



**UNITE  
FOR  
GOOD**

**CREATE  
LASTING  
IMPACT**

# **Rotary Club of Woolgoolga Annual Report 2025–2026**

for  
**Changeover**



**Club President Rod Mackenzie**

**District 9660 Governor Evan Burrell**

**Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo**

## PAST CLUB PRESIDENTS

1988-89	Ian Hickey	2001-02	Rod Mackenzie	2014-15	Patty Delaney
1989-90	Errol O'Brien	2002-03	Keith Minhinnett	2015-16	Leslie Casey
1990-91	Leo Goodfellow	2003-04	Dick Matthews	2016-17	Norm Michener
1991-92	David Shorter	2004-05	Brian Armstrong	2017-18	Pamela Fayle
1992-93	David Featherstone	2005-06	John Martin	2018-19	Geoff Royal
1993-94	Paul Canakis	2006-07	Ian Fitzgerald	2019-20	Pam Stone
1994-95	Bill Seyner	2007-08	Charles Phipps	2020-21	Julie Marshall
1995-96	Des Saunders	2008-09	Peter Lacy	2021-22	Kim Thompson
1996-97	Errol O'Brien	2009-10	Geoff Royal	2022-23	Kim Thompson
1997-98	Geoff Rogers	2010-11	David Fayle	2023-24	Rod Mackenzie
1998-99	John Ottaway	2011-12	Norm Michener	2024-25	Rod Mackenzie
1999-00	Selwyn Rogers	2012-13	Pamela Fayle		
2000-01	Terry Booth	2013-14	Karen Sedgwick		

## PAUL HARRIS FELLOWS

1978	Dennes Fayle (Armidale)	2010	Geoff Royal
1989	Charles Phipps (Rose Bay)	2010	Dick Matthews (sapphire)
1993	John Kramer	2010	Sel Rogers (sapphire)
1994	Errol O'Brien	2010	Rob White (sapphire D9650)
1996	Bill Seyner	2011	Frank Dean
1996	Dennis Houghton (Balgowlah)	2011	Pamela Fayle
1997	Ian Fitzgerald	2012	Rod Mackenzie
1998	Stan Alder	2012	Terry Booth
1998	Paul Canakis	2012	David Fayle
1999	John Ottaway	2013	Don Clinch
2000	David Shorter	2013	Norm Michener
2000	Leo Goodfellow	2014	Marie Matthews
2001	Des Saunders	2014	Peter Lacy
2002	Ian Hayes	2015	Karen Sedgwick
2004	Keith Messer	2015	Patty Delaney
2005	Val O'Brien	2017	David Fayle (sapphire)
2005	Sel Rogers	2018	Dennis Houghton (sapphire)
2006	Ila Rogers	2018	Phil Dalton
2007	Dick Matthews	2019	Megan Hart
2007	Rob White (D9650)	2021	Patty Delaney (sapphire)
2008	Brian Armstrong	2021	Norm Michener (sapphire)
2009	Keith Minhinnett	2025	Mary Bryant
2009	Elizabeth Phipps		

## Welcome from Club President, Rod Mackenzie

*Welcome to our Changeover Dinner, which celebrates our 2025–2026 Rotary year and installs the Board for 2026–2027.*

*I would like to begin by acknowledging the Gumbaynggirr 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.*

*This has been a year defined by the Rotary International theme of “Unite for Good” — and it is a theme our Club has truly lived. From supporting survivors of domestic violence to nurturing our youth, from honouring outstanding local workers to caring for our seniors, we have demonstrated once again that a small, committed club can make an outsized difference in its community.*

*I would like to sincerely thank each and every member of the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga for their fellowship, support, creativity, and willingness to pitch in. Thanks also to the partners and friends of our members, our Honorary Rotarians, and the organisations and businesses who have generously supported our work throughout the year.*

*I look forward to the year ahead, and to continuing to build on the strong foundations this remarkable team has laid.*

## President’s Report 2025-26

*The time flies by, and here is another Annual Report which comprehensively covers the activities undertaken by the Club this year. We have supported many good causes including youth, domestic violence victims, and seniors. A major project has been the support our Club has provided to the Woolgoolga Seniors Centre, including a generous grant from District 9660. Our members make up the Board of Management and work closely with an advisory committee made up from members. Membership now is well over 400, up from 85 in July 2025. The Seniors Centre continues to provide activities, workshops, guest speakers and has grant funding to provide digital training to 150 seniors. It is a vibrant hub for seniors to meet and socialise.*

*The Pop-Up stall we run at the monthly Marine Rescue markets continues to show the Rotary flag and raises moderate funds for projects. New members have strengthened the Club and brought new ideas and expertise for new and existing projects. None of these good works would happen without the participation of our Club members and supporters and they have my admiration and thanks for their contributions. They are also a great bunch of people, which makes our Club so friendly.*

*I look forward to this coming year when we will continue to be a small Club making a big contribution into our community.*

