distribute to our charities.

All in all a win, win situation.
Calm has descended on the organising committee after 2 years of planning for our Conference at Sea World Resort Conference Centre.

My thanks go out to:

- My committee from the Clubs of Surfers Sunrise, Gold Coast, Surfers Paradise & Nerang.
- Our Rotarians with outstanding numbers attending - 588 plus helpers.
- Our speakers who donated their time & talent free of charge.
- Our entertainers who donated their joy free of charge.
- Our sponsors who hopefully have kept us above the red line financially.
- **To Jo Gorman:** my special thanks for being a capable conference chair. Please read her article following.

Darrell Brown,
Governor, District 9640

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### Record Registrations at this year’s District Conference

At the recent District Conference, the winners of the District Awards for 2017/18 were announced:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Winning Club</th>
<th>What did they do to win it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Rotary Health</td>
<td>Glen Innes</td>
<td>Raised $252 per member from Jan-Dec 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Club Communication</td>
<td>Surfers Sunrise</td>
<td>Best Website / Social Media / Club Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Endeavour</td>
<td>Southport</td>
<td>Malaria Vaccing Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Multi Club Project</td>
<td>All Murwillumbah Clubs</td>
<td>Recovery after Cyclone Debbie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Conference Display</td>
<td>Ashmore</td>
<td>Knitted Chicks to raise funds for Days for Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Conference Attendance</td>
<td>Ashmore</td>
<td>59% of members registered AND attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>Jimboomba</td>
<td>Restoration of Jimboomba Community Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Service</td>
<td>Ballina on Richmond</td>
<td>House re-construction in Nepal after earthquake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Increase</td>
<td>Stanthorpe</td>
<td>Net increase of +10 members, = +34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations - General</td>
<td>Ashmore</td>
<td>PR in press, TV, Radio, Shopping Centres etc etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations - Single Event</td>
<td>Grafton Midday</td>
<td>Christmas Carols in the park - major event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to Youth</td>
<td>Currumbin-Coolangatta-Tweed</td>
<td>Active participation in numerous Youth Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Achievement</td>
<td>Stanthorpe</td>
<td>25 years of Opera at the Vineyard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rotary Foundation Award</td>
<td>Stanthorpe</td>
<td>Raised $653 per member Jan-Dec 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Excellence Award</td>
<td>E-Club of NextGen Queensland</td>
<td>Ms Pam Jones, Teacher par Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special (one-off) Award</td>
<td>E-Club of NextGen Queensland</td>
<td>Royal Flying Doctor Project 2012 - 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Congratulations to all the winning clubs!** And high recognition must go to all the clubs who applied, many were running projects which would have got the gong in another year. This was a year of stiff competition!

Franz Huber, Chairman District Awards Committee.

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Did you see **Bruce Sullivan** at the District Conference at Sea World on Saturday 10th March? (Bruce’s topic was ‘The Best of You’ and **he was presented with a Paul Harris Fellowship** in recognition of his 27 years of presenting at RYLA - Rotary Youth Leadership Awards).

**Would you like some more inspiration from Bruce?** Around once a month Bruce writes a short article filled with inspiration, challenge and practical ideas on relationships, business, and life. Many people refer to these messages as “inspirational and great reference points to doing what matters most”.

Subscribe now at [brucesullivan.com.au](http://brucesullivan.com.au) and get Bruce’s newsletter delivered straight to your inbox!
OK, so the Stanthorpe Rotary Club deservedly won this year’s Significant Achievement Award for running the Opera in the Vineyard event for 25 years in a row. Congratulations!

Approximately 35,000 patrons have attend the Opera over the last quarter century and the Stanthorpe Rotary Club has given in excess of $1.2 million to various health related charities.

