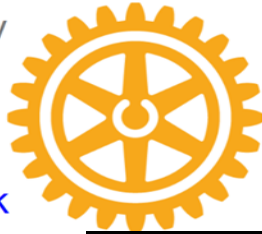


Serving our community

**Rotary**

Club of Diamond Creek



**UNITE  
FOR  
GOOD**

# The Creek

**Volume 7 Issue 29**

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**Editor: Kerry Jones**

Note: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Club or its members.

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## From the President...

Last Saturday, the Nillumbik Chinese Seniors Association (NCSA) held their Celebration of the Chinese New Year and Harmony Day event at the Eltham Community & Reception Centre.

What an event; packed with over 150 attendees (while some on the waiting list missed out), the event was funded through a Nillumbik Shire Council grant.

Harmony week celebrates Australian multiculturalism, focusing on inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

It promotes the message 'Everyone Belongs', encouraging community participation and recognising the cultural diversity that enriches our nation.

For the record, 2026 is the Year of the Fire Horse, a rare, high-energy, and dynamic combination that occurs only once every 60 years.

Interestingly, a check of the latest Australian census lists Nillumbik & Diamond Creek's ancestry as:

- English 40%
- Australian 38%
- Irish 13% and
- Scottish 12%, with no other ancestry reaching 10%.

Equally, if not more so, interesting is that the predominant ancestry groups don't have much of a public profile within our area; just look at the culinary offerings in Diamond Creek.

Clearly, there is a preponderance of Asian restaurants, followed by Italian, with only a couple of Anglo-Saxon options.

The event's stand-out impression for Carol and me was the happiness, the energy and the evident delight among the attendees of being Australian citizens who have been invited to share their background culture and history.

## The President continued...

Following welcoming addresses by Kate Thwaites (Federal Member for Jaga Jaga), Vicki Ward (State Member for Eltham), Naomi Joiner (Mayor of Nillumbik Shire) and the NCSA President and Vice-President, the festivities commenced.

A wonderful mixture of traditional Chinese dances, covering many aspects of Chinese culture, combined with other exciting artistic contributions, was followed by lunch.

At this point, there were plenty of opportunities for me, as Rotary Club of Diamond Creek President, to 'work the room', which I did.

The NCSA had already publicly acknowledged the support our Club provides to them (we auspice their Association by allowing them to utilise our ABN) and, following lunch, I was able to interact with many Association members who wanted to personally thank our Club for its invaluable support.

The concept of multiculturalism is one we, as Rotarians should and must embrace.

We already have a 'foot in the door', through being invited to attend events such as last Saturdays and, earlier, the SalamFest.

It's now up to us to be as welcoming to those whose are reaching out to us; we need to support them and invite them to participate in our events.

That way, we build a stronger Rotary Club and, more importantly, a stronger Australia.

Warwick Leeson OAM

*President Warwick at  
Harmony Day*

## Leading Us...

**Rotary International President:** Francesco Arezzo, Rotary Club of Ragusa, Italy.

**District Governor—District 9790:** Emma Davis, Rotary Club of Moreland

**Community Leader:** Linda Gidlund, Rotary Club of Diamond Creek

### ROTARY CLUB OF DIAMOND CREEK:

**President:** PP Warwick Leeson

**Vice President:** PP Kerry Jones

**Secretary:** PP Kerry Jones

**Treasurer:** PP Stephany Hutt

**Membership Director:** PP Linda Gidlund

**Service Projects Director:** PP Roger Knight

**Foundation Director:** PP Greg Paull

**Public Relations Director:** Linda Stewart

**Community Service Chairperson:** PP Alicia Hall

**Youth Services Chairperson:** Vacant

**International Service Chairperson:** PP Steve Crosling

**Sustainability Chairperson:** Carol Leeson



## From the Editor...

***'The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.'***  
- Nelson Mandela

One of the most important things Rotary does is support and encourage young people to reach their potential. Many of you are familiar with the RYLA – the Rotary Youth Leadership Award. However, occurring much sooner is RYPEN – the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment.

RYPEN is a weekend leadership event for young people aged 15–17 who could benefit from a boost in confidence and the opportunity to develop teamwork and leadership skills. Through a range of activities and challenges, participants build friendships, learn more about themselves and gain confidence in their abilities.

This year's camp will be held 24–26 April at Camp Getaway, Axedale, and Rotary clubs sponsor the young people who attend.

We are currently looking for suitable candidates. Often the best participants are not necessarily school leaders or high achievers, but young people who would benefit most from the experience and encouragement.

If you know a young person who might gain from attending RYPEN — perhaps a neighbour, family friend or someone connected to a local school or sporting club — please let us know soon, as applications close on 1 April.

Sponsoring a young person to attend RYPEN can make a real difference in their life, and it's a wonderful way for our club to invest in the future of our community.

Kerry Jones

## This Week's Meeting

This week, our Guest Speaker will be our own Sally West, who will be speaking about her amazing experience attending RYLA ELEVATE.

The meeting will be held at the Diamond Creek Bowling Club at 6.30pm for 7.00pm.



