Rotary

CREATE HOPE in the WORLD

THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

Rotary Club of Woolgoolga
Annual Report 2023-2024

for

Changeover

Club President Rod Mackenzie

District 9660 Governor Alyn Miranda

Rotary International President R Gordon R McInally

PAST CLUB PRESIDENTS

1988-89	Ian Hickey	2000-01	Terry Booth	2012-13	Pamela Fayle
1989-90	Errol O'Brien	2001-02	Rod Mackenzie	2013-14	Karen Sedgwick
1990-91	Leo Goodfellow	2002-03	Keith Minhinnett	2014-15	Patty Delaney
1991-92	David Shorter	2003-04	Dick Matthews	2015-16	Leslie Casey
1992-93	David Featherstone	2004-05	Brian Armstrong	2016-17	Norm Michener
1993-94	Paul Canakis	2005-06	John Martin	2017-18	Pamela Fayle
1994-95	Bill Seyner	2006-07	Ian Fitzgerald	2018-19	Geoff Royal
1995-96	Des Saunders	2007-08	Charles Phipps	2019-20	Pam Stone
1996-97	Errol O'Brien	2008-09	Peter Lacy	2020-21	Julie Marshall
1997-98	Geoff Rogers	2009-10	Geoff Royal	2021-22	Kim Thompson
1998-99	John Ottaway	2010-11	David Fayle	2022-23	Kim Thompson
1999-00	Selwyn Rogers	2011-12	Norm Michener		

PAUL HARRIS FELLOWS

1978	Dennes Fayle (Armidale)
1989	Charles Phipps (Rose Bay)
1993	John Kramer
1994	Errol O'Brien
1996	Bill Seyner
1996	Dennis Houghton (Balgowlah)
1997	Ian Fitzgerald
1998	Stan Alder
1998	Paul Canakis
1999	John Ottaway
2000	David Shorter
2000	Leo Goodfellow
2001	Des Saunders
2002	Ian Hayes
2004	Keith Messer
2005	Val O'Brien
2005	Sel Rogers
2006	Ila Rogers
2007	Dick Matthews
2007	Rob White (D9650)
2008	Brian Armstrong
2009	Keith Minhinnett
2009	Elizabeth Phipps
2010	Geoff Royal
2010	Dick Matthews (sapphire)
2010	Sel Rogers (sapphire)
2010	Rob White (sapphire D9650)
2011	Frank Dean
2011	Pamela Fayle
2012	Rod Mackenzie
2012	Terry Booth
2012	David Fayle
2013	Don Clinch
2013	Norm Michener
2014	Marie Matthews
2014	Peter Lacy
2015	Karen Sedgwick
2015	Patty Delaney
2017	David Fayle (sapphire)
2018	Dennis Houghton (sapphire)
2018	Phil Dalton
2019	Megan Hart
2021	Patty Delaney (sapphire)
2021	Norm Michener (sapphire)

Welcome from Club President, Rod Mackenzie

Welcome to our Changeover Dinner which celebrates our 2023-2024 Rotary year and installs the Board for 2024-2025.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Gumbaynggir people, traditional custodians of the land on which we gather today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connection to the lands and waters.

I would like to sincerely thank the members of the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga for their fellowship, support, advice and involvement over the past year. Thanks too, to the partners and friends of our members, friends of Rotary, Honorary Rotarians and the organisations we have worked with for your ongoing support.

President's Report 2023-24

As a Charter member of the Club in 1988, I somewhat reluctantly nominated for President at the 2022 AGM as the Club was low in members, only 8, and was in danger of handing back its Charter and closing. The country had experienced covid, floods, fires and an increased cost of living which contributed significantly to many organisations, including ours, having difficulties retaining and recruiting members and raising funds. Had the Club folded it was unlikely that a Rotary Club would again be established in Woolgoolga. This would have been a great loss as Woolgoolga Rotary has made major contributions to our community over 36 years. So, with encouragement and support from our Board and members we decided to continue for two more years and try to get the Club back on a sound footing. We had sufficient funds to operate that long with a careful watch on expenditure, but our fundraising sources had dropped substantially. Essentially survival and again being sustainable was the name of the game. Changes in the Club included making membership more flexible and affordable, a positive move. I'm pleased to say that our dire position has improved considerably since 2022. Sadly, Dick Matthews, a staunch supporter of Rotary, passed away at the start of the year, leaving our membership now standing at 15. The influx of our new members and the efforts of existing members has brought new ideas, fellowship and involvement into the Club and our projects. As our Secretary David Fayle so well describes in our Annual Report, we have continuing projects and several worthwhile new ones underway and planned.

In the upcoming year there are several goals I would like to achieve. Increasing new individual membership to 25, gaining five corporate members, establishing a major fundraising project, commencing a major community project, continuing our current programmes, maintaining good fellowship and enjoyment including with past and honorary members, raising Rotary's profile and not burning out members with excessive demands on their time and finances.