On 6th May 2018, Stanthorpe Rotary will embark on our second quarter century of this event. Every year, Rotarian and Ballandean Estate Owner Angelo claims it will be the last Opera, and every year he changes his mind! Recently his daughter, Leeanne, has become a member of the Stanthorpe Rotary Club. So with her influence, Opera will surely continue for many years to come. This year, the Opera is themed Carnivale di Venezia (Carnival of Venice) so it is an opportunity to dress up, don sparkly masks and let you hair down in true carnival style. Of course, the main attraction is to come and hear the beautiful voices of Opera Queensland’s Mr Jason Barry-Smith and Ms Emily Burke as the sun sets over Ballandean Estate vineyard and the distant blue hills of Sundown National Park and enjoy Stanthorpe’s best wines and gourmet food but there will be opportunities for photos in a life-size gondola, a chance to win a $30 000 trip to Venice, raffles and a Giving Tree and as a special treat this year, President Morwenna has dusted off her violin and rounded up some local talent to entertain us with a classical number during interval.

This year, for the first time, our major beneficiary will be The Rotary Foundation. Some proceeds still go towards health related causes, provided they are supported through Rotary International initiatives in accordance with DG Darrell’s goals.

If you have been to Opera in the Vineyard before, you will surely want to gather a table of friends and experience a fabulous weekend enjoying the best of what Stanthorpe has to offer. If you have never been, let this year be your first visit!

To book: Click here
In 2016, as a new Rotarian, a very nice man in our Club who kept getting fined for whacky socks and was apparently soon going to be very important in a bigger way, (although I didn’t understand what that was), approached me after our breakfast meeting one morning and asked if I would consider being the Chairperson for his Conference. Apparently, his existing person had stood down and the next person he had asked had politely (ie cleverly) declined. I asked what was involved and to this day and I can’t remember what I was told. Since then, I learned so many lessons. My first one: **Improve my listening skills...**

There are lots of moving parts in organising an event for 600 people, some more obvious than others, but what I knew early on was this would require a great team and a LOT of help. DGE Darrell Brown had already laid the foundations in picking a venue and also assembling the Committee and a theme. Pivotal to the Conference was the program and we were blessed to have a professional speaker with an address book worth $$millions as our Program Director. She assured us early on that Rotary was such a revered organisation and her network so strong that we would not need to pay for our speakers and she was right. **Lesson No 2: Hold your nerve.** Assembling a cast of international speakers on a pro bono basis requires flexibility, patience and a great deal of trust.

Another lesson practiced, if not learned for the first time – **use the experience of others.** I was a Conference Virgin, so attending the Ballina Conference was invaluable – almost as invaluable as the opportunity to join Col, Jodie, Michael and crew for their debrief and have their ongoing counsel throughout the next 12 months. We also had a committee of long standing Conference goers who collectively had a great understanding of what works and what doesn’t. We decided that we would follow some Rotary traditions but we would mix it up a bit too – and almost everyone appreciated some freshness.

Different components of the Conference took priority at different phases. Once the Program was nailed, Sponsors became the focus – we wanted to raise funds to donate to Rotary Health as our Conference legacy so we were thrifty wherever we could be-sashes instead of T Shirts, leftover hats from a previous event, free entertainment, decorations from the Two Dollar Shop and lots of generous exhibitors and sponsors. We are ecstatic with the money we have generated to gift to our chosen cause.

The plan was to lift the roof off on our opening night and this was achieved by the moving Welcome to Country and Dance from the Jellurgal Cultural troupe, the incredible voice of tenor, Raffaele Pierro who followed a rousing national anthem with operatic classics encoring with Nessun Dorma – and the sound of laughter caused by Scott Williams. It was a tremendous night and a super start.

**Thoughts before falling asleep Night 1.** Can we keep this up for 2 more days? Saturday morning was kicked off by our Youth and of all the compliments we have had about the Conference, the feedback on how wonderful our Youth presenters were, made comfortable by Karen Phillips, are the most prolific.

We were treated to a plethora of global speakers throughout Saturday – Bruce Sullivan, Allan Pease and Laurie Lawrence – all of whom had us all crying with laughter and singing from the top of our lungs.

