

History of the Strathalbyn Rotary Club

The First Rotary Club formed in South Australia is Adelaide and was formed in 1923.

Adelaide formed daughter Clubs in Unley on 17/4/35, Victor Harbor on 3/9/47, Glenelg on 25/3/52, Norwood on 30/6/54, and St. Peters on 29/4/58.

The World was split into Rotary Districts and ours was given the number 65 in 1935/36.

In the Rotary Year 1949/50 the District number was changed to 33.

The number was again changed in 1957/58 and became 250, and this was the District Number when the Strathalbyn Club was formed by Victor Harbor.

They have also been responsible for the formation of Rotary Clubs in Encounter Bay on 13/8/79 and Yankalilla on 30/9/87.

The inaugural meeting of the Strathalbyn Rotary Club took place on July 20th, 1964.

This was a meeting of commitment to a Club being formed and wasn't a dinner meeting. This is where the Provisional Club was formed. The extension, (Rotary jargon for forming a new Club), was being done under the auspices of the Victor Harbor Rotary Club, Our mother Club.

At the first Board meeting on the 23rd July 1964, the following Board was elected:-

President: Frank Hart, Director Club Service: Harry Nancarrow, Director Vocational Service: W. Ken Harris, Director Community Service: Ron Critchley, Director International Service: Andrew Nettlefold, Sergeant at Arms: Dene Pethick, Treasurer: Reginald Mattner, Secretary: Kinnish Martin.

The first dinner meeting of the Club took place on 18th August 1964 and was the first meeting with 100% attendance of 26 provisional Members.

Strathalbyn Club was accepted into the fold of Rotary International on the 10th December 1964.

This is when the Charter was drawn up and then forwarded from the USA to Strathalbyn, which culminated in its presentation to the Club by DG John McArthur on Saturday 13th February 1965.

Frank Hart, who was a past member of the Victor Harbor Rotary Club, had been transferred to the Commercial Bank in Strathalbyn was the prime mover in getting the Club formed. Frank Hart was the first and Charter President, having served two consecutive terms as President from 1964—65. Frank had a good knowledge of Rotary and Rotary information, and the first two years

under his leadership was that of consolidation and fellowship. This was a learning period of the overall structure of Rotary, and of the affiliation with Rotary International. This formed the Club into a good cohesive unit with harmony and a will to achieve. Fortieth anniversary celebrations were held at Currency Creek Winery in December 2004.

We have much to thank these pioneers for as we continue to grow and serve.

Always ready to assist our local, national and international community, the Rotary Club of Strathalbyn has a long history in raising funds to further the aims of Rotary.

We have, since our early formative years been involved in the very rewarding International Long Term Youth Exchange Program, and continue the tradition today. The Strathalbyn Club is proud to be a continuous participant in this rewarding program since our first involvement in 1968. We have seen on several occasions Members be involved in a hands on approach to FAIM Projects, and we have been, and are always ready to have involvement with Group Study Exchange Teams.

Our commitment to the very successful world wide project, Polio Plus, has been sound and this most high profile of Rotary Projects has been excellent for Rotary International. The Australian Rotary Health Research Foundation has also been continually supported with donations and, in recent years the holding of a Health Forum, promoting current mental health issues, which Rotary Australia has adopted.

Our local community has benefited from the many projects which our Members have worked on over the past forty + years. These range from the small intangible financial support for Meals on Wheels to purchase Christmas Gifts for their many customers, medical equipment for the local hospital, to the larger more visual projects such as the playground, Oval Hall renovation, bbqs for the much loved and renowned Strathalbyn Memorial Gardens river bank parks and, the Annual Duck Race our largest fund raiser.

Today we meet every Tuesday night at the Victoria Hotel in Strathalbyn or at another special venue as programmed.

To know more about our fantastic club, read the Bulletin and the link on our home page about membership.