*Rod Mackenzie, President 2025-2026*

## Office Bearers

<p><b>BOARD 2025-2026</b></p> <p>President Rod Mackenzie  Vice President Kim Thompson  Secretary David Fayle (2025) Alison Ratliff (2026)  Treasurer Geoff Royal  Assistant Secretary Alison Ratliff (2025)  David Fayle (2026)</p> <p><b>Directors:</b></p> <p>Services David Edwards  Youth Mary Bryant  Club Service Pamela Fayle  Public Relations Pamela Fayle  The Rotary Foundation David Fayle  International Alison Ratliff  Memorials project Bob Breen (<i>to Feb</i>)</p>	<p><b>BOARD 2026-2027</b></p> <p>President Rod Mackenzie  Vice President David Fayle  Secretary Alison Ratliff  Treasurer Geoff Royal  President-elect tba  Assistant Secretary David Fayle</p> <p><b>Directors:</b></p> <p>Service Projects David Edwards, Andrew Pryor  Youth Michelle McIntosh, Peter McIntosh  Club Administration Pamela Fayle  Public Relations Pamela Fayle  International Alison Ratliff  The Rotary Foundation David Fayle</p>
<p><b>POSITIONS NOT ON BOARD:</b></p> <p>Membership Christopher Chayko  Woopi Whisper Editor Mary Bryant  Public Officer David Fayle</p>	<p>Youth Exchange Program Counsellor  Bronwyn Mackenzie  Child Protection Officer Alison Ratliff  Compliance Alison Ratliff, Mary Bryant</p>
<p><b>COMMITTEES (2025-2026 and/or 2026-2027):</b></p> <p>Pop Up Vintage Shop Bronwyn Mackenzie, Michelle McIntosh, Peter McIntosh,  Kyle McIntosh, Jenny Witcombe</p> <p>Dick Matthews Pride of Workmanship Committee 2025: Bob Breen; 2026: Peter McIntosh,  Andrew Pryor, Bronwyn Mackenzie, Kyle McIntosh</p> <p>Memorials Project Christopher Chayko, Bob Breen</p> <p>S&amp;E Challenge Mary Bryant, Peter McIntosh, Patty Delaney (Honorary Member),  Andrew Pryor, Dennis Houghton (Honorary Member), Peter Lacy</p> <p>DV Safe Phone David Fayle, Alison Ratliff, Kim Thompson, Kyle McIntosh</p> <p>The Rotary Foundation Grants Committee for District 9660 David Fayle</p>	

### MEMBERS

Mary Bryant  
Bob Breen OAM (*to Feb*)  
Christopher Chayko  
David Edwards  
David Fayle  
Pamela Fayle AM  
Peter Lacy  
Bronwyn Mackenzie  
Rod Mackenzie  
Kyle McIntosh

### HONORARY MEMBERS

Michelle McIntosh  
Peter McIntosh  
Andrew Pryor (*from Sep*)  
Alison Ratliff  
Geoff Royal  
Jenny Storum (*from Oct*)  
Kim Thompson  
Jenny Witcombe

John Arkan  
Terry Booth  
Patty Delaney  
Dennis Houghton

# CHANGEOVER AND END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATION

Monday 29 June 2026 at C.ex Woolgoolga

6:00 pm	Pre-dinner drinks	
6:15 pm	Call to order	MC Bronwyn Mackenzie
	Acknowledgement of country	Alison Ratliff
	Introduction of guests; apologies; welcome	Andrew Pryor
	Object of Rotary	Peter McIntosh
	Four-Way Test	Mary Bryant
6:30 pm	DINNER SERVICE	
7:00 pm	Toast to Rotary International	David Fayle
7:40 pm	Overview of the Year	Outgoing President Rod Mackenzie
7:45 pm	Board of Directors Overview	Incoming President Rod Mackenzie
8:00 pm	Closing remarks	MC Bronwyn Mackenzie

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[www.woolgoolgarotaryclub.org.au](http://www.woolgoolgarotaryclub.org.au)  
[www.woolgoolgaheritagewalk.org](http://www.woolgoolgaheritagewalk.org)

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## 2025–2026 REPORT BY PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBERS

The 2025–2026 Rotary year has been one of important community impact for the Rotary Club of Woolgoolga, well in excess of the constraints of limited fundraising. Building on the resurgence of recent years, our Club — at present 17 members strong — has continued to deliver meaningful programs for seniors, local youth, domestic violence survivors, and the broader Woolgoolga and Northern Beaches community.

We welcomed two new members: **Andrew Pryor** (inducted September 2025), a former teacher and school principal bringing fresh ideas and energy, who will serve on the incoming Board and two Committees; and **Jenny Storum** (inducted October 2025), who has quickly become an enthusiastic participant in the Club.

The year was tinged with sadness by the departure of long-serving member and Past President **Kim Thompson**, who has relocated to Queensland after a decade of extraordinary service, including three years as Treasurer, two years as President, and years of dedication to the DV Safe Phone project and our Auction. Our Club's loss will in the coming months be another Club's gain.

Serving the older members of the community has occupied much of our members' efforts this year. The Woolgoolga Seniors Centre, in a precarious state under threat of closure, has not just been rescued, but is impressively thriving, with an almost fivefold increase in membership, and humming with activities, courses, support groups, entertainment, and excursions.

Nine local workers who demonstrated pride and excellence in their work were recognised at a wonderful ceremony at which they received Pride of Workmanship Awards.

Significant progress was made towards restoring the original Great War Memorial to a public place in Woolgoolga.

Our tenth Coffs Coast Science and Engineering Challenge continued our commitment to providing opportunities for school students in these fields, crucial for the future of our nation.

This year was particularly notable for our Youth Exchange Program. Midway through, Aliyah Knight returned from her exciting year in Brazil, and Izabella van der Merwe departed for her year in a different part of the same country. During the coming year, we will have Juliette Poncelet joining us from France.



Kim Thompson



David Fayle



David Edwards



Bob Breen



Alison Ratliff

As part of our ongoing efforts to counter the scourge of domestic violence, we funded 29 new collection boxes for donated phones, plus a donation sufficient to fund DV SafePhone’s refurbishment of about 26 additional phones to be placed in the hands of people at risk.

We are very grateful to Rotary District 9660 for two grants funding two vital projects: the safe phone work and the Seniors Centre activities.

Our Club sponsored Chase Saban to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program. Chase subsequently returned to the RYLA program seven months later in a leadership facilitation role.

Other notable activities included the visit of the Men’s Health Education Rural Van (MHERV) van; Curryfest; and a RYDA youth driver awareness workshop. We have also initiated the repair or replacement of damaged and unreadable Heritage Walk panels.

Pop-up Stalls raised modest but important funds, and perhaps more significantly, helped raise public awareness of our club and its ongoing work in the community.

Mary Bryant’s extraordinary contribution to the community and to our Club was recognised with the Paul Harris Fellow Award.