The trip to Outback Spectacular was lots of fun once everyone settled in the right seats – the unlikely highlight being the fantastic bus drivers supplied by Mount Gravatt Coaches.

**Thoughts before falling asleep Night 2.** 1. Please, please don’t let it rain tomorrow. 2. Can we keep this up another day? Turns out we could and everyone turned up again on Day 3 for a packed room and great presentation by Peter Beattie on the Commonwealth Games, Julie Cross who just bedazzled us all with her hilarious Sparkle and Jack Wilson who drew great parallels between the disruption required in golf to
keep it current and our own image problems at Rotary.
The committee and volunteers had other things on their mind on Sunday morning. The weather. Crossed fingers, prayers to the weather fairy and switching from one weather app to the next depending on which was most favourable did nothing to help us and the rains came, again and again, threatening to ruin our Paella in the Park grand finale. But 200 hungry Rotarians made their way to the Park where they were greeted with the wafts of huge pans of Paella and the magnificent sight of some 15+ tents, and 180 tables and chairs bravely erected in the pouring rain by our volunteers, which kept everyone dry and saved the day. Protected by ponchos donated by Sea World, we were serenaded with the dulcet tunes of a Spanish guitarist, accompanied by Salsa dancers and we ate, enjoyed fellowship and watched the skies clear until the last Rotarian disappeared back home for another year of service.
Thank you to the host Clubs, absolutely everyone who volunteered making the 2018 Conference a wonderful success and the 600 Rotarians who participated over the weekend. It is a lot of work for everyone involved but very, very rewarding.
Good Luck to DGE Terry Brown and his team for Lismore, 2019. If you’d like to hear lessons 4 – 104, just drop me a line.
Jo Gorman,
Chairman, District Conference 2018 Organizing Committee.

(Pictures by Cherry Jackson. There are a whole lot more of them on our District Website: Go to www.rotary9640.org - click on Photo Gallery at the top)

Shut the gate! Learn to resuscitate...! Yes! Laurie Lawrence had them in full swing on Saturday afternoon!

The Murwillumbah Clubs are at it again...

Hot on the heels of taking out the Best Multi-club Project at the recent District Conference, the three Murwillumbah Clubs are making waves again, bringing them onto the front pages of the local press. Well, not waves really, more like digging holes, lots of them, into which they plant trees.

Click on the image on the right to open the current issue of Tweed Link, the “official” newspaper of the Tweed Shire Council. In short: they turned up with some 35 volunteers and planted a whopping 250 trees.

Aren’t those fellows ever taking a break? 😊
Malaria Clinical Trials are looming large by PDG Graham Jones

The NOTICE below says it all! What an expectation “Volunteers Required for Malaria Vaccine Study” conjures up for all of us. While not many Rotarians will be eligible as volunteers for these clinical trials, we all understand the significance of what this means. It heralds the beginning of a critical set of clinical trials that will test the efficacy of Professor Michael Good’s malaria vaccine candidate PlasProtect® in a non-endemic country. It also foreshadows further clinical trials in endemic countries like PNG and Uganda and eventually the saving of nearly half-a-million young lives every year. The notice also provides an opportunity to spread the word to any potential volunteers.

It has been a great month for the Institute for Glycomics (Griffith University) as they have received a Commonwealth Games Legacy Grant for this malaria research. This grant for $50,000 is provided by the Queensland Government as part of a follow-up program to the Games. It is very good news for Rotary as the University has agreed that this grant will form part of the total fund raised by the partnership between Rotary (led by District 9640) and the Institute for Glycomics. I am delighted to say that this grant brings our total to almost $370,000. What a fantastic effort considering the project was only launched a year ago by the Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd). A huge thank you to Rotary Clubs and Rotarians in our District and in districts all over Australia who have generated more than $220,000 of this total.

There is still a way to go. Also, we have recently learnt that there will need to be a larger number of subjects in the sample which will increase the cost beyond $500,000. We need to go the extra way because “Clinical trials save lives!!” Help us to make it happen.

