

## District 9685 2022 -2023 Annual report

- Firstly, I want to thank the District Nominating Committee for giving me this wonderful opportunity to lead our district in 2022-23. It was for me, both daunting and exciting and definitely the biggest role I've ever had. Unfortunately, the pandemic prevented me, like my predecessor Lindsay May, from attending the International Assembly. However, our 2-year training program, albeit by zoom, was excellent and by the time I stepped into those shoes I felt somewhat more confident. Support from PDGs and the entire membership was always available and positive and I thank you all for that.

State of the district as at 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

- Membership as at 30 June 2023 - 1,581 (-89 on 1st July 2022) (gained 58 new members)  
As at 21/11/23 it is 1592.

65 clubs – 1 termination - Northrocks.

1 merger - Brookvale and DeeWhy Warringah merged and renamed as Warringah.

One satellite club – Ku-ring-gai Rotary Community Network Satellite Club

33.42% female members - RI President Jennifer Jones's goal. (as at 21/11/23)

- Goals set in Rotary Club Central – 17 clubs set 0 goals, 16 set 1-5 goals.

Only 14 clubs received a citation so there is room for improvement there.

- The Rotary Foundation – our district remains well above average in the zone in giving to the Foundation in both the Annual Fund and Polio Plus.

We were down slightly by 5.8% in Annual Fund contribution compared to 2021-22.

We were up by 16.4% in giving to Polio Plus.

We are well above average in the zone with personal contributions (EREY) but slightly down (by 1%) on 2021-22.

96.9% of clubs gave to TRF so a big congratulations to everyone.

- 144K received for district grants – 35 grants approved out of 43;
- We had 9 Global Grants approved in 2022-23, and submitted an additional 10 applications to the Foundation for approval. These have rolled into DG Christine Owen's year, using some of the DDF that is available this year.
- We are the most active international sponsor of Global Grants in Zone 8 again this year - tied for 11th place in the world in terms of approved grants at the time of writing, and tied for 5th place in the world if submitted grants are included.
- The total amount of funds committed to these grants is over \$US 1.38 million.
- RAWCS – we had 78 RAWCS projects and are again the leading district in our zone.
- PDG Peter Ward has been selected to be our new Council on Legislation Representative as PDG Ian Scott AM completes his 3-year term.
- I visited all of our clubs individually and have been impressed with the work carried out regardless of size. Congratulations and thanks to you all for making me feel so welcomed. My observation is that we have too many small clubs in close proximity. Considering that each club is required to maintain the same amount of governance, regardless of size, perhaps it would make sense to join together.
- Nothing could be achieved without an excellent District Team. My heartfelt thanks go to the Assistant Governors for working so hard to bring clubs together to build stronger relationships so that we can become more effective in our local communities. Once again thank you Julie Thorp for coordinating the AGs reports.

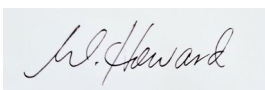
- To the Service Chairs and their committees –thank you for your tireless efforts to make our District so effective. I need to especially acknowledge the efforts of Marilyn Kenney, Communications Chair who published yet again two newsletters per month as well as working with Ian Cameron on keeping our website updated and FaceBook page active.

PDG Kalma McClellan, L&D Chair - All of our Learning and Development courses were well-attended and efficiently run. I'll also mention here RLI ably run by then DGE Christine Owen and supported by an amazing team of facilitators. Nothing but positive feedback was, and continues to be received by participants.

David Dean, TRF Chair along with Haran Ramachandran – the results that I've already mentioned speak for themselves.

Thank you to COTA (The Committee of the Association) in particular our District Secretary Liz McDougall and Finance Chair Stephen Thorp who have both done an excellent job, and to the board members who have been very supportive providing guidance and excellent governance. I need to acknowledge Paul Rogers for his work on Conflict Resolution. We had 3 or 4 minor issues and Paul was able to resolve them satisfactorily in a speedy and efficient manner. Paul has also been assisting two other districts with issues.
- Another team that worked above and beyond was the Youth Service Team. These programs needed to be resurrected after the Covid Pandemic so it was exciting to experience first-hand RYE, MUNA, RYLA, RYPEN and the Science & Engineering Challenge – all requiring serious effort to organise and run. These programs provide excellent opportunities for our young people and they are life-changing experiences. I'd like to thank the Youth Service Team and their committees for the many hours they committed to bring these programs together. It is especially good to see Youth Exchange up and running and I'd like to thank the committee for overseeing the Covid years and now the normal years, as well as the club members who are hosting these students and welcoming them into their homes. I'd also like to thank Tony Durbin for agreeing to chair the RYLA Committee after the sudden passing of Liz North, a dedicated and committed RYLA Chair. Thank you Tony, we are thankful for your taking on of this role.
- The highlight of the year for me was definitely the District Conference held in Cowra. It was a gamble to move so far from our district but the 280 odd members who attended provided glowing reports. I'd like to thank my club, Blackheath for doing a superb job in a venue that needed absolutely everything brought in. The conference committee worked tirelessly to counter every obstacle, and there were many, but the working relationship with RC of Cowra made the otherwise impossible, possible.
- Melbourne Convention – approx. 130 members attended the Melbourne Convention and by all accounts those who attended enjoyed the experience. I expected more to attend given that it was in Australia. Is it time for us to re-evaluate how we manage conferences and conventions?
- Regionalisation – apart from one district, we voted overwhelmingly as a zone to trial a regionalisation pilot to attempt to stem the declining membership in our region and to make Rotary a better fit for us. We are now into the first year of that pilot and I'd like to acknowledge the people in our district, and the zone, who have committed many, many hours to get this up and running. Thank you Kalma for your constant updates and management of our District in this space. I urge you all to remain positive and open-minded as we enter the trial and keep in mind that we are building this from the ground up. It is a pilot and it won't be perfect and negativity serves no purpose.

- My aim for the year was to encourage clubs to focus on the care and comfort of our members. Motivated members stay in our clubs and act as ambassadors when they have good things to say about their club experience. There is nothing more damaging to the Rotary brand than people spreading negative comments about their local club.  
I encouraged clubs to survey their members, engage everyone, continually educate members about our organisation and to support Rotary programs.
- Those clubs who did do surveys were able to identify areas of improvement, act on them and increase engagement and member satisfaction. They also increased their membership. It is crucial that we check in with our members on a regular basis in order to provide a satisfying and meaningful club experience, provide opportunities for more members to lead, provide every member with a meaningful role and continually tell stories to inspire and motivate our members. It is very easy to become inwardly focused and forget that we belong to the most effective humanitarian organisation in the world where people of action bring about change and improve the lives of millions of people every day. I encourage you all to attend our conferences and the conventions. These events serve to refresh and refocus our efforts and help us understand why we are members of this awesome organisation. Thank you to all of the members who did attend one or other, or both events. You will all agree that the experience was worth the effort.
- In her closing remarks at the Melbourne Convention, then RI president Jennifer Jones made the connection between Imagine and Hope – ‘We don’t imagine yesterday and we also don’t look for hope in past actions. Hope and Imagine are words for tomorrow – words that propel us forward.  
And in the words of RI President Gordon McNally, ‘to create hope, we must continue doing our important work, and do it better than ever before. We must refocus our efforts to build peace across the globe. And we must help each other to find peace within – and share that ethic of care to the people we serve. The words imagine and hope build upon each other and offer a path forward, a path of continuity.
- Thank you for your support – it’s been an amazing journey.



Mina Howard  
District Governor 2022-23