The year’s donations totalling \$14,090 are listed at the end of this report.

## Building our local community

### Ensuring the future of the Seniors Centre

The **Woolgoolga Seniors Centre**, important in providing the older members of our community a home away from home, with entertainment, companionship, skills, knowledge and fun, has again become a project receiving major support from Woolgoolga Rotary. The Seniors Centre [*see its Facebook page*] is fully run by volunteers, has no paid staff, and is self-funding as it receives no recurrent funding from governments.

The purpose-built Woolgoolga Seniors Centre, opened in 2004, was a major project by Woolgoolga Rotary. The building was subsequently handed over to Coffs Harbour City Council.

In July 2025 the Seniors Centre faced closure because it looked unlikely a new Board of Management would be elected. This was a situation our Club



Pamela Fayle



Mary Bryant

## 2025–2026 BOARD



Geoff Royal



Rod Mackenzie

President could not allow to happen, given the central involvement Woolgoolga Rotary had in its establishment. President Rod, after discussions with the Seniors Centre manager, recruited a new Board made up of seven members of Woolgoolga Rotary (President **Rod Mackenzie**, Vice-President **Bronwyn Mackenzie**, Treasurer **Geoff Royal**, Secretary **Jenny Witcombe** and **Peter Lacy**, **Peter McIntosh** and **David Edwards**) and they were elected as the Board on 16 July 2025. Four members of the Seniors Centre also sit with the Board in an advisory capacity (*photo*). All members sitting as the Board have made a very significant time contribution to ensure the continued operation of the Seniors Centre.

In July 2025 there were 85 financial members, and at the end of May 2026 there were just over 400 financial members. Over 20 different activities run at the Seniors Centre weekly including exercise classes, craft, mahjong, cards, table tennis, indoor bowls, a men’s reading group, and an Indian men’s support group.



MONDAY	Activity	Time	Time	Cost
Monday	Scrapbooking	9:30am - 12:00pm	\$5	\$5
	Fit Bits	10:00am - 11:50am	\$5	\$5
Tuesday	Seat Beats	10:30am - 11:50am	\$5	\$5
	Fit Bits	11:30am - 12:15pm	\$5	\$5
Tuesday	Scrabble	1:00pm - 4:00pm	\$5	\$5
Wednesday	Craft Class	9:30am - 12:00pm	\$5	\$5
	Members' Morning Tea	10:30am - 11:00am	\$2	\$2
Thursday	Knitting	9:00am - 12:00pm	\$5	\$5
	Blankets with Love	1:00pm - 4:00pm	\$5	\$5
Thursday	Quilting	11:55am - 12:00pm	\$10	\$10
Friday	Chair Fitness	1:00pm - 3:00pm	\$5	\$5
	Line Dancing	2:30pm - 3:30pm	\$5	\$5
Friday	Fit Badminton	2:30pm - 3:30pm	\$5	\$5
	Indoor Bowls	9:30am - 12:00pm	\$5	\$5
Saturday	21 for Memory Test	1:00pm - 4:00pm	\$5	\$5
	Line Dancing Plus	8:30am plus	\$10	\$10

An important achievement was securing a 10-year lease on the building through to 30 June 2035 from Council — a significant governance achievement for the Centre’s long-term viability.

A series of workshops, presentations and Expos have been held covering topics relevant to Senior’s health, independence, end of life planning and technology. Presenters have included a care services co-ordinator, Carers NSW, Dementia Australia, University of Technology Sydney and CHiLL (Coffs Harbour Choices in Later Life). Red Cross, the Parkinson’s Support Group and the Woolgoolga Garden Club meet there monthly, and rooms are available for hire to other groups.

A major highlight of the year was the successful District Grant application submitted in October 2025 under the theme “**Rotary and the Woolgoolga Seniors’ Centre – Unite for Good.**” The grant was confirmed at the District Showcase on 22 November 2025, and funds received early in 2026.

The grant, totalling \$4,200 (including \$3,500 in District Development Funds

and \$700 from Club funding), supports:

- **Parkinson's Support Group:** support and activities: \$2,000. This group was established by Wendy McCallum after an initial meeting to gauge interest had over 40 people with Parkinsons and carers attend. The contribution from the Rotary grant will allow the group to continue meeting at the Seniors Centre until the end of 2027 and provide funds to support its operation and have support services attend and present at their monthly meetings.
- Exercise and activity equipment: \$500
- Education, seminars and information sessions: \$900
- Bus transport, excursions and activities: \$500
- **Knit with Love** wool supply, stationery, social functions, and miscellaneous: \$500

The Seniors Centre has successfully applied for several grants and unsuccessfully for others. Successful applications were:

- Good Things Foundation: \$10,500 to provide digital training for 150 seniors.
- Dying to Know: \$3,000 to promote discussions about end-of-life planning.
- Federal Member for Page, Kevin Hogan: \$1,000 grant to assist volunteers.
- Council offset for the 10-year lease preparation fee and roof maintenance.
- Harbour at Home: \$2,670 to obtain a streaming and video camera.
- Woolgoolga Lions Club donated a seat for members outside the main entrance.

The Seniors Centre has a 12-seater bus which provides regular outings for members to events, shows, markets and places of interest.

The Board has inherited a number of costly maintenance issues with the building which they are working through to fix and fund.

Woolgoolga Rotary and the Seniors Centre will continue to work together to ensure this wonderful local asset continues to provide activities, companionship, outings and information to seniors aged over 50 in our community — practically demonstrating the Rotary themes “**Unite for Good**” and “**Create Lasting Impact**”.

## Recognition of outstanding work performance

The Club's prestigious **Pride of Workmanship Awards** started the year off with a bang, recognising nine local workers who demonstrate dedication, reliability, teamwork, and exceptional customer service.

Presentation evening was at the Wiigulga Multipurpose Centre on 14 July, with State Member for Coffs Harbour **Gurmesh Singh** presenting plaques and certificates. Nearly 100 people were there, in a warm and enthusiastic atmosphere.