None of this could have been or will be achieved without our members. They have been wonderful over the last year and are the reason the Club is on the up. So, thank you one and all for your fellowship, ideas, creativity and willingness to pitch in and make things happen. I look forward to a successful and enjoyable 2024-25 year.

Office Bearers

BOARD

President Rod Mackenzie
Vice President Kim Thompson
Secretary David Fayle
Treasurer Geoff Royal
President-elect tba
Assistant Secretary Alison Ratliff

Directors:

(Shared) Community, Membership, Public Relations

Youth Mary Bryant
International/TRF David Fayle
Club service Pamela Fayle
Dick Matthews *(2023)*
David Edwards
Memorials project Bob Breen

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Directors:

(Shared) Community, Public Relations

Membership Christopher Chayko
Youth Mary Bryant
International tba
Club service Pamela Fayle
David Edwards
Memorials project Bob Breen
The Rotary Foundation David Fayle

POSITIONS NOT ON BOARD:

Public Officer David Fayle
Woopi Whisper Editor Mary Bryant

MEMBERS

Mary Bryant
Bob Breen OAM
Christopher Chayko
David Edwards
David Fayle
Pamela Fayle AM
Bronwyn Mackenzie
Rod Mackenzie
Kyle McIntosh
Michelle McIntosh
Peter McIntosh
Alison Ratliff
Geoff Royal
Kim Thompson
Jenny Witcombe

HONORARY MEMBERS

John Arkan
Terry Booth
Patty Delaney
Dennis Houghton
Peter Lacy
Ila Rogers
Selwyn Rogers

CHANGEOVER AND END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATION

Monday 24 June 2024 at C.ex Woolgoolga

6:00 pm	Pre-dinner drinks	
6:15 pm	Call to order	MC Christopher Chayko
	Acknowledgement of country	PP Kim Thompson
	Grace	Michelle McIntosh
	Introduction of guests; apologies; welcome	David Edwards
	Object of Rotary	Peter McIntosh
	Four-Way Test	Alison Ratliff
6:45 pm	DINNER SERVICE	
7:15 pm	Toast to Rotary International	Stan Jackson, Coffs Harbour Rotary
	Response to the toast	AAG Robin Norton
7:30 pm	Overview of Year	Outgoing President Rod Mackenzie
7:45 pm	Board of Directors Overview	Incoming President Rod Mackenzie
8:00 pm	Closing remarks	MC Christopher Chayko

CREATE HOPE in the WORLD

www.facebook.com/rotaryclubofwoolgoolga

www.woolgoolgarotaryclub.org.au

www.woolgoolgaheritagewalk.org

THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

2023–2024 REPORT BY PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBERS

2023–2024 was a year of resurgence for the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga, with five new members inducted during the first four months, joining the three inducted at last year's Changeover. Alison Ratliff, Jenny Witcombe, Bronwyn Mackenzie, Christopher Chayko, Bob Breen, and previous inductees Kyle McIntosh, Michelle McIntosh and Peter McIntosh have all made major contributions to the club's activities during the year. Their energy and fresh ideas have helped the club once again achieve benefits for the community well in excess of expectations for a relatively small club.

Two important programs for local youth were run: the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) day and the Coffs Coast Science and Engineering Challenge.

Three local women noted for taking pride in their work and inspiring other to dedicate themselves to their work were conferred Pride of Workmanship Awards.

A new fundraising initiative boosted the coffers: a series of Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls, focusing on high-end items, couple with raffles and silent auction, were very successful. Two other new methods of supplementing our fundraising are also in place. The Club is now a registered member of local initiative Piiink; and we have also linked with young Rotarian Bianca Saikale's jewellery offer, whereby sales from her Dolphin range will generate a small income for the club.

Local organisations supported by donations were Woolgoolga Regional Community Gardens; the Woolgoolga Art Gallery; Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary; Pete's Place; two sections of the Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod; and six local schools.

Boomerang Bags, in light of comprehensive success in achieving their aspirations, decided to cease operation, which had been under the auspices of our club. Their accumulated funds will be used to assist homeless people in our region.

We continued to collect unwanted smart phones to be repurposed and given to people at risk of domestic violence, through DV Safe Phone. Moreover, supported by The Rotary Foundation through a District Grant, we are working toward expanding the coverage of donated phone collection in our enlarged Rotary District.

Kim Thompson

David Fayle

David Edwards

Bob Breen

Alison Ratliff

Dick Matthews

The Woolgoolga RSL sub-Branch, in partnership with our Club, made significant progress towards upgrading the War Memorial at the Diggers Club to reflect operations and peacekeeping since 1946. This is half of the Northern Beaches Memorials Project, the other half being a project aimed at restoring the original Great War Memorial to a public place in the heart of Woolgoolga. Applications for Commonwealth grant funding for the latter project have so been unsuccessful.