PDG Graham Jones, Project Manager

The malaria parasite has been killing children and sapping the strength of whole populations for tens of thousands of years. It is impossible to calculate the harm malaria has done to the world. Bill Gates

Has your club got any of those ‘unsung heroes’, ordinary people who have grabbed extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they ever dreamed possible? Tell us about it! Email to D9640newsletter@gmail.com
All the way back in 2009, avid cyclist and past Parkwood Rotarian (and now a member of Surfers Sunrise Rotary), Mark Twyford came up with the concept of a charity bike ride on the Gold Coast. Like many Rotary clubs, members of Parkwood were not cyclists so this was an entirely new concept for us. Aren’t cycling events run by cycling clubs? And how could a relatively small club of some 25 eager but uninformed Rotarians run a cycling event anyway? But we wanted to hear more. The potential financial rewards looked promising and Parkwood did not have a regular significant fundraising event to its name.

That was where the fun began. Setting up, promoting and actually running the event on the day in a location like the Gold Coast meant a myriad of red tape. Between planning the course, seeking approvals from Council, Main Roads and the Police and dealing with all of the problems concerns and issues that a public event entails, there was more than one occasion that a few Rotarians expressed concern over the cost of running such an event as the potential out of pocket expenses were significant to a club our size let alone the logistical nightmare…and what if no one came? Then there was the weather to deal with, insurance issues, ticketing processes and marshalling the event and of course this was all to be run by unknowing Rotarians and whatever family and friends they could muster.

But Mark was not deterred. I recall after he designed the course with the Gold Coast beaches some of the most beautiful aspects of the Hinterland in mind, many of us started to believe that maybe this could work! At that time many of the charity rides were based in and around Brisbane with only a few significant events on the coast. One Rotarian seeing an opening was the start of a whole new era for Parkwood Rotary.

Mark will be the first to tell you that he didn’t do it alone. With initial input from another Parkwoodian and then Councillor Margaret Grummit they managed to get ROMAC on board and with its far reaching arms, the district ROMAC chair enticed many members from various clubs to assist with marshalling on the day. Around 100 volunteers needed out on the course each year and through her other connections with the Gold Coast community we reached that number and in 2010 the first GC100 Charity Bike Ride was run from Southport Parklands.

Sponsorship also then became relevant to ensure the ongoing success of the event and the GC100 welcomed Condev Constructions Pty Ltd, a local building success story, on board as its major sponsor. Condev continues to be very supportive of the event to this day. That support, along with the year in year out commitment of the Parkwood Rotarians and the riders has helped the GC100 raise over $100,000.00 to date.
The GC100 and the GC50 are now run from the Luke Harrop Cycle Circuit at Runaway Bay. This has necessitated some changes to the course but was designed to allow the riders more "room to move" and greater safety by not having to deal with as much traffic on the return ride. This year it will change a little more by introducing a GC2 (2 laps of the circuit) and GC5 (6 laps for older kids), allowing Parkwood Rotary greater opportunity to fundraise and get involved with the Community as part of a family fun day.

The GC100 has become as much a part of Parkwood’s annual calendar as the President’s changeover. The event has been chaired by Bruce Rogers, Sam McGregor and myself this year. Each year it not only builds in intensity in the lead up but also in involvement by Rotarians and their families.

The financial benefits have assisted many local and international organisations such as ROMAC, Rosies, The Qld Cancer Council and many others and will continue to do so with Rotary charities being one of the main beneficiaries from the 2018 ride, but there is little doubt that it was one Rotarian, just an ordinary person who stepped outside his comfort zone in the first place to achieve an extraordinary thing. Thanks Mark from Parkwood and from all of those organisations and individuals who have benefited from that first brave step!

