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Wow, what a wonderful District Conference in Goondiwindi. Thank you everyone for your emails and phone calls congratulating the committee on a very special event. We had over 460 people who enjoyed the amazing food, great speakers, fun and meeting old friends and making new ones.

The bush dance and cotton tours were a real hit. Attendees were impressed with the friendliness of the people in Goondiwindi, the cleanliness and hospitality of the town and how everyone went out of their way to make them feel welcome.

A million thanks to the terrific team of Goondiwindi Rotarians and partners. It was great to have other local community groups involved also – Apex, Lions, Red Cross and others.

Congratulations to the Rotarians from Glen Innes who conducted a Ride for Rotary from Glen Innes to Goondiwindi to arrive in time for conference. Thirteen hardened souls (and bottoms) from Glen Innes, eClub of Nextgen, Brisbane, St George and Tamworth rode 280kms over 4 days raising $10,000 for mental health research through Australian Rotary Health. What a fantastic effort.

Thank you all for your donations to the Silent Auction which raised $4,500. A further $4,700 was raised from the live auctions of life sized Gunsynd and farm dog and the cruise donated by Princess Cruises and Zeppelin Travel. Proceeds of $10,000 will go to Human Brain Research.

I hope that you can come along to District Changeover on June 28th at Kingscliff (see details to right).

Is it really 11 months since I put on the DG badge? It must be true that time does fly when you are having fun.

Yours in Rotary

Wendy
Fighting Mental Illness in a Digital Age

In a quest to help young people experiencing mental ill-health, Australian Rotary Health is funding a growing number of research projects to test web and phone based mental health interventions. Of the $3 million they invested in research this year, 60% was directed towards improving the mental health of young Australians.

At the Black Dog Institute, NSW, Dr Janine Clarke and Professor Judy Proudfoot are providing the first Australian data on a web and mobile phone-based intervention for young people living with diabetes. myCompass aims to improve the mental well-being and reduce psychological and diabetes-related distress for 16 to 25 year olds with Type 1 diabetes.

“The Internet and mobile phones are popular tools in the everyday lives of young people,” Dr Clarke said.

A self-help app for adolescents used in one of the studies funded by Australian Rotary Health.

“We think that a self-help program combining these technologies provides an attractive alternative for young people who may not feel comfortable talking to doctors about their mental health.”

Funding Partner PhD Scholar, Emma Gliddon, from Deakin University, Victoria, tests the success of an online self-help forum for people living with Bipolar Disorder. MoodSwings provides online tools to assist in the day-to-day management of Bipolar.

“Something as simple as having someone to talk to can make a substantial impact on a person’s well-being,” Emma said.

At Monash University, Victoria, Dr Marie Yap is leading a study which developed Parenting Guidelines based on evidence that parental factors can increase or decrease an adolescents’ risk for depression and anxiety.

This tailored online intervention Parenting Strategies provides an immediate feedback report highlighting the parent’s individual parenting strengths and weaknesses; and recommends specific modules of the web-based intervention which support parents in making changes to the identified areas of weakness in their parenting.

“The greatest innovation of this project is the sophisticated programming that automatically tailors the parenting program,” Dr Yap said.

Australian Rotary Health is one of the largest independent health research funds in Australia. Visit their website (www.australianrotaryhealth.org.au) for more information and donations.

Vale Ian Simpson & Paul O’Sullivan

Ian Simpson

Ian passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on 5th April. Ian was involved in Apex for 23 years, local Vietnam Veterans group, Murwillumbah Rowing Club, Brothers Fishing Club as well as a highly regarded Murwillumbah Rotary member for 20 years, a past President and a Paul Harris Fellow.

Ian was certainly the quiet achiever, one who could always be relied upon, and filled many of the roles in the Club over the years. In recent years his love of fishing led him to become one of the key organisers of the Rotary Club’s annual Fraser Island fishing trips in August each year.

He largely organized one of these weeks himself, each year, as well as being the chief cook and caterer for that week. The Fraser trips will not be the same again without Ian. He will be sorely missed. Ian is survived by his wife Annette and children Amy and Tim.

Paul O’Sullivan

Paul was a charter member of Fassifern Valley Rotary.

