



Annual Report 2019 – 2020

Board of Management

President: Peter Comino Vice President: Margaret Johnson
Past President: John Rodstrom Treasurer: Ross Dickson
Secretary: Geoff Alderdice President elect: Margaret Johnson
Directors: Eleni Comino, Ross McDonald, Barbara Walsh

President's Report 2019-2020

2019 started out well and looked for all intent and purposes like most other years. It commenced with a new look newsletter 'Peter's Précis' which enabled contributions from all members. We were so thrilled to receive an award from our DG Graeme Hooper in recognition for this, as well as an additional award for Promotion and Social Media Marketing with our social media presence. These awards go to the whole club for its ability to embrace new concepts and ideas and not back away from challenges. This has proved to stand us in good stead especially with the COVID-19 lockdown we had earlier this year and still feeling the effects of it now.

Unfortunately, our year did not progress as expected with the first sign of the rocky path ahead was the sudden closure of the Morisset Golf Club. This impacted on our club immensely as it was to be the venue of our major fundraiser 'Hit for Youth Mental Health Golf Day'. This was to follow on the heels of the same event held in the previous year. Our very able Golf Day Fundraising committee had to think quickly and managed to contact sponsors and come up with an alternative date and

venue at the upmarket Kooindah Waters Golf Resort. Unfortunately, as COVID-19 set in, we had no alternative but to cancel this event. The club could not have asked for anything more from our Golf Day committee they gave it their all but sadly the event was undone by an inconceivable epidemic.

Before 2019 had completed, the club participated in the Salvation Army community Christmas Carol event with our trusty barbeque. The next time and last we used the barbeque at the Newcastle Show. Members were kept very busy with running the barbeque as well as the 'Tasty Toastie shack'. This called for a large number of our members to give of their time over a three-day period. In between these two events we also took the responsibility of supporting MHERV (Men's Health Education Rotary Van) This successful program aims at helping men be more aware of their health and what simple steps they could do to better manage it. This was set up for the Morisset Show. Saturday saw Rod Woolley the male nurse conducting in excess of 50 tests! However, nature as always had the last word and the last day of the show was cancelled due to constant heavy rain.

On one memorable day in 2019 we learnt that we had only a few hours to evacuate our shed at Myuna Bay Sports and Rec facility as it had to close due to an assessment the facility was in danger as it was in the path of a possible breach of the coal ash dam located above the facility. The dam is part of the Eraring Power station owned by and operated by Origin Energy. Unfortunately, it will never reopen at its current location but there is hope that a new Sport and Rec facility will open to take its place within our area in the not too distant future and hopefully we can once again have some permanency on the new site. Until then our rental storage facility continues to be paid by Origin Energy which was masterfully organised by two of our members.

Following the loss of two major recreational facilities in our area that is, the Golf Club and the Sports & Rec facility, our club organised a Time Out event to help rebuild confidence in the region. This was also supported by the Lake Macquarie Council. The event celebrated the arts and crafts produced locally. This was a huge success and consideration was given to hold it again the following year. Unfortunately, this did not come to be as COVID-19 once again got in the way.

Prior to the rain in February 2020 we all recall experiencing long stretches of smoggy smoked filled days due to the horrific bushfires that some of our fellow Australians were facing up and down the east coast of this country with life or death situations which started as early as September 2019. We have reached out to another Rotary district which was bushfire affected to establish a bushfire relief project. This is still be negotiated as to what format this may take.

During the COVID crisis, our club saw a need to help others and responded brilliantly with a dedicated bunch of members now named the 'Masketeers'. They have produced hundreds of masks for sale as well as for gratis to be distributed to people who are in great need of them in this country and overseas.

Our activities with such things as the T-shirt sales continued. It appears the sales come in waves, but we appear to manage with enough stock when we do get a large order. As always, the trick is not to be overstocked, this is a difficult balancing act at times. Our two international projects Tibar Farm in Timor Leste and the Morogoro health promotion have been our stand out success and our club is very proud of the fundraising we have contributed to these projects to get them from the point of off the drawing board and now near completion.

In regards to projects, our board decided to implement an annual review system of all current projects so this will help any future board to understand where each project is up to and how long they have to run until completion.

