

Rotary Club of Murrumbidgee Canberra Inc.

President report for 2024-25

By Ross Power, President

We celebrate another highly successful year for the Rotary Club of Murrumbidgee Canberra. The Club is now three years old being built on the fountains of over 111 years of service delivered by the former Canberra East and Woden Rotary Clubs.

We are proud of our achievements for 2024-25. Our efforts have raised funds to enable us to support charities locally and internationally to the amount of \$98,423.64.

Included in our donations this year we have support Rotary programmes and community initiatives. These have encompassed the Rotary Foundation, support for one Rotary Health scholarship for an indigenous student, Shelter Box, ROMAC (Rotary Oceanic Medical Aid for Children), NSW Flood Relief-Northern Rivers, Food Bank, Oz Harvest, Canberra City Care and Teacher in a Box.

We have given to Professor David Croaker and his team for their work in the Solomon Islands to perform paediatric surgery.

We have supported our member John Jedryk in his work for Ukraine and the de-mining of its landmines with the provision of metal detectors as well as medical equipment to help with the damage caused by the mines.

For our local support we have given to funding to the Early Morning Centre (which provides support for Canberra's homeless) and to My Home in Canberra which, in conjunction with the ACT Government, will provide housing for people with intellectual disabilities and the homeless in Curtin.

We also provided \$600 towards books for students going into Year 12 at Canberra College and we have increased our funding for the Bob Harvey bursary, an initiative in memory of a long term member of the former Woden Club.

Our major projects have all been very successful this year. We have completed two Antique and Collectable Fairs in August and March at the Albert Hall under the excellent management of Neal Fogarty and George McLean. We again participated in Floriade for our 22nd year with Gnome Painting under the management of Debbie Whitfield having increased our presence to five weekends and two full weeks of school holidays. Greg Hooper managed the volunteer rosters and for that we thank him for his many hours of work. In April the Five Peak Challenge was managed by John Widdup and Jeff Ibbotson. It proved very successful with the number of women participating increasing each year. There were 253 participants this year. I also thank Shukry Sahhar for his work in organising the various parking services for several major events.

We acknowledge the crucial part played by family members, members of other Rotary and Rotaract clubs and others who gave freely of their time and expertise to our Club.

As well as our major events, there are several smaller activities which helped contribute to our Club. The annual the Cherry Fundraising event was a success organised by Neal Fogarty with help from Viola Kalokerinos and Peter Barclay. We are proud of the contribution made by Jeff Ibbotson with the Return-It Recycling initiative with the funds going to support our Sailability sailing boat 'George'. We also participated in a number of other community events during the year.

For three meetings per month we had outstanding guest speakers organised by George McLean. We thank George for the work he did in finding such interesting speakers. He was assisted by others in the Club and we thank everyone for their support.

Greg Hooper introduced us to a different country at each weekly meeting with a toast to that country celebrating its national day.

I thank Viola for her constant work with those attending each week. It has been a different year with dinner beforehand and then a meeting in a separate room.

For the fourth meeting of each month we had a site visit, organised by George McLean, followed by dinner at a local venue. These included the National Library, The Museum of Democracy, The Royal Australian Mint, The Australian National Museum, the Glass Works and William Cole Funerals. We also attended the Bent Spoke Brewing Co in Braddon organised by Peter Barclay that was a fun night.

I thank John Widdup for his constant updating of every member with The Raven newsletter each week. Our Treasurer this year was Ajit Banerjee who has given freely of his time to ensure our Club was on time for each quarters GST and other paperwork.

I thank the Board members for their support and to all the Club members who have participated in the life of the Club. It had been a privilege to serve as your President and I look forward to working with John Widdup as your President in 2025-26 with the Rotary International theme of “Unite For Good”.