Our application for a Commonweath Government Volunteers Grant to purchase a club-branded marquee was, however, successful. RSE Ltd has also provided important assistance towards the costs of both the 2023 and 2024 RYDAs.

The club has also agreed to sponsor an outgoing Youth Exchange Program student in 2005.

Building our local community

Enhancing opportunities for local youth: RYDA

The Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) day held on 14 Mar 2024 was our fifteenth RYDA. Attending were 87 students from Woolgoolga High School, 14 from Dorrigo High School, and, for the first time, 9 from Orara High School – 110 in total. The attendance of students expected was unprecedentedly high, 110/113. In 15 RYDAs, we have now put 1446 students through this important program.

By influencing how teenagers at a pliable age think and behave in situations impinging on road safety, including by better understanding their own personalities and how they impact on road safety, we expect to improve outcomes for many of them throughout their subsequent lives - with flow-on benefit to the community. 15 years since our first RYDA graduates, we now have up to 30-year-olds whose behaviour, in many cases, has been modified by the program, and are part of communities in many places, including our own.

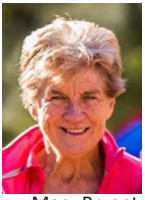
We are indebted to our RYDA Facilitators:

• crash survivor Robert Piper, who shared his life-experience with the students;

• Diana Weekes, Community and Safety Officer of the City of Coffs Harbour,who also provided extra materials for students' bags;

• Nicole Holland, Workplace Wellbeing Practitioner from Chess Connect in Coffs Harbour;

Pamela Fayle


Mary Bryant

2023–2024
BOARD

Geoff Royal

Rod Mackenzie

Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA): Tiarni Naylor (Orara HS), facilitators Nicole Holland & Raman Deep Singh, organiser David Fayle, Neale Parmenter, Coffs Harbour Rotary *(top)*;
Science & Engineering Challenge: *(clockwise from above logo)* Fish Traps; Helter Skelter Shelter; Turbine; Bridge; teams assembled for the challenge; scoring Job Juggle; Job Juggle.

science and engineering
challenge

• Raman Deep Singh, of RD Driver Training, Coffs Harbour;

• Wayne Hardy, of Allied Performance & Learning Solutions;

• Sergeant Mark Andrews of the NSW Police;

• James Daniels;

• driver Sam Hill, the owner of Woolgoolga Service Centre on River Street, who also provided the vehicle.

RSE (Road Safety Education) Ltd designs the program and provides the materials, and the Club is also grateful to RSE for their grant that covered almost all the Club's nett expenses for last year's RYDA. We also acknowledge the indirect support of Transport for NSW via their grant to RSE.

The venue was the Wiigulga Multipurpose Centre, with Speed & Stopping (which uses a vehicle) was run at the usual track, not far away on the other side of Solitary Islands Way.

Dorrigo Rotary funded the bus that transported the students from and to Dorrigo, and doubled as a shuttle-bus to and from the track during the day. Those funds came from The Rotary Foundation via a District Grant. Rotarians from Dorrigo (Marianne Strang) & Coffs Harbour (Neale Parmenter) were Group Monitors.

Science and Engineering Challenge

Also held at the Wiigulga Multipurpose Centre for the second time was the eighth Coffs Coast Science and Engineering Challenge, on 9 April. Nine schools attended: Grafton, South Grafton, Dorrigo, Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Toormina, Orara and Woolgoolga High Schools, and Bishop Druitt College. Bishop Druitt prevailed in a close contest. This year's challenges were: Fish Traps, Job Juggle, Flight, Wind Turbine, ElectraCITY, Confounding Communications, Helter Skelter Shelter, and Bridge.

Volunteer numbers were at an all-time high, almost 50. Many were repeat helpers, and among new volunteers were around 10 from major sponsor Ferrovial Gamuda JV (the Coffs Harbour Bypass Team). Lunch and morning tea were catered by the Woolgoolga High Canteen.

The Challenge Eve dinner crowd of 83 was treated to a very interesting presentation on the Coffs Bypass by Senior Project Engineer Teale McElhinney, covering her achievements in engineering, starting from an unconventional pathway into to her studies and her subsequent success. Teale was a graduate of Coffs Harbour High School and attended Narranga Primary School. Guests also had heaps of fun with their own engineering challenge to tackle, involving designing, building and optimising the flight of a vehicle made of paper.

Part of the team running this regional event is necessarily from outside our own club, and the involvement of two other local Rotary clubs has helped widen awareness of and support for the event: Sawtell (Peter Paff, Chair)

and Coffs Harbour Daybreak (Mark Spencer). Other members included Retired Engineer Graham Boulden, Woolgoolga High's Head of Science Paul McCormack, Honorary Members of our club Patty Delaney and Dennis Houghton, and current members Mary Bryant and Peter McIntosh.