## Forthcoming Events...

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 24 March      | Board Meeting                                     |
| 21 & 22 March | District Conference                               |
| 31 March      | Social Nigh - Swiper's Gully                      |
| 7 April       | Adeel Khan - Multiculturalism in Nillumbik        |
| 14 April      | Town Fair Meeting                                 |
| 21 April      | Simon Maugher from Practice Edge on Social Media. |

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

Join with us on congratulating President Warwick on his anniversary of joining Rotary 14 years ago.



# RYLA ELEVATE

This week, our Guest Speaker is our own Sally West. Sally will be presenting on her recent experience in participating in RYLA Elevate.

So, what is RYLA Elevate?

Seven years ago, Rotary leaders across Australia recognised a gap in the leadership pathway for young people who had completed their District RYLA programs and were left wondering what the next step might be. In response, RYLA Oceania ELEVATE was created to provide further leadership development for emerging and established leaders aged 20–45.

Now in its fourth program with more than 100 alumni, ELEVATE has grown into a significant leadership experience. This year the program expanded by 50 per cent, bringing together 36 participants from Australia and New Zealand, including RYLA alumni, Rotaractors, Rotarians and community leaders.

Unlike traditional RYLA programs that focus on team-based experiential leadership, ELEVATE centres on self-leadership. Over four days, participants explore strengths, values, wellbeing, habits and purpose, leaving with a personalised leadership plan they can apply in their clubs, workplaces and communities.



**I have always believed that in order to be a successful leader at work, or in your community, you first need to be able to lead yourself with intention, passion and commitment. ELEVATE did not just remind me of this belief; it strengthened it in the best possible way. I left feeling more confident in who I am, what I value and what direction I want to take next. It was motivating, energising and deeply impactful, and I am truly grateful to have been a part of it.**

**Sally West, Rotary Club of Diamond Creek**



Just as important as the content is the environment ELEVATE creates. The program gives busy community leaders the rare opportunity to pause, reflect and reconnect with their purpose. Participants consistently report increased confidence, clarity and motivation, returning home with a stronger sense of how they can lead and contribute.

**Thanks to Rotary Down Under - December, 2025**

# Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Projects around the Globe

March is Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Month. When people have access to these things waterborne diseases decrease, children stay healthier and attend school more regularly and mothers can spend less time carrying water and more time supporting their families.

Here are just a few of the many Water, Sanitation and Hygiene projects that are taking place around the world by dedicated Rotarians.



## Making Schools Healthier in Lebanon

All 24 of Lebanon's Rotary clubs came together — overcoming religious, cultural, and political divisions — to form partnerships with the government, World Vision, UNICEF, and the Red Cross. Together the groups developed a program that delivers clean water to every public school in the country.

## Water for a Community

Rotary clubs partnered with local organisations to install a rainwater harvesting and distribution center for 4,000 people in a remote village in Papua New Guinea. . They also delivered training programs for women in the community and students in 35 schools. delivered training programs for women in the community and students in 35 schools.



## Access to Toilets in the Philippines

Rotary clubs and partners built 222 toilets, six rainwater collectors, seven communal hand-washing stations, and 20 biosand filters.

The project provided more than 1,000 people with access to proper toilet facilities and almost 600 people with a regular supply of clean water.



## What's Brewing at the Tram Café this week?

This week we look forward to working with our friends from the Dementia Friendly Alliance on Saturday and St Thomas & Sacred Heart Social Justice on Sunday. New menus have been designed for the Tram Café and these are now being used in the Café.

### Dementia Friendly Alliance

The Dementia Friendly Alliance are regular volunteers at the Tram Café. They support people with Dementia and their carers by running a number of activities in the Nillumbik Shire.



### St. Thomas & Sacred Heart Social Justice

St Thomas and Sacred Heart Social Justice are connected to two churches in the local area - St Thomas the Apostle Parish in Greensborough North and Sacred Heart Parish in Diamond Creek. They raise funds for a number of projects.



## Focus on Community Groups



*Ken, Peter, David and Mike from the Diamond Creek Men's Shed volunteering at the Tram Café on Saturday.*

*Peter and Mike are modelling their new Men's Shed aprons!*

# Rotary in Action - This week at Diamond Creek

## What's our current focus?

*Every week, the Board and the Club have many things on their minds. This week our focus is on looking forward to two events which are coming up. Next weekend is the District 9790 Conference - a highlight in the District's calendar. Coming up in April is RYPEN - the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment for which the club is eagerly seeking some young participants.*

## Focus on District 9790 Conference

A number of our members will be attending the District 9790 Conference this coming weekend. The theme is Connection, Community, Courage. Instead of travelling into the more rural parts of the District, it is being held reasonably close to home this time in the Pentridge precinct in Coburg.

The conference has a range of inspiring speakers and some fantastic hands on activities this year. On the Sunday, they have planned a 'powerful day of community service' where Rotarians will team up to participate in a range of hands on activities which will make a difference to communities.



## Focus on RYPEN

Do you know a young person aged 15 to 17 who would benefit from experiencing various activities that are designed to build confidence, develop communication skills, be assisted in forming goals and develop their sense of identity. If you do, they could be an excellent candidate for RYPEN - the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment.

Our club is currently looking to sponsor some young people to experience this valuable opportunity.

RYPEN will be held from 24 to 26 April at Camp Axedale. Please contact Sally if you know of anyone who may be a potential participant.