Paul and his wife Esme owned a nursery and helped with many projects in the area including significant tree planting at local schools. He had been unwell for some time and passed away in early April.
District Rotarians Complete Kokoda Walk

Rotarians Gary Faulks (Ballina), Neil Jones (Broadbeach), Lois Robinson (Grafton Midday) and Courtney Challinor, Nathan Williams and Debbie & Rory Curtis (Kingscliff) all recently completed the arduous Kokoda Trail trek in PNG as part of a group of 35 Rotarians and friends from Eastern Australia.

The trek was co-ordinated by PDG Lou Johnson from Tasmania to raise funds for The Rotary Foundation and while the final total is not yet available, a healthy sum is assured.

The picture (above) shows our seven Rotarians at Owers Corner having just completed the nine day walk from Kokoda covering just under 100 kilometres in total distance including over 6 kilometres of climbs and 6 kilometres of descents. To add to the challenge, the track was reported to be the wettest it has been for many decades.

A highlight of the trek was the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Isurava which was attended by a record 800 trekkers and porters. A very moving experience for all.

Our Rotarians all admit to touchdowns (hitting the ground due to a slip, trip or fall) but came through with only minor aches, pains, bruises and blisters from which they are recovering quickly and are happy to relate their story (with due embellishment) to anyone who shows the slightest interest.

Major Donors Recognised

Recently, DG Wendy had the honour of recognising two very special Rotary couples as Major Donors to The Rotary Foundation (TRF).

PDG Ian and PDG Heather Yarker were presented at District Conference and PDG Sandra and Sam Doumany were presented at our District Paul Harris Dinner. A Major Donor has contributed $10,000 to TRF, so this is a significant donation to help with our worldwide projects.

Both of these recognitions have come about from regular contributions over many years. Thank you Ian, Heather, Sandra and Sam. You may never know the people that this contribution has helped, but you know that it has been well spent.

The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service

Neil Jones was surprised at the Paul Harris Dinner with recognition for his contribution to The Rotary Foundation. Trustee of The Rotary Foundation, Ian Riseley presented The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service.

This award is given to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding active service to The Rotary Foundation.

In District 9640 we are so lucky to have such a dedicated Rotarian in the role of Rotary Foundation Chair. Neil works with clubs to maximise their opportunities for District and Global Grants to further the good work of Rotary. Congratulations Neil.
2015 District Award Winners

Congratulations to the following winners which were presented at the District Conference in Goondiwindi –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Club</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Bulletin</td>
<td>Hope Island</td>
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<td>Conference Attendance</td>
<td>Mermaid Beach</td>
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<td>Rotary Foundation Award</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Central</td>
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<td>International Service</td>
<td>Mt Warning AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>Ballina-on-Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocational Excellence (Highly Commended)</td>
<td>Ashmore (e-Club of NextGen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocational Service</td>
<td>Mt Warning AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service to Youth (Highly Commended)</td>
<td>Burleigh Heads (Tweed Heads South)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotaract Involvement</td>
<td>Burleigh Heads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Rotary Health</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Central</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Increase</td>
<td>Ballina-on-Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Conference Display</td>
<td>Mt Warning AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interact Involvement</td>
<td>Burleigh Heads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Relations – General</td>
<td>Burleigh Heads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Relations – Single Event</td>
<td>Fassifern Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Endeavour</td>
<td>Ballina-on-Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website &amp; Social Media</td>
<td>e-Club of NextGen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant Achievement</td>
<td>Broadbeach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Club Project</td>
<td>Casino &amp; Kyogle</td>
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Service Above Self Award

At the District Conference a Rotary Service Above Self Award to Patricia (Pat) Fleming from Ashmore Rotary.

There are only 150 awards of this type given in any Rotary year. The nominee must have demonstrated exemplary humanitarian service, in any form and at any level, with an emphasis on personal volunteer efforts and active involvement in helping others through Rotary. Service rendered by the nominee through Rotary must have been on a continuing basis.

Pat is involved in all Club service activities. For the past five years Pat has devoted herself to transform a two room very basic timber & bamboo school in Siem Reap, Cambodia into a 3-story concrete block school, medical clinic, training restaurant, fish farm etc.

The project has had donations to date of $3,472,811 plus an ongoing amount of $80,000 per annum in operating funds.

Some of this year’s achievements from the school include -

- Over 1,380 students attending 3 school sessions / day;
- 195 adult students achieving Cert IV in Sewing and being gainfully employed;
- 16 adult students attaining Cert IV in Hospitality and employed in 5 star hotels;
- 380 families supported with continuing food programs
- 100 patients / day treated in clinic;
- 145 secondary school students financially sponsored; and
- 80 Khmer staff employed in the school & associated services.