Some of our members had gone beyond the call of duty last year and put themselves forward to take on district roles. Geoff Alderdice as the District Secretary and Craig Johnson as the Director for Learning and development. In addition to this, we also had John Rodstrom and Eleni Comino on the District Conference Committee.

Once again, our club participated in the Youth Exchange program. We had two local youths who went outbound and they were Harrison Burgess who went to Switzerland and Jordyn Laucht who went to Italy. Jordyn's experience commenced in January 2020, unfortunately for her, it was during the COVID-19 crisis which meant she spent most of her time indoors! While Harrison was fortunate enough to be able to enjoy the outdoors as his experience was in 2019. We had an exceptional inbound student Samuel Bydal 'Our Sam' as we nicked named him. All host parents could not speak highly enough of him. On reflection, however, our

club has considered the experience of our last two outbound students and wonder if the program is as rigidly applied as it is in this country. This may sound like a rather arrogant statement, but we should only be sending students in future to countries where we can be 100% confidence in the program. Unfortunately, that does not exist at the moment in the Outbound Youth Exchange Program and we believe Rotary International should be calling for a total review of this program.

In regard to financial donations, we proudly supported the following groups.

Southlakes Carers \$500

Heaven Can Wait Regatta \$500

Morisset Show/Mens Health Education Rotary Van (MHERV) \$500

South Lake Macquarie Amateur Sailing Club \$100

Ladybikes International \$500

Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children (ROMAC) \$1,000

ShelterBox \$1,000

Australian Rotary Health \$1,000

Interplast \$1,000

Integra Service Dogs Australia (District Governor's Partner's Project) \$1,000

Rotary Foundation Annual Program Fund \$1,000

Rotary Foundation – Polio Plus \$1,000

The Rotary Foundation Raffle \$500

Local School Awards and Scholarships \$1,800

Finally, at the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdown, we did manage to complete a project proposal for the Margaret Illukol Trust to consider for youth in our area. This was done in conjunction with Southlake Community Services. We have had numerous discussions with the Trustees but, as yet we have not heard back from the Trust on whether this proposal was successful. Next, I would like to thank my board for all the hard work we have achieved.

Thanks to COVID-19 we have not been active in the usual activities even weekly meetings changed drastically. We discover though that we took to zoom meetings rather well, so much so, at one point we had 46 people at a zoom meeting. We were fortunate enough to have leaders in their fields of expertise from NZ and

Cambridge UK as well as ex youth exchange students and even a Rotarian who is an airline enthusiast from Canada join us.

To finish on a happy note, our club also became a ShelterBox Bronze Champion for all its hard work in donations to this excellent program. The club has again been active supporting ShelterBox displays at local events. Each year we donate to this programme. Over the last seven years we have made donations in excess of \$16,000.

We are also pleased to receive the Rotary International President's Citation for reaching our goals.

Thankfully, we have taken to online meetings extremely well which is yet another an example of us being a progressive club.

Thank you

Peter Comino

President – 2019-2020

Youth Director's report 2019-2020

Morisset High School

During the year seven senior students from financially disadvantaged families are negotiating Year 11 and Year 12 with Rotary scholarships. In addition, Community Service Awards are provided for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Primary Schools

Each year Community Service Awards are presented to ten local primary schools; Arcadia Vale, Avondale, Bonnells Bay, Brightwaters Christian, Cooranbong, Dora Creek, Morisset, St. John Vianney, Wangi Wangi and Wyee. Annual awards ceremonies are attended by club representatives who do the presentations

Youth Mental Health

Six Primary schools have received grants to continue our support for a range of mental health promotion activities. These activities have been aimed at developing resilience and confidence in young people.

Rotary Youth Programme of Enrichment (RYPEN)

We support two students to attend the November 2019 RYPEN camps. This is supplemented by others who are financed by Morisset High School. The change of venue has been problematic with the relocation being a two-hour drive away. We continue to be impressed by the positive feedback from the attendees.

WWCC

Working With Children Clearance Register is maintained and regularly updated.

ShelterBox

We continue to provide Morisset High with a ShelterBox for a Year 8 study unit. Based on inspection of an erected ShelterBox and introductory information from club members, students chose research areas for their project. Later, very successful student project presentations are made with key club members present. Recently updated equipment has kindly been donated by ShelterBox. This year the students also raised \$500.

