

HISTORY Of The ROTARY CLUB Of LISMORE WEST Inc.

The Rotary Club of Lismore West was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Lismore (Chartered 31st December, 1931; sponsored by the Rotary Club of Sydney) in 1961, to be the second Rotary Club in the City of Lismore, N.S.W.

On Wednesday, 8th February, 1961, the Inaugural Meeting of the Rotary Club of Lismore West was held at the home in Lismore of PDG Art Brand (Rotary Club of Lismore). As well as PDG Art, those in attendance were the District-Governor's Representative, Bill Riley (Rotary Club of Lismore) and eleven selected Lismore businesses representatives. PDG Art Brand explained "What Rotary is, what Rotary does and the obligations of a Rotarian". It was then formally resolved that an application be submitted to Rotary International to admit to membership, the Rotary Club of Lismore West. The proposed area to be ceded by the Rotary Club of Lismore was that portion of their territory "*bounded on the west by an imaginary line in the centre of Wilson's Creek to Wilson's Creek bridge, across Wilson's Creek bridge to junction of Woodlark and Molesworth Streets, south along centre line of Molesworth Street to junction of Magellan Street with Molesworth Street, east along centre line of Magellan Street to junction with Dibbs Street, south along centre line of Dibbs Street to junction with Wyrallah Street (now road), along Wyrallah Street through Wyrallah*".

On Thursday, 16th February, 1961 a further meeting was held, attended by PDG Art Brand, Bill Riley and the following twelve prospective members: Mick Bartlett; Gordon Blair; Les East; Jim Funnell; Jack Fredericks; Ron Hensley; Alf Hudson; Eddie Newton; George Pope; Hugh Reading; Jack Riley; Jack Selwood.

At the next Meeting on Thursday, 23rd February, 1961 the following additional members also attended: Alf Jacobsen; Frank Lancaster; Ken Ramsay; Ron Somerville, Athol Spence; Don Tucker, Ken Wakely and Norm Webb.

The Club continued to meet as the Provisional Rotary Club of Lismore West and, on 12th June, 1961 was accepted into membership of Rotary International and set its Charter Night for Friday, 8th September, 1961.

A large number of Rotarians from Rotary District 260 and local dignitaries, gathered in the Masonic Temple, Magellan Street, Lismore on Friday night, 8th September, 1961 for the Charter Night. Rotary District 260 Governor, Frank Main (from Brisbane), presented the Club's Charter to Charter President Jack Selwood in the presence of President John Galbraith of the sponsor Rotary Club of Lismore. The following gifts were presented to the Club on Charter night: Lismore Club – gavel; Kyogle Club – President jewel; Toowoomba Club – Visitor's Book; Casino & Mullumbimby – flags. A Sergeant's baton was made and presented by Hugh Reading and a clock by Ken Ramsay, both Charter members. Other Rotary District Clubs donated cheques. The Club's Lectern has a plaque indicating it is a Charter Night gift but the plaque does not say from whom.

The Charter Board consisted of: President – Jack Selwood; Secretary – Mick Bartlett; Treasurer – Les East; Directors – Athol Spence, Gordon Blair, Ron Hensley, Alf Hudson. Jack Riley was the Charter Bulletin Editor, naming it "Westward Ho", because of the territory allocated to the Club by the sponsor Rotary Club of Lismore.

Because Club members had no previous Rotary experience or knowledge, they agreed that during their first year of operation, they should "hasten slowly" and use the time to have fellowship, learn and build a solid foundation for the Club to be effective and successful in achieving the ideals of Rotary.

The Club set Thursday as its Meeting night. It first met at the UPA Rooms in Woodlark Street, followed in succession by the Rowing Club Hall; Apollo Hall Keen Street, the Lismore Motel in Dawson Street, the Canberra Hotel in Molesworth Street; the Lismore City Hall and then to the Lismore Heights Bowling Club in High Street on 10 October 1974, where it has remained to the present day. Norma Wooldridge, PHF

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catered for our Rotary Meeting from the time the Club moved to Lismore Heights Bowling Club in 1974 until June 2006, when ill health caused Norma's retirement from catering.