Around 2,000 students have participated in our eight Challenges.

2024 SPONSORS OF COFFS COAST SCIENCE & ENGINEERING CHALLENGE

Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture	$7,500 *
Engineers Australia	$1,500
Clarence Consulting	$500

* plus $2,500 to the winning team if they are invited to complete in the State final

Following 2023's Challenge, the winner Coffs Harbour High successfully competed at the state finals and placed 3rd in that event. At that time, many of the local Rotary Clubs got together to fund the excursion to Newcastle with donations totalling $1800. The school presented a certificate of thanks, which our member Kyle McIntosh accepted on the clubs' behalf.

Recognising excellence in the workplace

In September, the Club had the privilege of publicly recognising three local residents with its prestigious Pride of Workmanship Award. Dick Matthews, along with President Rod, presented the three successful award winners, Lisa Scorse from Woolgoolga Centrelink Centre, Joy Cassels from Meals on Wheels, and Teneashia Skinner from Ground Earth, with their engraved plaques. These worthwhile recipients were joined by family and friends to help celebrate their achievements.

Joy Cassells oversees the Meals on Wheels service in Woolgoolga. Joy was nominated by one the Meals on Wheels volunteers with the accompanying citation "Joy is totally dedicated to superior customer service where she displays outstanding qualities, always carrying out her duties with a cheerful attitude. She acts as a guide and mentor to all the volunteers, always supporting them and offering a helping hand."

Teneashia Skinner, Shift Manager at Ground Earth Cafe Woolgoolga, is studying for her Certificate 2 in Hospitality. She was nominated by one of her loyal, regular customers with the attached recommendation. "Teneashia's friendly approach, warm smile and genuine interest in her customers sets her apart. She creates a welcoming atmosphere where all customers feel valued and appreciated. She constantly strives to provide a memorable dining experience."

Dick Matthews, Joy Cassells, Teneashia Skinner and Lisa Scorse and Rod Mackenzie

Lisa Scorse, a NSW Service Agent, is employed by the Woolgoolga Neighbourhood Centre to operate the local Centrelink Agency. She was nominated by a work colleague, who provided the citation "Lisa has provided the Centrelink Service for our Community for several years, and is always friendly and helpful in her role. She goes above and beyond her duties to assist customers in their dealings with Centrelink."

Dick Matthews again did an exceptional job initiating and organising all aspects of this event, which as it transpired, was his final major contribution to the work of Rotary International, and a fitting memorial to the excellence of his service.

Combatting domestic violence

Mobile phones for those at risk of domestic violence

During domestic violence, a mobile phone is often one of the first items to be thrown, broken or stolen by the perpetrator, leaving the victim cut off from the outside world. with no way to call emergency services or helplines for assistance.

For people at risk of domestic violence, usually women or children, a mobile phone unknown to the perpetrator can mean rescue, safety, life and health, instead of the devastation of mental or physical injury, imprisonment, or death. Through partner front-line organisations, DV Safe Phone provides phones loaded and ready to use, to people at risk throughout Australia.

Our club helps to collect donated mobile phones and send them to DV Safe Phone, along with a donation towards the considerable costs of refurbishment and outfit with prepaid calls. This year we have donated $615 towards refurbishment, and collected and sent 41 phones.

DV Safe Phone repairs collected phones and distributes them free and ready to use to domestic violence survivors, through over 360 domestic violence and law enforcement agencies, safe houses and hospitals Australia–wide.

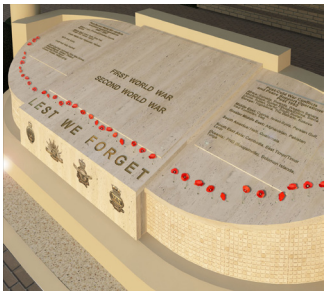
The club was successful in obtaining a District Grant (ultimately funded by The Rotary Foundation) to fill gaps in the catchment zone within our Rotary District (D9660) for collection of donated mobile phones, to send to DV Safe Phone; as well as part-fund their refurbishment for distribution to people at risk of domestic violence.

We are working to identify new partners in areas of D9660, supply them a collection box, & part-fund refurbishment of phones they send to DV. The current Committee working on the grant comprises Alison Ratliff, Kim Thompson and David Fayle, and significant progress has been made already, with the Rotary Clubs of Belmont and Morisset both now supplied with a collection box and ready to collect donated phones.

A $45 prepaid Telstra SIM was donated to the front-line organisation Pete's Place in Coffs Harbour, for a homeless person needing to make their mobile functional. Also, a Shelterbag was donated (purchased from the Rotary Club of Terrigal) to Pete's Place, to improve the lot of someone sleeping rough.