The event was named in honour of the late **Dick Matthews**, who gave 47 years



Ruth Reynolds – Woolgoolga's Finest Butcher  
Nominator: Bob Breen / Diggers Club

Nick Carr – Beach Street Dining,  
Woolgoolga Diggers Club:  
Nominators: Vince and Nancy Fazel



Yaping 'Ping' Doris' Jhang – Groundearth Café  
Nominators: Barrie and Suzie Briggs

Tabitha (Tabby) Rodrick – Beach Street Dining,  
Woolgoolga Diggers Club:  
Nominators: Vince and Nancy Fazel



## PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARDEES AND NOMINATORS



Irina and John Ferraro  
– Woolgoolga Post Office  
Nominator: Robyn Rooth

Lynzel Nunn – Your Home Styled by Lynzel  
Nominator: Rhonda Elliott



Laura Howe – Sea View Tavern  
Nominators: Alan and Cath Johnson

Maddison 'Maddie' King  
– Woolgoolga Bodyworks  
Nominator: Michelle McIntosh



of outstanding service to Rotary before passing away in 2024 at the age of 88. Dick ran our last Pride of Workmanship Awards in 2022 — how fitting that this was his final major contribution to our club’s achievements. **Marie Matthews**, Dick’s wife, who stood beside Dick throughout his long membership of Rotary and supported him in all his projects, being herself awarded the Paul Harris Fellow in 2014, was one of our special guests, to celebrate Dick’s legacy, **Service Above Self**. Apart from Gurmesh Singh MP, then Deputy Leader of the National Party, others present included Gurminder Saro, Coffs Harbour City Councillor representing the Mayor, Nikki Williams; and Roslyn Peacock, representing Kevin Hogan, Federal Member for Page and Deputy Leader of the National Party, who was away on Shadow Cabinet duties.

This program, celebrating excellence in our community, remains one of our most visible and valued contributions to community morale and workplace culture.

Thanks go to Bob Breen for organising this very successful event, and to Robert Watkins for these photos.

## Men’s Health Education Rural Van (MHERV)

Our Club hosted the **Men’s Health Education Rural Van (MHERV)** van in Woolgoolga on 13–14 October 2025, at the Woolgoolga Diggers Carpark. Organiser Michelle McIntosh did a fine job, Assisted by volunteers Alison Ratliff, Peter McIntosh, Andrew Pryor, Christopher Chayko, Jenny Storum, Rod Mackenzie, Bronwyn Mackenzie, and David Fayle, the two-day clinic achieved outstanding results:

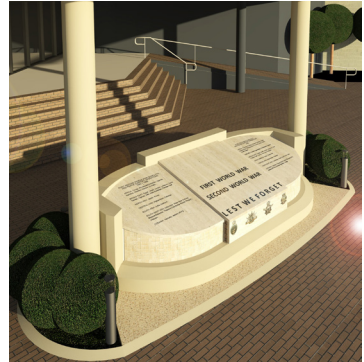
Day	Males	Females	Total	Category 1: Normal	Category 2: Follow-up Required
Mon 13 Oct	16	16	32	16	16
Tue 14 Oct	12	5	17	3	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>

Thirty people were found to require follow-up care — a compelling reminder of the life-saving value of this program in regional communities. Community organisations including the Diggers Club, C.ex Club, BCU Bank, Post Office, Woolgoolga Library, and the Seniors Centre all actively promoted the event.

## Northern Beaches Memorials Project

The Woolgoolga RSL sub-Branch, in partnership with our Club, is undertaking the **Northern Beaches Memorials Project** aimed at restoring the original Great War Memorial to a public place in Woolgoolga, as well upgrading the War Memorial at the Diggers Club to reflect operations and peacekeeping since 1946.

This project continued to advance through a series of important developments this year.



In December 2025, Coffs Harbour City Council gave conditional approval for the reinstatement of the Great War Memorial, central to the Beach Reserve and facing the dawn in sight of the beach — the location unanimously preferred by RSL sub-Branch veterans, the Woolgoolga Chamber of Commerce, Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club, Woolgoolga Lions Club, Woolgoolga Red Cross, and Woolgoolga Legacy Chapter, as well as over 400 community supporters.

However, progress has been slightly impeded by an individual’s refusal to surrender the original memorial stones (structural support for the plaques) to the community and project. Legal and departmental advice has been sought from the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs and NSW Office of Veterans Affairs, and the project team awaits guidance on how to proceed. One fallback would be to manufacture a near-exact replica.

The plaques belonging to the WWI memorial have been cleared for removal from the existing memorial at the Diggers Club, following the Wyong Leagues Group’s commitment to fund a \$2.2 million upgrade of the area in front of the club.

Our heartfelt thanks go to **Christopher Chayko** and **Bob Breen** for their tireless and meticulous stewardship of this important project.

## Curryfest

Chair and co-organiser of Woolgoolga’s iconic annual festival, **Curryfest**, **Pamela Fayle**’s original involvement with Curryfest began as the Rotary representative on the festival organising team; that role grew with subsequent festivals. In recent years that core team has comprised Pam plus **Carl Mower** and **Michael Bryers** from Another Tasty Event.

The nineteenth year of Curryfest continued to build on a tradition of bringing major social and economic benefits to Woolgoolga and the broader Coffs Coast region. The October 2025 festival extended to three days of events, with a movie on the beach on Curryfest eve and a Wellness by the Waves yoga and chai event the day after. Festival day was a “feast” of Bhangra and Giddha dancing, Dholi drumming and chef’s cooking demonstrations as well as an Indian

Bazaar, turban tying and henna tattooing, pop-up entertainment and a photo booth to accompany the wide range of curries and other cuisine.



Though blessed with decent weather, the event attracted just 7,000 people, comparable to the previous event in 2023, and well down on pre-Covid average levels.

