



DG Newsletter – September 2015

During the months of September and October we have been asked to support two of the areas of focus of The Rotary Foundation – namely basic education and literacy; and economic and community development. I have no doubt you would have been doing this through your club plan, both implementing and bringing projects to fruition. Whether your projects benefit your local or the overseas community, many of them will fall into these two areas.

As Kerry and I visit your clubs, and as I do as another Rotarian, we are inspired by what you do. Your enthusiasm, commitment, and enjoyment in achievement are wonderful to see.

Two great opportunities are coming up very soon ...

The first is Australian Rotary Health – Hat Day – Friday October 9th – a wonderful opportunity for you and your club to promote Rotary and Australian Rotary Health. Please remember that we do not just sponsor research into mental health, so vital in today's society, but also indigenous health, rural nursing and rural medical scholarships that benefit so many local communities.

Secondly, you can attend a pre-release screening on Wednesday 21st October of the movie "Bridge of Spies" starring Tom Hanks. All proceeds will go to polio eradication – still so necessary with Pakistan and Afghanistan remaining endemic countries, albeit with only 41 cases this year. Africa is now non-endemic, with NO cases over the past 12 months. I thank you and your club for helping achieve this fantastic milestone. We edge closer to keeping our promise to the world. You can book online through the District website – please consider helping us. This coincides with World Polio Day on October 24th.

At the Seoul Rotary International Convention in South Korea – May 26th – June 2nd 2016 a Young Leader's Summit is being held. This is for young Rotarians, Rotaractors or other Rotary Alumni between the ages of 19 – 35. The cost will be about \$2,000 per delegate (flights and registration). Accommodation and food during the official programme will be provided by South Korean Rotarians. Your District is sponsoring five delegates at \$1,000 each. The remainder will need to be found by the delegate, or the delegate and their sponsor Rotary club between them. Your club president has all the details so please consider nominating a suitable candidate.

At this convention we are also seeking YOUR thoughts on suitable topics for the break-out sessions. It is essential that we have relevant, topical and interesting break-out sessions, themes that will benefit you. Please give this some thought, and let me have your ideas before October 12th 2015.

I congratulate Past Governor Bill Benbow on the selection of his grandson Cameron Bancroft as part of the Australian Cricket Team to tour Bangladesh, hopefully the tour will go ahead. Bill and Heather are, naturally, very proud grandparents.

November 5th is a day to celebrate Interact. Please consider a celebratory event with your Interact club on or around that day.

I'm sure most of you know about the Rotary Australia World Community Service programme, where your overseas project can be supported by other Rotary clubs, individuals, businesses or corporates, and they can claim tax deductibility.

There is another, similar programme in place – Rotary Australia Benevolent Society. This works in the same way; you register your project, and similarly, other clubs, individuals, businesses and corporates can support you, and get a tax deduction. These projects are local, your projects in your Community.

You will be aware that Australian accountant Ian H.S. Riseley, a member of the Rotary Club of Sandringham, Victoria, was selected by the RI nominating committee to be the Rotary International president-nominee on 1st October 2015. Ian Riseley has been a Rotarian since 1978 and has served Rotary International as treasurer, director, trustee, executive committee member, task force member, committee member and chair, and as a district governor. We congratulate Ian on his appointment. Ian will be the 5th RI president from Australia.

I thought you might like to have some information on the other previous four RI presidents. This information was kindly put together by Past RI Director – Ken Collins.

The first was Sir Angus Mitchell – 1948-49. Angus was born on a ship in the China Sea on 1 April 1884. Grew up in Williamstown Victoria. Educated at Scotch College, Started work as a clerk but at the age of 21 went into partnership with a friend and set up as grain brokers, and by the late 1920s were the largest grain brokers in the southern hemisphere.

He married Teenie McKenzie in 1910, and they had three daughters. Teenie died in 1947 from cancer.

He was inducted into the Rotary Club of Melbourne on December 7, 1927 with the classification of Grain Broking. There were 144 members at the time. He became president in July 1931. He was District Governor of D65 in the year 1934-35. There were two districts in Australia at the time and D65 covered all of Australia except NSW north of the Riverina and Queensland.