Northern Beaches Memorials Project

As reported in 2023, the Club has partnered with the RSL sub-Branch in a project to restore the original Great War Memorial to a public place in the heart of Woolgoolga, and to upgrade the Memorial at the Diggers Club to reflect operations and peacekeeping since 1946 *(photo shows early idea)* – the Northern Beaches Memorials Project (NBMP). The Club's involvement has been to provide an 'incorporated' organisation to lead on applications for Grant funding. Most unfortunately, a second application for Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) 'Saluting Their Service' funds for the restoration of the Great War Memorial was rejected in early 2024. However, the Club remains



engaged, through Rod Mackenzie and Rotary and RSL Members Bob Breen and Christopher Chayko, in the project going forward.

Although the NBMP was successfully launched over 12 months ago and has achieved a good deal of community collaboration, this effort will need to be maintained in the coming Rotary year through ongoing engagement with volunteer leaders, councillors and MPs. It is intended that a 'Winter Campaign' will maintain that engagement and also the production of a Development Application to Council for the preferred site for the restored Memorial on the beachfront, facing 'the Dawn', between the play park and surf club. A survey to gain community endorsement (or not) for the site will be circulated through social media, publicised in the Woopi News.

The upgrade to the Memorial at the Diggers Club is proceeding apace, with planning completed, community support gained and most funding available for a target completion date of 25 April (ANZAC Day) 2025. Funding for the restoration of the Great War Memorial, possibly through resubmission to DVA or from business and private sources, is to be pursued with Rotary advice and assistance.

Fundraising and recycling

Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls

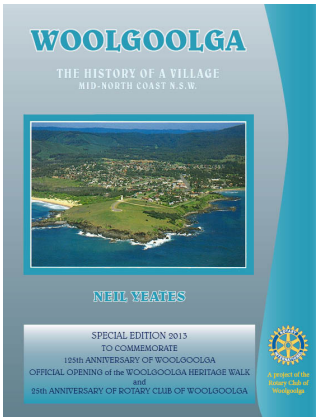
For virtually the whole existence of the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga, a major focus has been on recycling of used goods coupled with fundraising – especially through the monthly Auctions that we ran until 2020. That tradition has continued this year in an innovative way, via a series of Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls, starting in February.

Despite at-times challenging weather, these stalls and the associated raffles and silent auction raised almost $2,500 net. As a side benefit, they give good publicity and an ongoing public presence for the club. This will be magnified

through the recent purchase of a high-quality, Club-badged marquee. Thanks must go to Peter McIntosh *(left)* for the suggestion, organisation and ordering of the marquee, and to Pam Fayle, who wrote both the submission to Kevin Hogan MP and the successful application to obtain the $1,500 Volunteers Grant that funded the purchase.

Back in July, we set up a stall at the Woolgoolga Regional Community Gardens for the Growing and Grooving event, organised by the Council in connection with NAIDOC Week. Maintaining this public presence for the Club remained an important part of our activities throughout the year, and involved most of our members. Our next stall was at the same venue in September, for Woolgoolga Community Garden's open day.

Sales of Woolgoolga: the History of a Village



Sales continued of last year's print run of the fourth edition of Neil Yeates' *Woolgoolga: the History of a Village*, 26 copies being sold during the year, and since the printing cost has already been covered, each contributes $30 to the club's funds, totalling $780. Not many copies remain from that batch.

The only comprehensive history of Woolgoolga, the book was out of print for 17 years before our 2013 edition commemorating the Woolgoolga Heritage Walk, the 125th anniversary of the gazettal of Woolgoolga as a village, and the club's own 25th anniversary. A 17-page Addenda section corrects and extends the original on four significant topics, and includes four pages of colour plates. The 25-year history of our club to 2013 was also outlined.

INCOME

Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls (net)	$2,483
Sales of Yeates book	$780
Interest	$301
Volunteers Grant (for marquee)	$1,537
Rotary District Grant (DV Phone project)	$4,250
Grant from RSE Ltd (for 2023 RYDA)	$710 *
TOTAL	$10,061

* to which should be added a per-student charge of up to $9.88 foregone

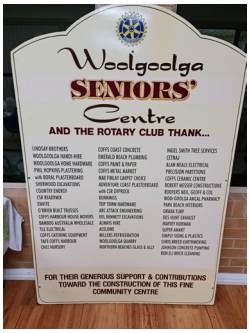
During 2023–2024

We arranged for the Men's Health Education Rural Van (MHERV) to visit Woolgoolga on 18 October. Though community uptake was again modest, with just nine men and five women tested, one person was found to have very high blood pressure and advised to seek urgent medical help. This visit was also arranged by Dick Matthews, while Christopher and Mary-Ann Chayko hosted visiting nurse Leanne Garvey and her son. Since 2017 MHERV has been out in the backblocks of NSW on two scheduled tours per year seeking out the menfolk who haven't seen the inside of a doctor's rooms for years. These are the blokes who drop dead in a paddock, because nobody saw it coming. 41,000 Australian men die of preventable diseases each year. 12,356 have been tested by the Rotary-initiated MHERV project since 2017: 5,891 were found to be in need of treatment, and 441 were in immediate danger of a stroke or heart attack.