As with many other recent events, this indicates the continued impact of cost-of-living increases on family discretionary spending.

Nevertheless, 38% of attendees were from outside the Council area, and those who stayed overnight stayed an average 3.5 nights. The injection to the local economy from Curryfest visitor spending was over \$1.5 million. Together with other economic spin-offs, including \$96,000 of the festival running costs paid by organisers to Coffs Coast businesses, the overall boost to the local economy was well over \$1.6 million.

That analysis was once again done by [David Fayle](#), part of his [Curryfest 2025 Market Research Report](#). These reports continue to help secure sponsorship and grant funding.

## Woolgoolga Heritage Walk repair

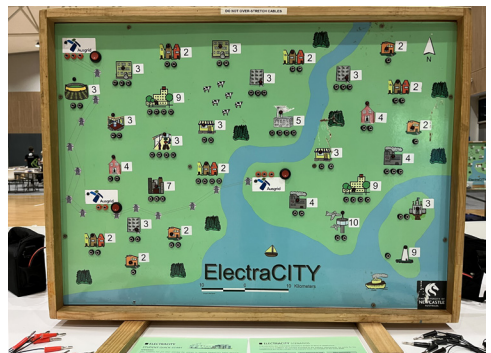
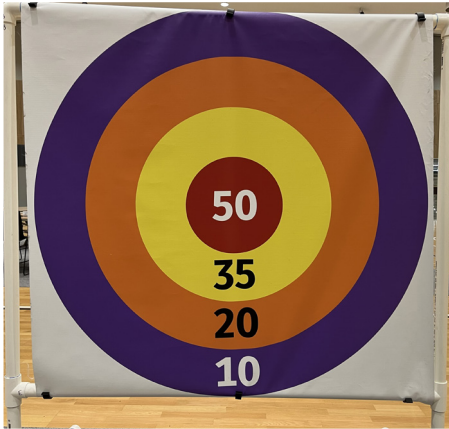
Significant progress has been made towards the repair of unreadable and damaged [Heritage Walk](#) panels. Thanks go to community member [Robyn Rooth](#) for initiating this through Club member and Heritage walk team member David Fayle. After ascertaining and documenting what needed urgent repair or replacement, David submitted successive requests to Council (City of Coffs Harbour) and finally succeeded in having the manufacture of replacements ordered. We await news. A further task for the coming year is finalising a major update of the trifold pamphlet.

## Enhancing opportunities for local youth: Science and Engineering Challenge

Our tenth Coffs Coast [Science and Engineering Challenge](#), held on 31 Mar 2026 at Wiigulga Multipurpose Centre, involved seven high school teams: Maclean, South Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Toormina, Bellingen and two from Woolgoolga High School. This year's challenges were: The Grab Lab, Eco-habitech, Flight, Fish Traps, Wind Turbine, ElectraCity, Confounding Communications, and Bridge. The event partnered with major sponsor Ferrovial Gamuda JV (the Coffs Harbour Bypass Team) for the third consecutive year. The function on

## 2026 SPONSORS OF COFFS COAST SCIENCE & ENGINEERING CHALLENGE

Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture	\$7,500
Northrop Consulting Engineers	\$2,000
Engineers Australia	\$1,500
Clarence Consulting	\$500
BK Engineering Consulting Solutions	\$500



Science & Engineering Challenge: (clockwise from above right) Grab Lab target; promotion graphic; panel for ElectraCITY; introductory assembly.



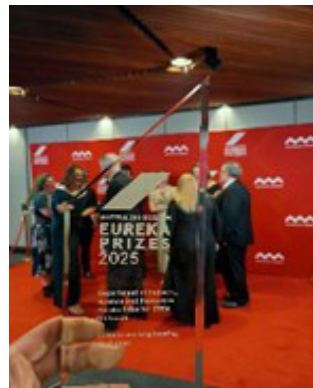
Challenge Eve included a fascinating presentation by Andy McGrath, the Project Manager for Tunnels on the Coffs Harbour bypass. Andy was also a Bridge judge at the Challenge.

Congratulation and thanks to the organising committee, chaired by **Peter Paff** (Sawtell Rotary), with **Mary Bryant\*** (Treasurer), **Patty Delaney\*** (Volunteer Coordinator), **Peter McIntosh\*** (Secretary), **Andrew Pryor\***, **Mark Spencer** (Coffs Harbour Daybreak Rotary), Woolgoolga High's Head of Science **Paul McCormack**, **Graham Boulden** (retired Engineer), **Dennis Houghton\*** (retired school principal), and **Greg Williams**. \*Woolgoolga Rotary Active and Honorary Members.

Volunteer Coordinator Patty Delaney secured a full contingent of 45 volunteers, a testament to the enduring goodwill this event generates year after year.

Notably, last year's winning team from **Coffs Harbour High School**, competing at the University of Newcastle regional final, placed third — a creditable result from the top seven teams across northern NSW. The 2026 National Final marks the 25th anniversary of the Science and Engineering Challenge, and will be held in the Great Hall of Parliament House in Canberra while both houses are sitting.

The Science and Engineering Challenge also received national recognition, winning the prestigious **Eureka Prize for STEM Inclusion**, awarded by the Australian Museum in Sydney. This award recognises initiatives making **science, technology, engineering, and mathematics** more inclusive — a fine honour for a program in which our Club has played such a central role.



## Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)

Our Club proudly sponsored **Chase Saban** to attend the **Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)** program (4–11 October 2025, Yarrahappini Adventure Park) at a cost of \$1,450. Chase subsequently returned to the program in May 2026 in a leadership facilitation role — a wonderful demonstration of the lasting impact of RYLA on young people in our community. After both occasions, Chase spoke about his experiences at our club — inspiring and impressive.

## Youth Exchange Program (YEP)

The 2025–2026 year was a particularly exciting one for our Youth Exchange Program.

