

## 1957-1958 Tom Keith

In 1957, the most popular film was: The Bridge on the River Kwai, starring Alec Guinness, William Holden and Jack Hawkins. It is loosely based on a true story about the construction of the Burma Railway by POW's held by the Japanese. The film won 7 Academy Awards and many believe it is one of the greatest films ever made. The most popular song for the same year was: All Shook Up, by Elvis Presley.



In 1957, there were now 72 members and the new President of the Rotary Club was Tom Keith. President Keith took on RI's motto for the year: Enlist for Action; Extend for Strength; and Explore for Knowledge and Serve.



To ensure members engaged more, a Buffet Meal was introduced for some meetings, rather than the traditional set dining. Special discs were also introduced for members to easily identify people who worked for the press, radio employees and the guest speaker at the meeting.

Mannequin and Picture Nights were held for both members and their partners to enjoy. Vocation job talks from members were also encouraged during the year.

To ensure suitable members of the community were chosen to join the Club, screening was undertaken of prospective members. Once someone was chosen to become a Rotarian, a film was shown to them called: Making of a Rotarian. The Board obtained a copy of the film to ensure new members clearly understood what was expected with becoming a member of Rotary.

To ensure Rotary grew in the Bendigo community, the Club also began the process of ceding local Rotary boundaries for the purpose of forming a new Rotary Club.



A Homes Exhibition in City Hall was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> of March. President Keith and the Board believed vital funds could be raised for the Club if the correct planning were undertaken to ensure it was successful.

Consequently, an organiser was given the job of canvassing potential stall holders to exhibit at the Home Show. Members could then be given the role of selling tickets, staffing the gates and other general duties required at such events.

The result was that 30 firms had stands at the Show. 5,600 adults and 2290 children attended the event. Importantly, 969/9/1 (pounds/shillings/pence) was raised.

A survey was undertaken to gauge how best these funds could be used.



It was decided a youth project should be chosen. Consequently, the Club engaged with the leaders of the Scouts and Guides movement with how they would spend the funds.

The Club were told the Girl Guides had no permanent hall to meet at. To assist them build their own meeting hall, 600 Pounds was donated towards the 3,500 pounds which was required to build a suitable venue. The mayor supported the venture by formally opening an Appeal for the Girl Guides at a Club Luncheon. Both the Club and the City of Bendigo canvassed the State Government to make up the balance of the funds.

The remaining 369/9/1 was donated to the Scouts. Their goal was to obtain 800 pounds for a brick hut to safely store their equipment.



Overseas correspondence to other Clubs continued to ensure their Club members learnt more about Bendigo.

In Sri Lanka, the Club assisted Colombo Rotary with sponsoring local financially disadvantaged families.

Funds for Sri Lanka were raised from:

- A billiard competition held at the home of PP Norman Oliver.
- A picture night held at Albert Matthews' home.
- A colour slide night held by Ian Hall, Bill Sones and Hal Moors.
- Fulbright scholar Homer Sherman's, Al Fresco dining supper.

As a result of the fundraising events, 450 Rupees was sent to Colombo Rotary.

At the time, under a United Nations program, the Club was sponsoring an Austrian student. The Club received a lovely reply from the student during the year. (*Copies of letters received at the time are in our history records*).

The regular visit of Asian students from Melbourne to Bendigo for a weekend, did not happen due to a lack of accommodation offered from members. Regardless, the Club was also involved in ensuring Asian students who wished to study in Bendigo found comfortable accommodation. Also, the new students to Bendigo were invited to meet Rotarians and their partners at a picture evening. Furthermore, they were also offered a guided tour of Bendigo and a visit to the Axedale Camp.

First Aid courses were organised for 200 residents of Bendigo. This was to inform the local community of the importance of learning first aid. Consequently, being able to provide vital support in emergencies to loved ones, or members in their local community. The Club also organised first aid lessons for student teachers. They were shown a demonstration of resuscitation techniques from staff at Bendigo Hospital and from the Nurses Training College.

Other highlights for the year were:

- The City of Bendigo asked the Club to campaign for a University in Bendigo. Five club members volunteered to take on this mission.
- The Youth Camp now had a full-size basketball court, a swimming pool in the river and ground water supply. The tennis court was also completed.
- A new publicity brochure was produced for the Youth Camp.
- The Welding Trades Exhibition was well attended. The proceeds from the Exhibition were used to pay for prizes for students of metal trades at Bendigo School of Mines.