The Club has signed up as a member of the new initiative Piiink, a retail reward app offering discounts and benefits, including to charitable groups. Piiink was started by community stalwart Lisa Nicholls, of Woopi News, RUOK, Fluro Friday and our local Woolgoolga and Northern Beaches Facebook page, who was also our guest speaker at one meeting.

By undertaking to donate $300 to the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary, the Club also qualified to enter a contract with Saikale, a jewelry business with a difference. Set up by young Rotarian Bianca Saikale, a member of the Rotary Club of Coffs Harbour Daybreak, Saikale directs part of the income from jewelry sales to an appropriate animal conservation organisation, and if the piece sold during the 12-month period is from the Dolphin Range, $20 will come to our club. A Brazilian, Bianca participated in the Rotary Youth Exchange program in 2017 and later received the opportunity for a second exchange in Germany. During 2024 Bianca has travelled widely in Australia and Indonesia speaking with Rotary Clubs and High Schools promoting Rotary, Interact, Youth Exchange, and her support for Rotary and its programs.

On 3 May, The Woolgoolga Seniors' Centre celebrated the 20th anniversary of its establishment. President Rod Mackenzie represented our club, which had played the major role in building the Centre *[see page 14]*. Gurmesh Singh MP opened the new extension (funded by NSW State Government). Federal MP Kevin Hogan *(pictured with Rod)* also attended.



THE WOOLGOOLGA SENIORS CENTRE — BUILT BY WOOLGOOLGA ROTARY

Opening 3 May 2004: Luke Hartsuyker MP, Dick Matthews, District 9650 Governor John Burkey; Deputy PM John Anderson

The idea of building the Woolgoolga Seniors Centre came from members of the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga, and the Rotary Club initiated, managed and completed the project. Starting in 1999, this massive project took five years, culminating in the official opening on 3 May 2004, by the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, Hon. John Anderson.

Initial seed funding of $50,000 from our Club in 2001 became the basis for a large and concerted effort to raise the rest of the funds through government and private grants, as well as canvassing support from local businesses and suppliers and the Woolgoolga Lions Club.

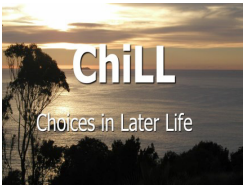
The majority of funding for construction came from

- The Rotary Club of Woolgoolga – over $100,000
- Federal Department of Transport & Regional Services – a grant of $137,500
- Bananacoast Community Credit Union (BCU) – a grant of $30,000
- Lions Club of Woolgoolga – a grant of $20,000
- Coffs Harbour City Council –exemption from fees + a $90,000 interest-free loan

The construction cost of $420,000 was much less than the inherent value of the completed building, estimated at three-quarters of a million dollars by the then Council General Manager. Vital to the project was a huge contribution in the form of donated & discounted services and supplies. Donating their services were the architect (Steve Abrahams) and engineer (John Tozer), many local tradespeople provided their services at or below cost, and major purchases such as building supplies and chairs were supplied at discounted prices.

Rotarian Charles Phipps was the project coordinator throughout, given strong support by the other club members in this complex logistic task. Another key player was a former Rotarian, Keith Messer, volunteer Project Manager. Keith Messer was presented with a Paul Harris Fellow Award by Rotary at the opening of the centre. An Honour Board in the Seniors Centre identifies the many individuals and organisations who contributed to the success of the project. The initial management committee of 8 included 3 Rotarians; then Rotary's involvement was phased down as the committee became more self-sufficient.

A $300 donation was made to ChiLL (Choices in Later Life). ChiLL is a project that runs 2–hour seminars for over 55s to present topics related to planning for later life and death.



A Shelterbag was donated (as purchased) to Pete's Place, along with a $45 prepaid Telstra SIM for a homeless person neeeding one, as donations from our club.

The Club has agreed to sponsor a Youth Exchange Program (YEP) Outbounder, Aliyah Knight. Aliyah was subsequently successful at the YEP interviews and intends to go on exchange in 2025.

Congratulations to Elisabeth de Halleux, our Exchange student from Belgium, here in 2011–2012, on her engagement during the year.

The Club has supported the 2024 Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod with $100 donations to both the choir section and the instrumental section.

As usual, the club supported end-of-year presentation ceremonies (or the equivalent) in six local schools (total of $1,200).

Club members Christopher Chayko and Bob Breen, as key members of the Woolgoolga RSL sub-Branch, did a fine job organising excellent ceremonies for 2023 Remembrance Day and 2024 ANZAC Day. Participation by other club members was also high, with the Rotary contingent marching in ANZAC Day march being the largest for many years. At the Main Service that followed, Kyle Macintosh laid the Rotary wreath.