**Aliyah Knight**, our 2025 Outbounder, returned to Woolgoolga in January 2026 after a wonderful year in Brazil, regaling members with stories of Brazilian family life, her growing language skills, different school systems, and a deep enthusiasm for future international travel. Aliyah presented to the Club in February 2026, and is now focused on her HSC year.

In January 2026, **Izabella (Bella) van der Merwe** departed for Brazil as our 2026 Outbounder, having received her Rotary blazer at the Changeover Christmas Party in December 2025. Bella has been sending back vivid accounts of her experiences: kayaking, zip-lining, visiting the circus, sharing ANZAC biscuits with her host family, and the breathtaking experience of visiting Foz do Iguaçu — from where she could see Argentina and Paraguay. She is due to undertake an Amazon trip later in the year.

We look forward to welcoming **Juliette Poncelet** from France as our next incoming exchange student who will be hosted by our Club for her second six months from January 2027. Our Club and the **Rotary Club of Gunnedah West** will jointly host Juliette, who will arrive in Australia in July 2026.

### Other support for local youth

Road Safety Education Ltd, designers and content providers of the RYDA program, used by Rotary Clubs to run Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) events, decided to run a **RYDA day** themselves at Wiigulga Multipurpose Centre on 19 Nov. Club member **Christopher Chayko** served as a Group Monitor alongside Rotarians **Marianne Strang** of Dorrigo and **Tony Jorm** of Coffs Harbour.

Our club has previously organised and run 15 RYDA events, putting 1,446 students through this important program.

As usual, the club supported end-of-year presentation ceremonies in five local schools (total of \$1,000).

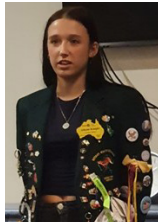
## Combatting domestic violence

### Mobile phones for those at risk of domestic violence

Over 20,000 victims of domestic violence have been supported with a DV Safe Phone Australia-wide. Over 58,000 phones have been donated to DV Safe Phone, and those unsuitable for refurbishment are used for parts and recycled through MobileMuster.

Our DV Safe Phone program reached a significant milestone this year, with the





Aliyah Knight  
to D6510  
São Paulo, Brazil



District 9660  
Rotary Club of Woolgoolga



Izabella (Bella)  
van der Merwe



District 4510  
Brazil



completion and final acceptance of our District Grant project on 21 October 2025. The grant program resulted in:

- 29 new collection boxes for donated phones deployed across 15 geographic locations in District 9660 and beyond;
- 14 Rotary, Rotaract or Satellite Clubs directly benefiting from the project;
- Collection boxes now in place at Belmont, Morisset, Narrabri, Wee Waa, Boggabri, Port Macquarie, Wellington, Kempsey West, Nambucca Valley, Warners Bay, Bourke, Coffs Harbour, and Woolgoolga Library, all in District 9660. Outside of D9660, boxes to Byron Bay (D9640) and Corowa (D9740).
- A \$1,968 donation towards phone refurbishment — approximately 26 additional phones in the hands of people at risk.

The Club maintains three collection points in Woolgoolga: the Post Office, the Lottery Office on Beach Street, and from November, a new box at Woolgoolga Library. During 2025 there was also a collection box at the Seaview Tavern. The box at the Library, temporarily unavailable during major library renovations, was back in place by early June.



A member of the DV Safe Phone Committee, Alison Ratliff, ran a booth at the District Showcase in Coffs Harbour in November 2025, where the display attracted positive interest from other clubs in the program.

## Fundraising and community presence

### Pop-up Clothing Stalls

Another ongoing project was a series of Pop-up Stalls, housing a 100s board or traditional raffle, and in amenable conditions, second-hand “up-market” clothing. These stalls, plus raffle sales in the Mall, significantly boosted the Club’s coffers, despite numerous setbacks due to rainy weather.

Perhaps more importantly, they continue to be very effective in raising public



awareness of our club and its work in the community. Since the demise of our monthly auctions, that PR task has become more crucial.

The raffle prizes were donated by businesses and Club members, and we are very grateful for their generosity. They included Lalu Lalu, XS Surf, Thai on Market Restaurant & Bar, Your Home Styled by Lynzel, That Beach Shop, Woolgoolga's Finest Butchery, Ground Earth, La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant, The Sugar Kitchen, Woolgoolga Body Works, A Taste of Aloha, Mitre 10, Mogul Beer, Cellarbrations Bottle Shop, The Sweet Shop, Aanuka Beach House, and Woolworths.

These Pop-up shops could not have happened without the consistent and devoted efforts of the core team: [Bronwyn Mackenzie](#), [Michelle McIntosh](#), [Peter McIntosh](#), [Kyle McIntosh](#), [Jenny Witcombe](#) and [Rod Mackenzie](#), assisted by other members occasionally. A major task is obtaining donations for raffles, this team is exceptionally effective – well done team!

A second life for high quality used clothing is ecologically and environmentally sound, and so that is a further community benefit from our Pop-up Shops. This continues a club tradition of recycling of used goods, coupled with fundraising, albeit on a much smaller scale than the monthly Auctions that we ran until 2020.

A new feather banner enhanced this fundraising effort and public awareness. Thanks to Peter McIntosh for initiating and organising this.

## Fundraising overview\*

Pop-up Retro Clothing Stalls, including raffles and 1–100 squares (net)	\$3,318
Sales of Yeates book	\$180
Public donations	\$131
District Grant: Mobile phones for those at risk of domestic violence (see 2023–2024 Annual Report)	—
District Grant: Rotary and the Woolgoolga Seniors’ Centre Unite for Good	\$3,500
Interest (term deposit retained interest)	\$723
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,852</b>

\* Note that this Table does not include income from the lease payments made by Home + Yard, tenant of the Rotary Shed. About one-fifth of that (\$2,500) goes to CWA (Country Women’s Association), which owns the land the Rotary shed stands on by Deed of Licence. The remainder ensures the viability of the club through difficult fundraising times, and enables us to maintain and improve the shed itself.