In 1937 he led a mission of 32 Rotarians plus 35 spouses and daughters to the Philippines, China and Japan. In 1937-38 he was nominated as one of the then 5 directors of RI, and in 1948-49 he served as President of Rotary International. President's Themes were not introduced until 1953-54. He travelled greatly and made friends wherever he went but his most important achievements perhaps were to readmit German and Japanese clubs to Rotary International, actions that were not widely accepted by some countries.

Our second World President was Sir Clem Renouf – 1978-79 – Theme – "Reach Out".

Sir Clem was born on the 19th April 1921, two days before Rotary came to Australia and on Paul Harris' birthday, in Ingham, Queensland. He started accountancy in 1940 but deferred his final exams because of the outbreak of the 2nd World War. He applied to join the RAAF as a clerk but was talked into applying for aircrew.

He continued his studies after the War eventually becoming an accountant in April 1946. He started his own practice in Nambour in October 1946. He married June Day on the 10th February 1951 and they had two children. Sadly June died from a brain tumor on 2nd November 1993.

Sir Clem was charter secretary of the Rotary Club of Nambour, chartered on 24th September 1949, was Club president in 1954-55, District Governor in 1965-66 and RI Director from 1970-72. As president he established the Health, Hunger and Humanity Program, despite stiff opposition from the old guard in Rotary. In April 1979 he proposed the PolioPlus Program, and is so close to seeing his dream become a reality. He is still alive and well at the age of 94.

Our next World President was Royce Abbey – 1988-89 – Theme – "Put Life into Rotary, Your Life".

Royce was born in Footscray on 8th June 1922. His first job was shoe shine boy and messenger in a shoe store. He served with distinction in the army during the 2nd World War, being awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery. Immediately after the war he renewed the acquaintance of Jean Armstrong who he married in 1946.

He started a part time business making scooters and toys and later was asked to make venetian blinds which had become popular. The family established Dural Leeds in which he worked for many years. He joined the Rotary Club of Essendon in 1954, was president in 1963-64, District Governor 1969-70 and RI Director in 1976-78.

He is best remembered for taking Rotary back to the USSR in Poland, and establishing The Rotary Foundation Endowment Fund. Sadly Royce passed away a couple of years ago.

Our most recent World President was Glen Kinross – 1997-98 – Theme – "Show Rotary Cares".

Glen was born 9th January 1931 in Townsville. He was apprenticed to a cabinet maker in 1947 and later established his own furniture making business. He married Heather Allen on 1st May 1954 and they had 3 children. Sadly Heather died from a massive heart attack in October 2000.

He joined the Rotary Club of Hamilton in 1960, was president in 1965-66, District Governor in 1973-74 and RI Director from 1982-84. His two major accomplishments as president were – the low cost shelters project which saw 3000+ shelters built during his presidency, 963 by Australians, and an emphasis on literacy. Glen is still alive and well at the age of 84.

Please consider enrolling for the upcoming Rotary Leadership Institute three-part course. This is all about interactive learning and networking. In fact some districts call this the Rotary Learning Initiative. This will be held at the Mt. Lawley Senior High School on 11th, 18th and 25th October. Part 1 is on the 11th, part 2 on the 18th, and part 3 on the 25th. This is a great to learn about Rotary, what is happening in our district, Australia and worldwide. And it's great to meet other Rotarians and have fun.

We also have a membership forum on Sunday 1st November at Tompkins on Swan. This will be a proactive, interactive, positive forum to discuss achievable strategies regarding retention and increased membership.

Both of these forums are free.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work of our District Treasurer, PP Robert Barry. Robert is absolutely meticulous with the District accounts and his sage advice is very much appreciated. Thank you Robert. On behalf of the District I would also like to acknowledge and thank our Auditor – Greg Godwin from UHY Haines Norton.

Once again I thank every one of you for being a part of our great organisation of friends, having fun in Rotary, and – for being a Gift to the World.

Jerry Pilcher