Michelle McIntosh and Kyle McIntosh represented the club at an information day held by the former Dolphin Marine Park, part-way through its transition into Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary.

Kyle also often volunteers (with Peter McIntosh) at Friday's Sandy Beach Breakfast Club; helped present prizes at Woolgoolga High School; was on hand to accept the thanks of Coffs Harbour High School for support to attend the Challenge finals; and has done a lot of work for Rotary Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls, auction and raffles. In between, he managed another stellar year athletically, at local, national and international level, including a Gold medal at the Australian Cross Country Championships; becoming Open Para Cross Country Champion of Australia; representing Australia at the Virtus World

Cross Country Championships in San Diego, where he was also flagbearer; won 5km at Coffs Harbour Running Festival; and represented Regional Australia at the Oceania Games in Suva, Fiji, in June, winning silver in both the 800m and 1500m, having the honour of being flagbearer at the opening ceremony. He has also been presented with the Australian Sports medal, awarded just once in a career, by the reigning monarch. Most recently, he won Gold at the NSW Cross Country championships, thereby qualifying for the National Championships in Launceston.

Bob Breen, who has created in effect a job for himself as part-time journalist, has done an exceptional job in publicising and documenting our activities during the year, in *Woopi News* and *News of the Area*. He also authored the obituary of Dick Matthews, published in *Woopi News*.

On 1 February, 2AIR-FM interviewed David Fayle on air about what our Club was, and what services we had provided to the local community in the past year. David also took the opportunity to promote all the Rotary clubs in our local region, and tell the audience about the Woolgoolga Heritage Walk. The challenge for service clubs of recruiting new members, particularly young people, was discussed.

Bob Carle of Coffs City, Neil Cole of Coffs Harbour, Marilyn Brien of Coffs Daybreak, Rod Mackenzie of Woolgoolga and Denis Gleeson of Sawtell Rotary

President Rod Mackenzie participated throughout the year in meetings of Rotary Presidents of our local clubs, to exchange ideas and information, canvass support, and explore joint projects. The involvement of Dorrigo and Coffs Harbour Rotary in RYDA, and Sawtell and Coffs Harbour Daybreak Rotary in the Science and Engineering Challenge, were indicative of deepening cooperation among local clubs.

The club is most grateful to donors of raffle and silent auction prizes that helped supplement the profits from the Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls. They included: XS Surf Shop; Woolgoolga Body Works; The Hub Café; La Hacienda 101 Mexican Cantina; TPM The Physio Movement, Woolgoolga; and Greenside Surf, Woolgoolga.

Valete

Richard H ("Dick") Matthews

Member Dick Matthews passed away a few hours into the 2024 New Year at 88 years of age. His wife of over 60 years, Marie, and their children, Julie and Chris, and son-in-law Alex were at his bedside.

Born in Warwick in 1935, Dick grew up on a remote farm called Mildool, just on the NSW side of the border near the outback Queensland village of Hebel. From that start, graduating as a mining engineer from Queensland University

in the late 1950s was a very significant achievement. After marrying Marie in 1962, Dick's mining career took them to Christmas Island, the Pilbara in Western Australia, and Barraba, near Tamworth.

Dick joined the Barraba Rotary Club in 1976 and quickly made his mark as a quietly diligent contributor with a dry sense of humour.

In 1980 Dick and Marie made a sea change and bought 10 acres (4 hectares) of land in Woolgoolga and set up a hydroponic cut flower business. He joined Coffs Harbour Rotary after settling in, and assisted with founding the Woolgoolga Rotary Club in 1988. In 2001, he transferred to the Woolgoolga Club. He had also transferred to the Woolgoolga Masonic Lodge and began a 30-year contribution to the work of the Freemasons, becoming a Worshipful Master in 1996.

Dick was the Rotary President in 2004 when then Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson opened the Woolgoolga Seniors' Centre, one of Rotary's most significant endowments to the Northern Beaches community *[see page 14]*.

In the 2000s, the traditional Rotary dinner auctions, with their hilarious stage shows, were joined by monthly community auctions of donated household goods, beginning at a shed in the industrial area and relocating to the current location of Home+Yard on Beach Street adjacent to the CWA building. Dick took over from Selwyn Rogers as the Shed Manager in about 2009. Under Dick's management, the precarious viability of the auction was revived with investments in a perimeter fence, south verandah extension and north verandah, and the purchase of an auction vehicle and trailers. With a lot of work from the auction team, record profits were achieved.

