

There can be no doubt the birth of the Rotary Club of Rutherglen was due to the enthusiasm and drive of the then DG's Special Representative the late Ron Prime. Ron applied to Rotary the same dedication he applied to everything in life-especially the Collingwood Football Club! He organised the interest meetings, worked hard for likely members and inspired those to whom Rotary was a new venture.

The Charter Dinner at the Memorial Hall was a memorable evening with many visiting Rotarians and their wives (being before partners), during the evening not only were the twenty Charter Members inducted into the Club but also our first new (!) members Lance Sullivan and Kelvin Bates.

The first Board, under Charter President Brian Murtagh, stayed until our first Changeover in 1989. During the first year and a bit the foundations of the Club were put in place, we learnt a lot more about Rotary and we commenced what has been an ongoing commitment to Community Service. During this time a major effort, in association with the Apex and Lions Clubs, was the landscaping of the Community Centre at the High School a big job. Those who attended our first Conference at Geelong will not forget the experience especially the Fancy Dress Dance where we were all garbed under Gael's direction. Also unforgettable - our first fund raising cleaning "a million" old bricks from the old Tuileries when we spent many convivial hours at Campbells.

Some highlights from the years which have followed.

1988/89 saw our first Businessmen, Dinner, the first Community Service Award, a very successful Charity Ball at "Fairfield", "Rutherglen high School won the Debate at Conference and in International Service we sent books to the Rotary Club of Roi Et (Thailand) and provided them with a donation to assist poor students in finishing their education.. We also held an International Dinner with guests from the Royal Thai Embassy and an exhibition of Thai dancing from young Thai ladies living in Albury.

1989/90 also saw a number of firsts. Notable was our first inwards Exchange student Karl Kristenson from Denmark, the year also saw our first Ambrose Golf Day and the first mock job interviews for Rutherglen High School. Other activities such as the Charity Ball, Arts Show and the Businessmen's Dinner continued as did community projects such as the fencing for the Play Group at the Anglican Hall. We also undertook our first joint International Project with the Rotary Club of Rutherglen Scotland - a water supply project in a village in India.

1990/91 The revamped rescheduled Arts Show was a great success. Brooke Whelan our first out student departed for India and we welcomed in Anita Aswath from India. Some more firsts with a RYLA attendee, RYPEN attendees, hosting for a week six overseas students from the English Language Centre at La Trobe University and we hosted the Women's GSE Team from North Carolina-including a splendid dinner outdoors at St Leonards. Our regular activities continued including landscaping at St Mary's new School.

1991/92 Our efforts in the local community - Meals on Wheels, School Bursaries, Debates and Mock Interviews continued. The Businessmen's Dinner was again very successful and our "beautification" activities continued with tree planting on the Howlong Road and a clean up at Lake King. Internationally we again donated to projects in India.

1992/93 Nick Gay was our out student to Canada and we welcomed in Meredith Lilly. This year saw the Club Incorporated, the formation of the Rutherglen Probus Club (thanks to great work by Graham Harrop) and the hosting of the Swedish GSE Team. The Rutherglen High School's Public Speaking program was launched and we, together with the Lions and Apex Clubs, landscaped the Medical Centre. Internationally we supported a village project in Cambodia to build a new bridge to replace a 30 year old structure - this was the first time Rotary had been involved in Cambodia since the Pol Pot takeover in the early 1970s.

1993/94 Again our regular community programs continued and included the Joint Service Clubs Dinner. The Rotary Clock was erected at the Post Office and actually worked showing the correct time !!! The Kiosk adjacent to the Post Office was completed - the user groups being very appreciative and tables and seats were installed in Fig Tree Park. The year also saw the tragic death, in a car accident, of Kevin Downie-an enthusiastic Rotarian and a great bloke.

A highlight of the year was the International Dinner attended by the Ambassador for Cambodia, members of his staff and a very senior lady from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Phnom Penh. Carmel Hill departed for Canada and we welcomed in Juba Chiavone from Brazil. The year saw the last of our Art Shows due to competition from the local Arts Society however on the positive side we ran the first Tour de Muscat.

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1995/96 All our regular community activities continued with the notable exception of the Community Service award which was, unfortunately, not reinstated for several years. Work continued on Fig Tree Park and in International Service we supported the Rotary Club of Phnom Penh (which had been reestablished in May 1995) Milk Powder and Nutritional Supplement Program being implemented by the NGO Servants to Asia's Poor in Phnom Penh Cambodia -

PP Brian presented the funds to the NGO in Phnom Penh. Again tragedy struck with the death of Past President Frank Fitzgerald - a loss not only to his family but also the whole community.