Previous years have similar numbers. Houses have been made waterproof. Pat ensures good governance, financial management, administration and fundraising. She is now adding a High School to the community.

She was recognized by the Cambodian King with a special Gold Medal for her wonderful work.

Pat has travelled to Cambodia 12 times to ensure the venture is run successfully and to train the clerical staff. All this while running her successful accounting business.

Congratulations Pat – a very well deserved award for your dedicated Service Above Self.
2015 District Conference Gallery

All attendees will no doubt take their own images of the Conference away with them but here is a selection to jog the memory banks -
## Calendar of Activities

Mark your diary for the following key dates, including training dates. Don’t forget you can get more details on these events as well as what else is going on, via the District Website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details (Location)</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Antiques &amp; Collectible Fair (Alstonville)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>BBRC Young Achievers Award (Broadbeach)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22 – May 24</td>
<td>Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment - RYPEN (Bornhoffen)</td>
<td>Youth</td>
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<td>May 24</td>
<td>District Assembly (Xavier Catholic College, Skennars Head)</td>
<td>Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>ROMAC Trivia Challenge (Gold Coast Arts Centre)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>Trivia Night (Southport Rotaract) (for details visit <a href="http://www.trybooking.com/132211">http://www.trybooking.com/132211</a>)</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 28</td>
<td>District Changeover Lunch (for bookings visit <a href="http://www.trybooking.com/HRLC">http://www.trybooking.com/HRLC</a>)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 17</td>
<td>Rotary Hope Island Charity Golf Day (Links Hope Island)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 26</td>
<td>Opera at the Channon (Northern Rivers) (for bookings visit <a href="http://www.operaatthechannon.com.au">www.operaatthechannon.com.au</a>)</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 24</td>
<td>Kyogle Bush Turkey Charity Ball</td>
<td>Event</td>
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Upcoming Events

The 2015 International Convention is on between 6 and 9 June 2015. For more information and to book please visit www.riconvention.org.

This year we are honored that Dr. Oscar Arias, former president of Costa Rica, will be the keynote speaker at the Rotary Peace Symposium. Arias received the Nobel Peace Prize for brokering a peace agreement that ended the brutal civil wars in Central America.

Other events 4-5 June include the Rotaract Preconvention Meeting, the International Institute, and the Youth Exchange Officers Preconvention Meeting.

When the convention is over, spend time exploring all that Brazil has to offer – pristine beaches just a few hours away, the excitement and glamour of Rio de Janeiro, and the wonders of the Amazon rain forest.

Every year, I return from the Rotary convention inspired to do more, to give more in Rotary service throughout the year. Register today at www.riconvention.org.

I look forward to seeing you in São Paulo!

Gary C. K. Huang
President 2014/15

President’s Monthly Message

One of my favorite parts of a Rotary convention is the House of Friendship. In Chinese, we say: 有朋自遠方來，不亦樂乎. "To have friends come together from faraway places is a wonderful thing."

At the 106th annual Rotary International Convention, 6-9 June, the House of Friendship will reflect the excitement and the diverse blend of cultures of São Paulo, the host city.

In between general sessions, you can relax and enjoy all that Brazil has to offer – sample the cuisine, browse locally made gifts, and take in top-quality entertainment. You also can get ideas for service and find partners at booths showcasing Rotary projects and Rotarian Action Groups.

And best of all, you'll have the opportunity to spend time with old friends and make many new ones.

The House of Friendship is a wonderful place to bring your convention guests – your family and your friends from home. By attending conventions with me, my family experienced the true internationality of Rotary. Eventually my wife, Corinna, and all three of my children joined Rotary clubs.

News Snippets

The Fighter
Diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer, Ohio Rotarian and medical researcher Kimberly Koss decided to make a costly contribution to the field.

For the full story visit http://ow.ly/MFCaL

The Rotarian Conversation: Jeff Bridges & Billy Shore
How much of a difference can a school breakfast make? Jeff Bridges and Billy Shore take on child hunger with No Kid Hungry.

Find out how they are doing it at http://ow.ly/MFBnc

The Lives of Mothers
Mothers play a fundamental role in every culture, but depending on where they live, their experiences differ.

Find out how at http://ow.ly/MFEYB

Social Media Connections

Stay up to date with all the latest Rotary International news by following these social media pages / feeds –

Facebook  Google+  Vimeo
Twitter  Flickr  YouTube
LinkedIn  Instagram  Pinterest