Discovery Day/ Science & Engineering Challenge

In August, assisted by several Toronto Sunrise members, a successful Primary School Discovery Day program was held over two days at Avondale School. Morisset Rotary serving the food for the helpers. In July - August 2019 our volunteers also assisted supervising at the Science and Engineering Challenge events held at University of Newcastle in July - August.

Youth Exchange Programme

This year we have enjoyed the visit of a young man from Sweden. His return home was extended as a result of travel changes due to Covid19. Our outbound student has been enjoying her stay in Italy in spite of pandemic problems there.

Barbara Walsh

Youth Director / Child Protection Officer

International Report - Timor Leste 2019-20

Tibar Farm Development – Timor Leste

Morisset Club has been involved with Timor Leste projects since 2013 when we supported construction of school classrooms and a disease prevention project in

conjunction with other clubs. The development of the farm at Tibar in the Liquica District has been the club's focus over the last 4 years with the assistance of District Matching Grants. Produce from the farm significantly reduces the annual food bills for local orphanages.

To date, perimeter fencing for the whole property has been erected & water reticulation has been installed. Fruit trees, melons and root vegetables have been planted. Some areas still require development for planting & water reticulation. Currently the building of a local style shelter house has been started but Covid19 has caused some delays.

The project is overseen locally by a paid NGO team registered as "Rotarians Helping Timor". Young Dili Rotarians are employed at this office to manage project funding. They also manage arrival containers for Donations in Kind and the outgoing paperwork for other Rotary projects e.g. ROMAC and YEP. The Tibar Farm project has been supported with District Matching Grants in recent years. The matching grant application for this year was not successful as less funds were available. However, a local church has been helpful in supporting the project.

During the year, the water pump failed & requires replacement. A District Grant has been applied for to assist with this.

Barbara Walsh – Project Manager

Community Based Health Improvements Project- Morogoro

This project which has been running since 2017 has focused on improving public health in the region of Morogoro, Tanzania. Components have revolved around health education and awareness as well as improvements to health and hygiene facilities.

The 2019-2020 Rotary year has seen the project facilitate workshops run by 'Ngoma Afrika' in conjunction with the Municipal council and local hospital to local school teachers to provide updated health knowledge as well as providing the resources necessary for the teachers to set up student-led 'health clubs' at their schools. These health-clubs are run entirely by the students with a

supervising teacher. The children meet to discuss and increase their health knowledge and are encouraged to pick a small health project in the community which they can work on and spread this knowledge into the wider community. The need for first-aid kits at the local schools became apparent through the health clubs and we have recently been able to provide the funds for well-stocked first-aid kits to 10 local schools.

This project is nearing completion with remaining funds to be directed into providing further resources for the schools and the newly formed health clubs.

Eleni Comino – Project Manager

Technology 2019-20

Morisset Rotary actively participated in a broad array of activity requiring support in the 2019/20 year.

General

2019/20 was full of activity, twists and turns. The arrival of Covid-19 later in the year stopped us from conducting business as usual and we were to find that technology would play a vital role in club activity.

Communication

We established a new version of Peter's Précis for the year which was well received by members and widely recognised within the district.

Zoom

The advent of Covid-19 and social distancing found us following District lead to change our normal meetings to Zoom digital meetings. This initiative was better embraced by Morisset club than most, but most agree it is not a complete or long-term alternative.

Web Site

During the year we consolidated our web site hosting and re-routed all activity to www.morissetrotary.org.au.

During the process we updated the look and operation of the site to a more contemporary one. Regrettably, web page design was well advanced for the proposed golf day which was eventually cancelled.

Social Media

Prevailing conditions during the year have demanded more interaction on social media. We attended District social media training in October along with Mike Baudinette who picked up this initiative for the new Rotary year.

Fundraising

In December we established a crude on-line ticket purchasing process which showed some success and will likely be considered for the next year. We also added on-line fund raising pages via Trybooking for Timor Leste and Morigoro to aid in digital, perpetual fundraising on social media platforms. Pull up banners were designed and purchased for Timor Leste and Morigoro for face-to-face fundraising opportunities.

Craig Johnson - Technology Director 2019-2020

Treasurer's Report 2019-2020

The report of the Treasurer, Ross Dickson, forms part of a separate document - the Financial Report 2020.