1996/97 Kristine McLeod departed to Canada whilst we welcomed in Naka Uematsu from Japan. The usual regular community activities continued. It is interesting to note that in this year the profit from the Tour de Muscat was \$5,140 and from the Hole in One \$2,000, both splendid efforts.

1997/98 A highlight was the Para Olympians Fundraising Dinner at Cofield's Winery with Sue Lovette as the as Guest Speaker. While neither the Businessmen's Dinner nor the Service Awards made the activities conducted an attendee was sent for the first time to the Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre Summer School. The debates, public speaking and mock job interviews were among the continuing activities and we were awarded a Presidential Citation.

1998/99 This year we hosted the Italian GSE Team including, again, an excellent dinner-it could be said the Italian team was somewhat different to the other Teams we had hosted. We bid farewell to Aaron Hawking to Finland and, would you believe, carried out repairs to the Clock - battery back up & the Rotary Wheel. A notable event was the 60th Birthday of our sponsor the Rotary Club of Corowa.

1999/00 We welcomed in Julie Lete from Belgium and, Internationally, again undertook a joint Project with the Rotary Club of Rutherglen Scotland by a donation for library books to the Papa Community School in Papua New Guinea. Community activities continued except, unfortunately, there was no Businessman's Dinner. We all suffered a heartfelt loss with the death of Ron Prime. not only was Ron an enthusiastic and dedicated Rotarian with a magnificent attendance record but also he was the conscience of our Club determined to see we stayed on the right path and that all our actions were in accord with the Spirit of Rotary International.

2000/01 Jacqui Hollier departed for France and for the first time we were successful in having a person accepted for an outgoing GSE Team-to the USA. We hosted a successful concert by the Victorian Concert Orchestra and some members attended a working bee at the Moira Kelly Farm. Our very well attended International Dinner had the Ambassador for Vietnam as the Guest Speaker. The Community Service Award was finally reinstated!

2001/02 We welcomed Opale Oumghar from France-and subsequently enjoyed the visit by her Mother and young sister. A number of joint meetings were held with Corowa at Campbell's Winery and our Guest Speaker at the International Dinner, again very well attended, was the Hugh Commissioner for Singapore who was a splendid speaker. Taking over the responsibility for the Country Fair was a major move by the Club. Again tragedy struck with the untimely death of Rotarian Bruce Gordon - a good Rotarian and one of Nature's Gentlemen.

2002/03 The Mental Health Forum was a huge success, largely due to the efforts of Glenda Mackay and her team of supporters. Laurie Thatcher and his team organised a very enjoyable Tour de Muscat. David Carter did a wonderful job organising the Business Dinner at the end of October, while Ray Terrill organised the Triathlon at very short notice making it a very successful event. The Club hosted a visit from a GSE team from Sweden. Unfortunately Past President Graham Harrop died.

2003/2004 The International Rotary theme of "Lending a hand" has been demonstrated most convincingly in both the financial and active service contributions during the year. Five new members were welcomed. Our International Exchange Student from Scotland, Sean Keegan was a valuable "guest member". Major contributions were made to the Glenview Building Appeal. The New Zealand High Commissioner gave an insightful presentation as Guest Speaker at our International Dinner.

2005/2006 The year started with the resignations of past president Fred Renneberg, Ian Gordon, Narelle Bowden-Ford, Frank Ford and Susan Benedyka. Following this, membership remained static. The meeting venue changed from Parker Pies to Forks and Corks and subsequently Cafe @. Apart from the usual fund raising activities, the Club was involved in: Youth Exchange with Gesa Wilkins from Germany; The Business Persons dinner with Leigh Jasper, Managing Director of Aconex; Tree planting along the Rutherglen-Wahgunyah Road; Assistance to Arts Rutherglen Inc. in its inaugural production; A most enjoyable Christmas function at Cafe @ with carols from Ken Jasper and Glenda McKay; Agreement was reached with Indigo Shire/Apex to extend the Apex shed for storage purposes for the Club.

2006/2007 We celebrated our 20th Anniversary and Club meeting 1000. Outgoing student Caleb Edelsten departed for Germany. PP Des Whelan took leave to work in Rwanda, giving us an opportunity to send much needed educational supplies for Des to distribute. The club has a new storage shed, promotional banners, Tshirts and caps. Our regular activities continued, including – Business dinner, Vocational awards, Tour de Rutherglen, Triathlon, Country Fair, school debating, public speaking and bursaries – to mention a few. We welcomed three new members so our membership is now 35.

2007/2008