Mark Kenny

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**Scenic Rim Observation Run**

**Sunday 29th April 2018**

**Where?** Jubilee Car Park, Beaudesert, McKee Street Car Park

**Time?** Sunday 29th April 2018, from 07:30 for 08:00 start

**Registration:**

- $30.00 per vehicle, includes lunch for driver + 1 passenger.
- Extra people for lunch $10.00 (15 years and over)

For full details and to register: [Facebook](#), or by email to [beaurotary@outlook.com](mailto:beaurotary@outlook.com) or call Mark 0413 122 839 or David 0434 209 595

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**ALSTONVILLE ROTARY**

**Ninth Annual**

**ANTIQUES, VINTAGE & COLLECTABLES FAIR**

Saturday 19 May 9am to 4.30pm

Sunday 20 May 10am to 3pm

Alstonville Leisure & Entertainment Centre
Commercial Road Alstonville
Click for more information

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**ROMAC Trivia Challenge**

18th May 2018, 6:30 pm—10:30 pm

Paradise Showroom - Gold Coast Arts Centre
135 Bundall Road
Surfers Paradise, QLD
"Man is always more than he can know of himself; consequently, his accomplishments, time and again, will come as a surprise to him." I quote the German historian Golo Mann (he was one of the sons of the famous writer Thomas Mann). Well, fellows, the accomplishment of the successful staging of the recently held District Conference did not come as a surprise to me. Alright, so we had showers on and off just for about the whole weekend and thus there still is a lot of room for improvement regarding our connections to the weather gods...

As one of the small cogs of the organizing team, I was “in the middle” of the frantic preparations in the lead-up. I've seen the expressions of exhaustion and emotion on the faces of fellow team members when there was yet another hurdle to overcome, and I have seen the almost stoic, yet for Rotarians quite common behaviour of simply getting their nose to the grinding stone and getting it sorted out. It is stuff like this, this working with a positive, constructive team, that for me is one of the most satisfying aspects of being a Rotarian.

A few years ago, the slogan “Mission Accomplished” made all the international press and electronic media bulletins - all for the wrong reasons. At that time, it was anything but (forgive me if I have overstepped the mark in relation to Rotary remaining non-political). In contrast, I look at the many huge projects that were undertaken by Rotary Clubs throughout the District. The many applications we had by individual clubs for various District Awards are only scratching the surface: massive projects like rebuilding the local Community Hall, building and supplying an entire school building for Samoa, rebuilding a house in earthquake devastated Nepal, getting Murwillumbah back onto its feet after the devastating floods in the aftermath of Cyclone Debbie, five year long projects to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service, just to name a few. Add to that the “not Front Page News”, yet massive efforts such as organizing various youth projects.

I have attended a fair number of Rotary District Conferences by now, and every year I am amazed at the breadth and calibre of the Keynote Speakers, many of whom are professionals that can ask hundreds of dollars per person to attend one of their seminars. Take Scott Williams (the Laughter Doctor) on Friday night; yes, it almost hurt... Take Karen Phillips (now, that is what “woman power” is all about!). Take Bruce Sullivan, the top notch motivational speaker who year on year donates his time to fire up our RYLA Awardees (you can subscribe to his newsletter—see below). Take Alan Pease, humorous yet serious author of dozens of Best Sellers on the psychology behind relationships. I've listed but a few. Personally, I am very grateful to these people who donated their time to entertain us, to motivate us, to stir us up a bit. Did I hear you thinking “... but Rotary District Conferences are boring...” ? Well, fellows: if that sort of event really bores you: Got a mirror?

It is stuff like this, this working with a positive, constructive team, that for me is one of the most satisfying aspects of being a Rotarian.

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**Donations in Kind at the Cross Roads**

**Imminent requirement for RAWCS DIK to vacate the premises**

Rotarians, with the **imminent requirement for RAWCS DIK to vacate the premises** we currently occupy at Durack by the end of June – we must ask you all **NOT TO SEND** further goods to Brisbane **until further notice**.

The only exception to this is **books**, which are used as packing and space fillers in containers. Birthing kits also can **continue to come in**. Definitely **no school furniture, or hospital beds or other equipment until further notice**.

If your Club or individual Rotarians can come to Packing Days on May 5, or June 2 – many hands will be needed. Extra packing days may be announced as the date for moving gets closer.

