

Dear friends,

While my family frequently reminds me that there is life beyond Rotary, and they're probably right, I remain deeply humbled and incredibly proud to have had the privilege of serving as your President over the past year.

I did try my best to make Rotary a little more active, with a focus on projects and member experience, and I believed all members assisted me in trying to achieve this goal.

Throughout every project and community activity, I witnessed the very best of Rotary; people creating change, building communities, and 'doing good in the world' every single day. My role was challenging, inspiring and exhausting, but most of all, unforgettable. To me, we are more than just members of a rotary club. We are Rotarians.

Thank you to everyone who helped me throughout this incredible journey.

Throughout my term, I've been constantly reflecting on what we as a Board, and a club have done. To me, our highlights have been increased membership, member recognition, new projects to help our local and global community, our continued support to our three signature projects, and the commencement of what will become our fourth signature project; that is the Golden Hour Cafe.

Our focus on community and youth projects remains very strong, and the engagement with our Rotary Community Group #4 is growing stronger every year, with four projects completed or still ongoing; namely the Timor Leste water project, Domestic & Family Violence awareness, social nights & club visits, and the 'All in the Mind' mental health forum.

From a club perspective, we started the Rotary year with the Train of Lights, then in September and November we packed two hundred birthing kits for mothers in the developing world, then engaged with our community to pack eighty-one 'share the dignity' bags for local mums, families and at-risk teenagers. We then held our Primary School Speech contest, followed by the 22nd year of the fabulous Rotary Kids Fun Run with PBR. The next day, sixteen members & family travelled to Tasmania to walk the 'Three Capes' track, returning for our fabulous Christmas party at Ali & Roy's house. After NYE, we then partied at Melinda & Dan's Philip Island beach house, followed quickly by another very successful, and rebranded, Gembrook Classic & Custom Car Show.

In March, we again travelled to Tasmania for the Joint D9815 & 9830 District Conference, where we placed 2nd in the Gala Theme dinner, but first amongst the Victorian clubs; returning for more club meetings, culminating in May with a FORaMEAL project whereby we packed 13,860 meals for humanitarian & disaster relief, then held our second mental health 'All In the Mind' forum; this time a joint project with five other Rotary Clubs. June quickly followed, with another 'Rotary Revealed' open night, our 36th annual Debutante Ball, our Club Changeover to President Elect Gayle, and planning for the installation of our very own Emma Clark as District Governor. It's been a busy, but wonderful year.

However, that's not all.

Overlaying all of this was our continued support and involvement with our Youth & Community projects, namely the ESC Breakfast Club, St Lukes & St Marks / ECHO projects, awarding three McLeod Murphy scholarships, two ESC Outstanding Community Service Awards, an ESC Music Scholarship, youth mentoring sessions, ESC camp attendance support, sponsoring the Emerald Art Society, RYLA, RYDA, RYPEN & MUNA, providing food, meal and pharmacy vouchers, attending Clean Up Australia Day, supporting

Australian Rotary health by riding for mental health research, donating to RAWCS / Dick Smith projects, support for the relaunched Emerald Neighbourhood Watch, a new trailer for Selby Scouts, Christmas hampers for Emerald Scouts, Bushfire relief, Emerald Community House projects for homeless & rough sleepers, Cockatoo Community bus, easter eggs & Christmas gifts for residents at Lifeview - Glades, participation in World Polio Day activities, Emergency Services Day, ANZAC Day & Remembrance Day services, and I'm sure many other acts of kindness and generosity throughout our community.

Although focused locally, we also continue to look globally, and we have done this since our club was chartered in 1980. We increased our support for the Tenderfoot school in Kenya, which commenced in 2003, with our club providing three student scholarships, with members also sponsoring children. We continued our support of the Australian Himalayan Foundation, given through our association with past member Alfred Grgeory and his wife Sue. Our club, and individual members, also support the Rotary Foundation, through contributions to the Annual Share fund and the Polio Plus Fund, with many members now recognised as multiple Paul Harris Fellows. At a district level, we closed the district grant for the Wrights Forest Nesting Hollows project and received another district grant for the Golden Hour Cafe.

Our presence and engagement within the community is growing, and we have built on our two EarlyAct clubs by establishing, earlier this year, the ESC InterAct Club.

For many of us, our commitment doesn't stop at club level as we also serve on many district committees, and we are, as a club, very fortunate to have a Past District Governor and the District Governor Elect, as members.

I also can't forget to mention our 'Jolly Walkers' who meet every Sunday morning for a 5-10km walk around Emerald and surrounds. Of course, it's not all about the walking, or chatting, as picking a cafe at the end of the walk is also very important.

Now, if I had to respond to my family again, I'd say that it's certainly been busy and at times challenging, but I wouldn't change anything and honestly, I'll miss it.

I truly believe that our Board, and our members, leave our club in a strong position and I'm sure that PE Gayle will continue to make our club a more vibrant and engaging experience for our members.

There is no doubt that with our support, Gayle and her Board will have an awesome year.

Thus, to my Board and Committee Chairs, thank you.

To my Sergeant Rowan, thank you.

To my program manager and gift designer extraordinaire, Anna, thank you.

To our Sunshine Lady, Lyn, thank you.

To project Chairs, Ken, Ian and Lyn, thank you.

To Kris, for our new Golden Hour cafe, thank you

To Melinda, ESC Interact is in great hands, thank you

To Kerith, Gayle and Sue, EPS EarlyAct, thank you

To Lyn & Gloria, GPS EarlyAct, thank you

To Carol for ESC Breakfast club, thank you

To John Ritchie for your wonderful 'Toasts to the Elderly' - thank you

To Linda, for editing Sparkle, thank you

To Lorna, for managing the Paradise Hotel, thank you

Finally, but not least, to all members, those new, current and past, to our honorary members, friends & families, your attendance,

support and enthusiasm, is what makes our club successful.  
THANKYOU.

And to Chris, for doing an excellent job with Chook Lotto, I see you.

Thank you again to all. It's been a pleasure.

Peter Brock PHF

**President – RC of Emerald & District 2025-2026**