

## **Welcome & Opening address SEC 23/10/2010**

**Mayor Paul Green & Michelle**

**Aboriginal Elder Ruth Sims**

**Rotary International President's Personal Representative and Zone 8 RI  
Director Stuart Heal & Adrienne**

**Past District Governors and Partners**

**District Governor Elect Rob Woolley and Beth**

**District Governor Nominee Phil Armstrong**

**My Fellow Rotarians and Friends of Rotary**

**Welcome to Rotary International District 9710 Conference 2010. By now you will have had a familiarised yourself with your programs and are aware of the wonderful Rotary experience that awaits you this weekend.**

**Some time ago, PDG Governor Noel Trevaskis came across the idea that it may be good to have the Conference closer to the beginning of the Rotary year rather than towards the end, as at the beginning of the year we have the opportunity of sharing ideas and projects as well as showcase some of the amazing achievements by Clubs and hopefully to charge your Rotary batteries to carry your enthusiasm for DOING GOOD IN THE WORLD all the way through to the beginning of the next Rotary year and beyond.**

**To date I have visited 45 out of 48 Clubs in our District as well as one of our Rotaract Clubs and I have had the opportunity of meeting with the Boards of many of the Clubs which has allowed me to get a much better insight into how Clubs serve their Community. I will shortly be completing the rest of the Official visits to the Clubs and hope to visit many of them again during this year as Governor. My congratulations to the Presidents and Boards of the Clubs for their leadership of their Clubs.**

**Time has moved on so quickly and we are 4 months into the Rotary year and there have been many highlights to my year already. Attending a number of Club Changeovers as well as marking significant milestones, meeting the Youth Exchange Students at their first orientation in Tuross, opening the first RYPEN camp for this Rotary year just last month, attending the opening of**

the amazing Careers Market in Canberra largely organised by the Rotary Club of Canberra City, attending the finals of the Model United Nations and witnessing the negotiation skills of the young people in a realistic setting in the Old Parliament House, and of course most recently welcoming the German GSE team from D1870 to Canberra. It would be remiss of me not to mention that this District recently hosted the Australian Rotary Conference in August which was attended by more than 500 Rotarians from around the 22 Districts in Australia who had the opportunity of meeting our Rotary International President Ray Klingensmith, and his aide as they attended after a gruelling travel schedule. The purpose of the Conference was to “Strengthen Rotary in Australia”, and that effort can not end with the end of the Conference. It is imperative that we all continue our efforts in strengthening Rotary in Australia.

No doubt you have heard that all Service organisations are inflicted with the same issue of declining memberships, and unfortunately our District is not immune to this phenomenon, so far this year we have had a decline in Membership in the first quarter of some 26 Rotarians, 13 of which are due to the Rotary Club of Eden surrendering its Charter as at June 30, 2010, and it was my dubious privilege to receive this Charter at a function to celebrate 49 years of Rotary in Eden in July of this year, a wonderful celebration of Rotary attended by more than 100 people. It was indeed a pity that the Club could not see a way to carry on, surprising especially after they, with the help of the surrounding Clubs, hosted what I would consider a very successful combined PETS and Assembly weekend earlier this year.

I would like to highlight some of the goals that the District Leadership Team has set this year, and we believe them to be very achievable and realistic goals.

**FOUNDATION:**

- Donations to the Annual Fund of \$120K
- Funds to the End Polio Now Campaign to match the \$US355M from the Bill & Belinda Gates Foundation of \$49K
- EREY – We have not set an amount – just something every year

- Increase the PHS to at least 15 Members

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

- Every Club to endeavour to reduce its average age by recruiting a younger demographic, but not lose the experience of longer serving Rotarians
- Every Club to have a positive Membership growth of just 2 Rotarians
- Every Club to conduct a Membership survey and engage in a recruitment strategy, there are many available

#### **YOUTH:**

- Each Club to nominate at least 1 participant to any of two YOUTH projects – RYLA, RYPEN, NYSF, YOUTH EXCHANGE
- Charter two new Interact Clubs
- Charter one new Rotaract Club

#### **CLUB EXTENSION:**

- Charter at least one new Rotary Club

#### **LEADERSHIP**

- Every Club to review the new Club Leadership strategy
- Support the PRLS program
- At least one third of all Clubs to participate in a Club Visioning exercise

On Page 21 of the current District Directory we list of all the criteria which will make a Club eligible for a District Goal Award.

There are many ways of supporting our Rotary Foundation, often referred to as the Engine room of Rotary, and this Sunday is World Polio day as determined by the UN and Rotarians around the world will celebrate with the lighting of iconic buildings with the famous END POLIO NOW logo that we have seen in the past on the Sydney Opera House. But it is also a wonderful opportunity of donating directly to the Foundation on line, using the Member access portal, and have your RI recognition doubled because of the 2 for 1 opportunity – donating \$US500 will be credited to you at \$US1000 and you will be rewarded with Paul Harris recognition and RI maintains that they have determined that their servers can cope with the expected surge in on line transactions, and whilst it will end on Sunday 24 I suppose you will still

be able to do it on Monday Australian time because of the time difference, but just to be safe when you get home hop on line and donate – 2 for 1.

I am sure that PDG Phil Mewett will speak in more detail about the Foundation during his presentation this afternoon, and update you about the flagship program of Rotary, the total eradication of Polio, a campaign that Rotary started back in 1985.

17 of 22 Districts in Australia have signed on with a PR proposal put together by PDG Dick Garner, he is the National Public Relations Coordinator, and whilst it will involve printed material, the exciting part is that we will be moving into the 21st Century with the use of electronic media through avenues such as Facebook and others – it may not result in immediate Membership gains, but it should certainly serve to make the public far better aware of the works of Rotary and Rotarians in Australia. We are anxiously looking forward to word from Rotary International later this month advising that we will be given support in the way of a PR grant from RI to assist in funding this undertaking and our District will also be undertaking a local TV advertising campaign with WIN TV.

We have the rest of the year ahead of us to continue in our efforts of “BUILDING COMMUNITIES AND BRIDGING CONTINENTS” as we face the “NEW DECADE and NEW HORIZONS” and also continue the good works of Rotary, to grow our Membership, and we are SO very, very close to the total eradication of Polio and by the way ask yourself “WHY DID YOU JOIN ROTARY”, give your friends, family and colleagues the same opportunity TO DO GOOD IN THE WORLD and ASK, ASK, ASK.

My fellow Rotarians we have a full program of information and entertainment in store for you and you obviously now realise that my boast of the most comfortable District venue was not an idle one – welcome to the District 9710 Rotary Conference and to the beautiful Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre – Enjoy your Rotary – Enjoy the Conference and once again WELCOME. Thank you