If you have any ideas or political connections that may lead to new premises for us, please pick up the phone: **Col Laurenson 0412 142 895**.
Pottsville Primary books to Donations in Kind

Pottsville Beach Primary School continue to be one of the District’s most significant contributors to Rotary’s Donations In Kind program, providing regular donations of books for distribution around the Pacific region. Recently, we delivered the school’s **6th load of donated books** in good condition to the Northern Region’s warehouse of Donations in Kind, led by Col Laurendon. They include a wonderfully diverse selection of fiction and non-fiction, suitable for first readers through to teenagers. After we sort the books, our District’s DIK reps deliver the books to the fabulous team at the DIK warehouse in Brisbane. From there, they are consigned and shipped to a requesting community overseas.

**Thank you, Pottsville Primary,** and also to **Denis Hallworth** for liaising with the school and picking up the books!

Is your school library interested in contributing? Please contact **Cathy Akehurst** (0419 722 689) or **Stephanie Boldeman** (0407 691 009).

**RYPEN Awardees present at the District Conference**

OK, so your Editor could be accused to be just a bit biased, but... those girls not only were nominated by your Editor’s Surfers Sunrise Rotary Club to attend RYPEN, but before that they both had won the **Surfers Paradise Life Saving Club’s “Lutzy” Award** in 2016 and 2017. What a credit to their generation! So, if ever again somebody has a whinge about “today’s youth... etc etc...”, I’ll scream!

At the conference, **Lucy Thorburn** (left) and **Jessica Webber** (right) briefly presented in the Youth segment at the conference.

And whilst we talk about high achieving Youth: Check out Page XX about Stanthorpe’s Miss Rotary taking out the Apple & Grape Festival’s Young Ambassador Award two years running!

**How are we progressing with Kerrie Brown’s ROMAC appeal?**

![ROMAC Graph]

And what about DG Darrell’s goal to raise funds for an Australian Rotary Health Scholarship?

Regrettably, it’s hardly moved since January: Only $7,125 of $33,000 so far.
If you haven’t met Benji, you should!

by Teresa Dawson

A wonderful mascot, Benji a little dog stands for love and goodwill to all! For the last 15 years he has spread the word and promoted awareness, helping raise funds for countless charities, such as Cancer Sisters, Suicide Line, Guide dogs etc, and pops up at so many functions and events, the Mayors Christmas Carols, Walk at Parliament House for Polio, to name a few. Dressed for every occasion from dinner suits to bathers and always happy to oblige having his picture taken.

He’s been seen with celebrities, dignitaries and politicians spreading the love, a very busy dog! Benji puts a smile on everyone’s face, he’s pretty cuddly too, just go to his Facebook page to see what he’s up to next!!

Benji is the brainchild of Karin Kolenko an amazing Rotarian with the biggest heart from the Rotary Club of Hope Island, District 9640 and a tireless campaigner and champion for charities and medical research. The epitome of a true Rotarian!

Not only has Karen supported and given her time to lots of charity organisations and events for many, many years. Karen is a key committee member of the Malaria Vaccine Project and travels all over Australia with Benji her mate by her side to make people aware of this significant project. A project to raise funds to support the work of Professor Michael Good and his team at the Institute for Glycomics, Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Benji is passionate and recognises the importance of this project to help save thousands of lives worldwide in areas affected with Malaria!

Benji even sells spring water but only the best and purist and has endorsed pure bottled spring water with his name ‘Benji’s Drop of Life’ to support the Malaria Vaccine Project. Benji has made a very generous gesture and donated 50,000 bottles of water to the project. Purchase Benji’s bottled water (24 bottles in a carton) and all proceeds will go to the Malaria Vaccine Project.

For more information on the bottled water please contact PDG Sandra Doumany.