Attendance became an early feature of the Rotary Club of Lismore West with 100% Attendance Meeting after Meeting. In its first 10 years, the Rotary Club of Lismore West won the Rotary District Attendance Trophy nine times. The Club has won the District Attendance Trophy on a number of occasions since, including in 2002 and each year from 2004 to 2010. Charter member, PP Ken Ramsay, PHF had a 100% Attendance record for 42 years until he became ill in 2003, passing away on 12 November 2005.

Over the past 50 years the Rotary Club of Lismore West has a proud record of outstanding service in all five Avenues of Service (was 4 until 1992 - 1993 when Rotary District 9640 created Youth Service). Some major Community Service construction projects include: brick gateway wings at Lism,ore Airport; playground equipment, North Coast Childrens' Home; playground equipment, sheds and pathways at the Lismore Sheltered Workshop; playground equipment Wyrallah Park, Wyrallah; picnic tables & seats, Uralba Street Park, Lismore; picnic tables and seats, Spinaze Park, Tullera; public toilet block, Heritage Park, Lismore; picnic tables & seats and playground equipment, Riverview Park, Lismore; picnic tables & seats & shelter at Lismore Lakeside Pool; kitchen cupboards, Lismore Senior Citizens' Club and Lismore Police Youth Club; covered walkway, Lismore Base Hospital; playground equipment & bicycle Track, Wilson Park School for the Disabled; gazebo, Lismore St. Vincent's Hospital Rehabilitation Unit (demolished in 2007 and re-erected at the Wilson Park Public School); picnic shelter at House With No Steps, Alstonville; koala cages East Lismore; various beautification & tree planting projects, including a koala corridor at Tucki Tucki;

The Club developed professionally, health videos on Breast, Prostate, Bowel and Skin Cancer and marketed them throughout the whole of Australia from 1990 to 2002.

The Club has from its inception strongly supported Rotary's Youth Programs which, up to 1992, came under the International Avenue of Service. However, in 1992 - 1993, the Club, like most other Rotary Clubs in Australia, created Service to Youth as an additional 5th Avenue of Service, with a Youth Service Director being appointed each year since. The Club has supported Rotary's Youth Exchange Program (Y.E.P.) sponsoring/hosting 15 students. 23 students were sponsored/hosted for the now defunct Australia-New Zealand Exchange. Other Rotary Youth Programs always strongly supported by our Club are: Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA); National Youth Science Forum (NYSF), Canberra & now Pert as well; Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA); Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment RYPEN); Rotary Youth Transition Seminar (RYTS); Honeywell Engineering Summer School (HEES); and Seimens Science Experience. The Club has also actively supported the Group Study Exchange Program by sponsoring Team members, supplying Team Leaders and hosting Inbound GSE Teams. The Club has supported the Rotaract (18 - 30 years) Club of Lismore and in 1967 - 68, sponsored the formation of the Interact (14 - 18 years) Club of Lismore which, sadly, folded in the late 1980's.

Over the past 50 years, the Rotary Club of Lismore West has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in financially supporting a wide variety of charities, disadvantaged groups and humanitarian programs, throughout our local community, nationally and internationally, including The Rotary Foundation.

In 1995 the Club built a "Wee Barbie" Catering Unit (Van) which over the past 16 years has been used to raise tens of thousands of dollars for our Rotary Programs and, at times, providing free catering for a community organisation or function.

Our Club is also proud to have provided PP Jim Dowling, PHF, as the 1991 - 1992 Governor of Rotary District 9640.

Congratulations Rotary Club of Lismore West Inc. on your 50th Birthday !

PP Norm Robinson
Club Historian
June 2011

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