## Donations and volunteer work

The year’s donations totalling \$14,090 are listed at the end of this report. Some have already been mentioned.

The apt theme for the Rotary Year about to start is “*Create Lasting Impact*”. **The Rotary Foundation (TRF)**, the charitable arm of Rotary, has created lasting impact on an astonishing scale across the globe. Since it was founded more than 100 years ago, the Foundation has spent more than US\$4 billion on life-changing, sustainable projects. They include

- Providing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene
  - Tackling disease (especially polio and malaria)
  - Supporting education and countering illiteracy
  - Improving maternal and child health
  - Growing local economies, and fighting poverty and malnutrition
  - Protecting the environment
  - Response to disasters
  - Promoting peace – in sharper focus recently with escalating conflict
- and to find sustainable solutions to these complex problems that leave lasting impact.



Crucial to the effectiveness of TRF is a global network of Rotarians in Clubs – including Woolgoolga Rotarians – who invest their time, money, and expertise into countless projects, both international and local. Our donations to TRF’s

Annual Programs Fund totalling \$910 will help empower Rotarians to realise those solutions.

Nationally, the club supported **Australian Rotary Health**, which includes a major focus on mental health. For each guest speaker during the year, \$50 is donated on the speaker’s behalf.

The **Woolgoolga Seniors Centre** and its users were the major beneficiaries of the second District Grant, totalling \$4,200. The users supported through grant funds included the **Woopi Parkinson’s Support Group** and **Knit with Love**.



Other local donations went to **Woolgoolga Regional Community Gardens**; and to the **Woolgoolga Art Group** for their flagship art competition, the Woolgoolga Art Prize (formerly called the Lillipilli Art Prize) for 2026.

The **Sandy Beach Breakfast Club**, providing a morning meal for students from struggling households, was again supported by volunteer work by **Kyle McIntosh** and **Peter McIntosh**, plus donations of food and equipment. Our small cash donation included \$20 from a member of the public, earmarked for this purpose.

A nice **Mahjong set** was donated to the Woolgoolga Seniors Centre (*photo*).



Club members **Christopher Chayko** and **Bob Breen**, as key members of the Woolgoolga RSL sub-Branch, once again did a fine job organising the ceremony for **2025 Remembrance Day** and Christopher followed up by organising excellent **2026 ANZAC Day** ceremonies. Members carried the club banner in the ANZAC Day march. At the Main Service that followed, **Jenny Storum** laid the Rotary wreath.

The club set up a table at the **Woolgoolga Neighbourhood Centre’s 30th**



**Anniversary.** We handed out flyers and spoke to people about Rotary. Thank you to the members involved.

Pamela Fayle remains the Chair of the **Curryfest Organising Committee**, a hardworking and very successful team of three.

## **Paul Harris Fellow awarded to Mary Bryant**

Mary Bryant's contribution to the community extends far beyond Rotary, and was revealed to her Rotary colleagues during the presentation of the **Paul Harris Fellow** award to **Mary Bryant** on 28 Jul 2025. Past District Governor **David Mayne** conferred the award. The citation detailed her extraordinary contributions to Woolgoolga Tennis Club; Red Cross (represented on the night by **Judith Jackson**); disaster outreach work; and the St Louise Conference of St Vincent de Paul, Woolgoolga (**Robin Harbidge**, *left of Judith in the photo below*).



Here, we will focus on her Rotary contribution. Mary Bryant joined our Club on 19 Mar 2012, and has chalked up nearly 14½ years' service. For virtually the whole time she has been either a Director on the Board, or an Assistant Director. For two years from 2014 to 2016 she was Secretary, then had a year as Community Service Director, and for 8 years she was Youth Director. As well, she has often been the Woopi Whisper Editor; joint editor, or back-up editor, including for the last 4 years, and what a class job she does! Add to that being Treasurer for the Science and Engineering Challenge Project for the past few challenge years.

While she was Secretary, Mary Bryant travelled to the Indonesian islands of West Timor and Flores as part of a wonderful Rotary project to assist farmers and schools in the province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) with small grants or loans. In these areas of extreme poverty, this seed funding allows many worthwhile projects to happen that would be impossible without the funding. Their visit was to assess how effectively donated funds are being spent, and what else may need funding. Mary was impressed to discover that each small grant is used either in the education field where it's especially needed, or for materials for the villagers to use and work with themselves. They have to build the water tanks and wells or build the fences and care for the crops to make them sustainable. They are given the training and resources to help themselves. They then have ownership and responsibility. The team also visited Timor-Leste (East Timor), meeting members of the Dili Rotary Club and learning



something of East Timor.

Mary was Rotarian of the Year for 2015–2016, for exemplifying Service Above Self, particularly for her key role as Secretary, and for her work in remote parts of Indonesia.

To help build our relationship with the area of India from which our local Sikh population originates, in 2019 Mary visited our counterpart Rotary District in northern Punjab with President-elect Pam Stone. They attended their District Conference, where Pam Stone spoke. At Ludhiana they stayed at the home of Past District Governor Kuldip Dhir. Subsequently we contributed towards an important project aimed at improving the access to education and prospects of female high school students, the project focuses on counteracting the high drop-out rate of girls from school upon reaching the age of menstruation. Central to this project is the local manufacture and supply of eco-friendly menstrual pads.

Throughout her time in Rotary, Mary has helped nearly every time help is needed. The Rotary auction of course; helicopter golf ball drops, Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Days, Science and Engineering Challenges, Mullaway School Sensory Garden, Rotarians against Malaria, BowelScan, Soap Aid, school events such as Getting Out There Day, Curryfest, Boomerang Bags, promotional and fundraising stalls ... and much more.

## Two new members

We were delighted to welcome two new members to swell our ranks. [Andrew Pryor](#) was inducted in September 2025, and [Jenny Storum](#) in October 2025.