Dick and Marie Matthews were an inseparable team assisting with all aspects of the monthly Rotary auction. They picked up donated household goods and furniture, backloaded inferior goods to the tip, organised quality donations in the Shed, and fronted up on auction days to manage the process. Dick and his team enhanced the goods display by constructing bookcases and shelves, tool

storage boards, and rationalising storage configuration inside and outside the Shed. Funds raised contributed to the Woolgoolga Retirement Village, Yeates Hall, the toddlers pool, the Heritage Walk, Rotary Youth Driver Awareness, Pride of Workmanship Award, the Men's Health and Education Van, Science and Engineering Challenge, Rotary Youth in Agriculture, Pitch A Project, $20,000 to the Wiigulga Sports Complex, end of year prizes for all local schools, local Auction support organisations, disaster relief projects and overseas aid programs.

Dick gave 47 years of service to the Barraba, Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga Rotary Clubs, accompanied by his loving, loyal wife, Marie. The highest form of recognition a local club can bestow is the Paul Harris Fellow, presented to a Rotarian who has made an outstanding contribution to the community. Woolgoolga Rotary awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship to Dick Matthews in 2007, and a Sapphire Pin in 2010, and Marie received her Fellowship in 2014. In 2014 Dick received the award of 2012/13 Rotarian of the Year for his continuing contributions to the Woolgoolga Club, especially in his crucial role as Auctions Director.

By 2017, managing the auction shed and picking up, sorting and auctioning items was becoming unmanageable due to falling and aging Rotary Club membership, higher volumes of donated goods, changing local demographics, and fewer buyers attending auctions. Dick retired as Shed Manager in 2018 at the age of 82 years. The 2018 Rotary Annual Report mournfully stated: 'Auction Director Dick Matthews has been a lynchpin contributor to almost every aspect of the auction. … [It is] unsustainable without his impressive personal management and involvement.' By 2020, overflowing inventory, low buyer turnout, a new Council waste policy and scarcity of fit people for clean-up, organisation and pick-ups ended the Club's monthly auction. Norm Michener, Patty Delaney and Dick closed down the 30-year operation that had raised about $750,000 for community projects.

In 2022 Dick revived the Rotary Pride in Workmanship award for a customer or community-nominated worker who displayed the attributes of dedication, work ethic, leadership, teamwork, commitment, reliability, kindness and understanding and support for others. He presided over this award in September 2023 at 88, his last major contribution to the Woolgoolga Rotary Club. Many would say that Dick epitomised these attributes and could have been an award recipient himself. Dick was surprised and delighted to receive the prestigious District 9650 Service Above Self Award in 2023 as the culmination of his career in Rotary. This award is made annually from nominations from over 100 Rotary and Rotaract Clubs in northern NSW.

Desmond Saunders

Des Saunders, who passed away in June 2024, was a member for many years and a well-liked, respected and hard worker for the Club. He was the Club's historian during most of its "men-only" period, until resigning in 2007. He was Club President in 1995–1996, and was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow for his service in 2001. His late wife Norma who died 9 January 2024 was also noted for her outstanding contribution to Rotary activities during Des' membership.

John Bourne

John Bourne passed away 2 Jun 2024. He joined the club not long into its existence and was a member in those early days.

Donations 2023-2024

Helping build our local community

Choices In Later Life (ChiLL)	$300
Shelterbag and SIM card for the homeless, via Pete's Place	$135
Pride of Workmanship Awards	$240
Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary	$300
Woolgoolga Regional Community Gardens (Christmas party)	$200
Lillipilli Art & Craft Competition, Woolgoolga Art Gallery	$300

Opportunities and support for local youth

Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) day	$710
Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod prize (instrumental)	$100
Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod prize (choir)	$100
Woolgoolga High School (end-of-year presentations)	$200
Woolgoolga Public School (end-of-year presentations)	$200
Mullaway Primary School (end-of-year presentations)	$200
Corindi Public School (end-of-year presentations)	$200
Sandy Beach Public School (end-of-year presentations)	$200
St Francis Xavier Primary School	$200

Counteracting domestic violence

DV Safe Phone, to refurbish phones to fight domestic violence	$615
Purchase of DV phone collection boxes	$170
Postage of collected phones to DV Safe Phone	$32

TOTAL (including cost of running RYDA)	**$4,402**

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE (separate financially)

Science and Engineering Challenge expenditure	$11,927

Since our inaugural Science and Engineering Challenge in 2015, the accounts for the program have been maintained separately from the Club's other accounts. The Science and Engineering Challenge, an initiative of Woolgoolga Rotary and the University of Newcastle, is run locally by a team from Woolgoolga, Sawtell and Coffs Harbour City Rotary and other community members, and funded by generous sponsorship from companies and organisations, plus a small contribution from competing schools.

CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD

2023-2024 theme

THE MAGIC
OF ROTARY

2024-2025 theme

The Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

The Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

- FIRST. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- SECOND. High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- THIRD. The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;
- FOURTH. The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

The Rotary Motto: *Service above self*