

## **An Introduction to Rotary**

(A brief and unofficial explanation)

### **Rotary is an International Organisation**

The first Rotary Club was organised in Chicago in 1905 by Paul P. Harris. This club met in rotation at the offices of the members, thus the name Rotary. There are now more than 33,000 Rotary Clubs with a total membership of over 1.2 million men and women (as of 2008). Rotarians are members of a specific club, such as the Rotary Club of Burnie, and it is the Club that is a member of Rotary International.

Rotary International is governed by a president and board of directors elected from all over the world. Annually, each District elects a District Governor and each club elects its officers and directors.

The Rotary world is divided into Districts within which a group of clubs are associated. There are 502 districts in the Rotary world (in 200 countries). In District 9830 (Tasmania), there are 49 clubs.

All Rotarians have become members of a Rotary Club after being sponsored by another Rotarian. As part of the procedure, that club's Classification Committee will need to verify that the employment position of the prospective member is important, that the person is deemed to be an outstanding leader in that vocation and that no other Rotarian active in the club has that vocation.

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### **A Rotary Club**

Each year the club elects its officers and they are responsible for conducting the general business of the Club.

The club's President, with the approval of the club's Board of Directors, makes committee appointments based upon the following Avenues of Service:

- \* Club Service
- \* Community Service
- \* Vocational Service
- \* International Service
- \* Service to Youth -- "New Generations"

Each Rotarian is expected to participate in one of the Avenues of Service.

### **Object of Rotary**

The object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster the following:

- \* First

**The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service.**

- \* Second

**High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying by each Rotarian of their occupation as an opportunity to serve society.**

\* Third

**The application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to their personal, business and community life.**

\* Fourth

**The advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace through a world of fellowship of business and professional people united in the ideal of service.**

Rotarians implement the Object of Rotary through these five **Avenues of Service**:

#### CLUB SERVICE

The following activities are directed toward the internal functioning of the Club to maintain its health and vigour:

Membership, Club Bulletin, Attendance, Rotary Information, Sergeant-at-Arms, Classification, Membership Development, Program, Fellowship Activities.

#### VOCATIONAL SERVICE

Promotion of the ideal of service:

Adherence to and promotion of the highest ethical standards in all occupations.

Recognition of the worthiness to society of all useful occupations.

Contribution of one's vocational talents to the problems and needs of society.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

A club effort to improve the quality of life within the community by:

- + Community projects
- + Community grants
- + Environmental Protection

#### INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

The promotion of many efforts to advance understanding, goodwill and the quality of life throughout the world:

- + International Youth Projects
- + World Fellowship Activities
- + Rotary Foundation
- + World Community Service

#### SERVICE TO YOUTH -- "New Generations"

One of the most rewarding opportunities available to Rotarians is that of working closely with the youth of our community, through:

- + Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)
- + Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA)
- + Youth Exchange Students
- + National Science / Engineering Schools / Forums
- + Rotoract - Interact – Rotex

### **The Rotary Foundation**

In 1917, the then President of Rotary International, Arch C. Klumph, proposed that an endowment be set up *“for the purpose of doing good in the world.”* The first sum donated was \$26.50. In 1928 the name changed to The Rotary Foundation and it has grown in size and importance dramatically since then. Contributions in 2006-7 to the Permanent Fund exceeded US\$100,000,000 and the Foundation is arguably the world’s largest fund of its type.

The Foundation furthers understanding and friendly relations among the world's people by funding educational and humanitarian programs including:

- \* Ambassadorial Scholarships
- \* Matching Grants
- \* Group Study Exchange
- \* Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grants
- \* Rotary Grants for Univ. Teachers to Serve in Developing Countries
- \* Grants for Rotary Volunteers
- \* PolioPlus Program
- \* Rotary Peace Programs

Several of these programs send scholars and volunteer workers abroad to study, learn about other cultures, offer assistance and promote goodwill within a host country.

**The Four-Way Test** of the things Rotarians Think, Say or Do

**Is it the TRUTH?**

**Is it FAIR to all concerned?**

**Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**

**Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?**

### **The Privileges of a member of Rotary**

- \* The privilege of friendship with leaders in his/her community; in neighbouring cities all over Australia and around the world.
- \* The privilege of giving service to the community.
- \* The privilege of developing international goodwill and understanding.
- \* The privilege of helping build higher ethical standards within his/her vocation.

### **Obligations of a Rotarian**

#### Participation

A Rotarian must give his/her time and talents to the following:

- Community work
- Social functions
- Club and District activities

#### Attendance

100% attendance is urged and honoured in Rotary. To achieve this goal, Rotarians are expected to:

- attend a Rotary Club meeting each week, if necessary by “making-up” at another Club within 14 days before or after a missed meeting of his/her own Club

- attend a District Institute, Assembly or Conference or a Rotary International Convention

Rotary Attendance Rules

Attendance:

- \* Attend at least 60% of a meeting to receive credit.
- \* Attend at least 60% of regular club meetings.
- \* Attend at least 30% of the regular meetings of the Rotarian's own club.
- \* Failure to attend or make up four consecutive meetings automatically terminates membership.