As already mentioned, both have been enthusiastic participants since then – indeed, even before induction. Andrew already has six years' prior service, from 1993 to 1999 in the [Rotary Club of Yenda](#), in the Riverina near Griffith.

## Links with other Rotary Clubs

Sawtell and Coffs Harbour Daybreak Rotary played important roles in organising and running the Science and Engineering Challenge, as already mentioned. Our link with Coffs City Rotary on the DV Safe Phone project is



another example of ongoing cooperation among local clubs.

**Pamela Fayle** helped judge the Rotary District's **Public Speaking Competition**, won by **Ayisha Titimira**, a student from Wee Waa High School, in a final of exceptionally high standard.

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.

**Bronwyn** and **Rod Mackenzie** participated in several **District Youth Exchange Program (YEP) Committee** Zoom meetings.

Members participated in a **Rotary Barbeque at the Outriggers National Championship** (*photo, front cover*). Thanks to **Peter McIntosh** for organising our participation and to those who turned up to help. The day went well, and our team fed many of the competitors on the Friday.

**David Fayle** remains a member of **The Rotary Foundation Grants Committee** for District 9660.

**Rod and Bronwyn Mackenzie** participated in a Rotary Exchange trip to New Zealand. District 9930 in the centre of the North Island of New Zealand has 46 clubs, from Waipukarau in the south to Huntly in the north, with over 1175 Rotarians. They visited five different clubs in 15 days:

**Waikato Sunrise** Rotary (Hamilton): Waikato Sunrise has a vibrant and youthful membership of men and women. They raise funds by serving in the hospitality tents at local rugby games and other major events in the Waikato, along with the sale of tickets to Circus Quirkus – a human circus performed annually at Founders Theatre in Hamilton.



**Havelock North** Rotary: works closely with the other nine Rotary clubs in the Hawkes Bay – Tairāwhiti region. This cooperation is called the Rotary South Pacific First Light Community Group.

**Lake Taupo** Rotary is an amalgamation of the Rotary Clubs of Taupo, Taupo Moana, and Taupo Expresso and is a vibrant club of around 45 members. They hire out their Rotary House, which is a versatile and flexible event venue for public meetings, community meetings, and theatre productions.



**Papamoa** Rotary: located in the fastest growing suburb of Tauranga, they have a great relationship with the local Surf Life Saving Club and to date have raised funds to present them with a longboat and an all-terrain vehicle and has donated more than \$120,000 to community projects.



**Morrinsville** Rotary: Nestled in the heart of the Waikato dairy producing region, the club was founded in 1945 and currently has over 40 members. In association with the Senior Citizens Club, they have secured a 30-year lease and naming rights for the building, “The Morrinsville Rotary Community Centre.”



**Narrabri** Rotary was involved in **Pamela and David Fayle’s** memorable Outback Tour with the Clarence Valley Orchestra and renowned soprano Mirusia. The Narrabri concert was organised with the help of Narrabri Rotary, and raised around \$8,000, half each to Rotary and CVO. The touring group was treated to a very classy and most delicious treat by the Narrabri Rotarians: gourmet pizzas from their own pizza oven, both before and after the gig! Thank you Narrabri Rotary!



The experience was enriched greatly by **Peter Smith**, whose experience and network of contacts throughout the region was extraordinary. Peter’s notable career was shaped by the **Rotary Group Studies Exchange** he went on when young. Peter says the 1996 GSE was “absolutely a life-

changing experience which opened doors to take a brass band to England and France.”

## Also in 2025–2026

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 8 Dec 2025, at Woopi Gardens, combined with our Christmas Party. The meeting appointed the Board for the incoming year, though latecomers wishing to join are more than welcome.

Further improvements have been made to our Auction shed by the lessee Jason Farr, Home + Yard. The money spent on improvements enhances the value of this asset for our club.



## Vale – Geoffrey Michael Morrow

We record with sadness the passing of Geoff Morrow, who passed away in late October 2025. Geoff was a widely loved member of our community. He was long dedicated to the restoration of the Great War Memorial. He was also a key member of our Heritage Walk team (*photo*) and the manager of our precious historical image collection. His contribution to our community is remembered with deep gratitude.

## ... and from last year's Annual Report



*District Governor's Awards presented at Changeover 2025: recipients (foreground) Peter McIntosh; left to right: Bronwyn Mackenzie, Michelle McIntosh, Kyle McIntosh, and Jenny Witcombe. (Far left) Rotary Community Leader Zone 4 Richie Goddard; (2nd from right) Past District Governor David Mayne; and President Rod Mackenzie*

## Donations 2025-2026

### *Helping build our local community*

Woolgoolga Seniors Centre activities [from District Grant]	\$2,200
Woopi Parkinson's Support Group [from District Grant]	\$2,000
Knit with Love	\$200
Woolgoolga Regional Community Gardens	\$200
Woolgoolga Art Prize, Woolgoolga Art Gallery, 2026	\$200
Pride of Workmanship Awards (\$528 of this paid in previous Rotary year)	\$701
Prizes distributed to community winners of 1—100 squares and raffles	\$600
Sandy Beach Breakfast Club	\$50

### *Opportunities and support for local youth*

Support for Chase Saban's participation in Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)	\$1,450
Blazer for YEP outbounder Bella van der Merwe	\$335
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

### *Counteracting domestic violence*

Donation to DV Safe Phone: refurbishment of donated phones [from District Grant]	\$1,968
Purchase of DV phone collection boxes and backboards [from District Grant]	\$1,671
Postage of collected phones to DV Safe Phone [partly from District Grant]	\$305

### *Supporting Australian and international causes*

Rotary's worldwide work through The Rotary Foundation	\$910
Australian Rotary Health	\$300

**TOTAL** **\$14,090**

### SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE (separate financially)

Science and Engineering Challenge expenditure **\$13,786**

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.

**UNITE  
FOR  
GOOD**

2025-2026 theme

**CREATE  
LASTING  
IMPACT**

2026-2027 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*