

1995 - President Kevin Reilly

In 1995, Paul Keating was the Prime Minister; Jeff Kennett was the Premier of Victoria and Bruce Reid continued as our Federal representative for Bendigo. It was the year that QANTAS became privatized, Telecom became Telstra and Pay T.V. entered our homes for the very first time. Our fanatical Carlton supporters in the club will no doubt remember it as the year the Blue-baggers gave the Cats a football lesson in the Grand Final that year.

It was also the year that our new president took something out of how Carlton got their nickname (players packing groceries for locals during difficult times) to assist local rural families with their groceries. President Kevin Reilly started a Rotary Farm Aid Project that provided weekly food parcels to 175 families in the district. In retail terms, this equated to \$533,000 of financial assistance. The project was so successful it would go on to win the State Premier's Award for the best community project in the State of Victoria (chosen from all Community Service Clubs projects throughout the State). Furthermore, our president was to receive the Highest Achievement Award at the Rotary District Conference.



Kevin Reilly, during his year as president, also supported 10 projects in over 7 countries to save the sight of 2,476 children. Two FAIM teams during his year worked to reinforce school buildings in Samoa against the risk of further cyclones. Furthermore, literacy projects were set up in Bangladesh and literacy material provided for 8 classrooms (and 20 artificial legs) in India. Medical help was provided for a leper colony in Indonesia. It was also the year that Kevin assisted with bringing Ramish from Fiji with the assistance of ROMAC – a program Kevin was instrumental in assisting Barry Cooper to establish.

Locally, \$20,000 was raised at a Dinner Auction for Mirridong Low Vision Clinic, Bendigo Hospital and others. Members also enjoyed a Fashion Parade and a Scottish Night with Fortuna Pipes and Drums to raise money for numerous other projects. Attendance for the year was 78% and 10 new members joined the ranks.

At the changeover, Kevin awarded Paul Harris Fellowships to Bill Gray, Des Sampson and Daryl Watts. Kevin also made special mention of the significant contribution of PP Ken Hesse PHF who passed away during his year.

When I asked Kevin if he would like to add any comments regarding his year or had any special memories. Kevin responded by saying: It was a great year never to be forgotten. My own statement for the year was: We Can Do it.



70th Rotary Changeover, Saturday July 29, 1995. President Kevin Reilly, Ken Hesse and immediate past president Hugh Wheeler.