Miss Rotary wins Stanthorpe Apple and Grape Ambassador competition

For the second year in a row, “Miss Rotary” won the Stanthorpe Apple and Grape Festival’s Young Ambassador competition this year. This year the honour went to Bridget Campbell (photo right); the previous year it was Samantha Blaxland who took out the competition. Bridget’s win was announced at a gala ball in early March, in front of 500 people.

Bridget is the daughter of Stanthorpe Satellite Club member, Paul Campbell. By the way: Meet Bridget at the Opera at the Vineyard!

The role of a Festival Young Ambassador is to be ‘The Face of the Festival’ and help raise funds to keep the festival financially viable.

The Ambassadors raised over $46,000 to help run the biennial Festival. Well done, girls!

Several Rotarians are running in the C’wealth Games Baton Relay next week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rotary Club</th>
<th>Start time and date</th>
<th>Start location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Kenny</td>
<td>Jimboomba</td>
<td>10:42 am, 01 April 2018</td>
<td>Doug Larsen Park, Logan St, Beenleigh QLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daryl Sanderson OAM</td>
<td>Surfers Sunrise</td>
<td>10:01 am, 02 April 2018</td>
<td>172 Bayview Street, Runaway Bay QLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG Darrell Brown</td>
<td>Surfers Sunrise</td>
<td>12:28 pm, 04 April 2018</td>
<td>Doug Jennings Pk /Seaworld Drive, Main Beach QLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoff Price</td>
<td>Tweed Heads South</td>
<td>3:30 pm, 04 April 2018</td>
<td>91 Albatross Avenue, Mermaid Beach QLD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lifetime Membership to ‘Paul Harris 711 Club’ for Donella Kinnish

To celebrate Rotary’s 113th Birthday, the Ballina-on-Richmond Club turned its meeting on the 22nd of Feb into a party, with cake and balloons, with a background of Rotary history being provided by PDG John Randel. To conclude the celebrations, a presentation was made to President Donella Kinnish with a Lifetime Membership to the “Paul Harris 711 Club”.

Now, you have been wondering: “711 Club”? Some of the gentlemen among us may vaguely recall an Eau de Cologne brand of similar name... No! Nothing at all to do with toiletries! Click on this link to learn more about the Paul Harris Room 711 Club. It is a Rotary Global History Fellowship, dedicated to the preservation of the room where the first meeting took place on 23rd of February 1905.

It was about to be demolished along with the building, when a group of Rotarians decided to remove it piece by piece and re-install it in another building. This office is now maintained in another building in its original layout for visitors to see.

PDG John Randel presents current President of the RC of Ballina on Richmond Donella Kinnish with her certificate and key. (Photo by Sue Randel)

From the Netherlands to the Gold Coast - a YE Student’s perspective

Dear Rotarians,

I’ll first tell a little bit about myself. My name is Gigi van Ligtenberg and I’m an sixteen years old exchange student from the Netherlands. In the Netherlands I come from a little city which is called Lelystad. My city is a 45 minutes’ drive from Amsterdam and it’s known for its dikes and reclaimed land.

Back home I used to play soccer and do yoga. Now I’m in the Gold Coast and going to the all-girl school St Hilda’s. This is very different than what I’m used to. In the beginning I wasn’t sure if I would like it, because I also really like it to have guy friends. But I learned that it did had some pro’s. For example, that the girls aren’t scared to say what they want to say, because they don’t feel the pressure of the guys. Also it is not that I can only make guy friends through school.

Besides school I also met the other people. The exchange students. These are the people who I’m now the closest with. You can see we are all different. But we are still very close. I see them as a second family and I know we will be friends for life.

Further am I very grateful for all the new experiences I was able to make here: having my first surfing lesson, for the first time going on a jetski, having a job at Sea World, traveling a little bit through Australia [Gigi is at present on the YE Safari], having for the first time a 44 degrees Celcius day, seeing a kangaroo, koala and all the beautiful birds, being able to go to such a beautiful beach and a lot of other things.

Gigi is hosted by Surfers Sunrise for the second half year of her Exchange. Ed.

The single most powerful element of youth is our inability to know what’s impossible. Adam Braun