

# President Hugh Wheeler 1994-95

*"Act with Integrity Serve with Love Work for Peace."*

President Hugh took the Rotary theme for the year to his heart. During President Hugh's year, the planning for a Rural Farm Aid Project was begun. The goal of the Project was to assist alleviate rural distress caused by a prolonged drought in surrounding areas. With Women in Agriculture assisting as a referral group, the goal was to assist feed 50 – 60 needy families each week for 6 months. The State Minister of Agriculture and State Minister for Community Services would be invited to formally launch the Project. Importantly, President Hugh and President Elect, Kevin Reilly, worked as a team to ensure the program would be successful as it would cross over both their years as President.



Several organisations and funding bodies came on board to support the important project. For example, Toohey's Brewery pledged \$60,000, The State Government \$40,000 and District 9800, 15,000. Also, numerous



Rotary Clubs also pledged funds. Overall, \$150,000 was raised (equivalent of 270,000 in today's dollars) to assist rural families in need. President Hugh, Warwick Johanson and Bruce Perrin were assigned to undertake the responsibility of managing the account from

Sandhurst Trustees to distributing agencies. Most importantly, the confidentiality of all those recipients that were provided with assistance was always respected.

The Rural Aid Project is fondly remembered by long term members as one of the Club's most important and proudest chapters in our long history.



During the year, a formal Sister Program was agreed on with the Rotary Club of Apia. This was very significant as such an agreement would ensure it would be easier to facilitate programs in the future. Our Rotary Club is still involved with facilitating RAWCS projects in Samoa.



Just a small sample of some of the other achievements during President Hugh's year: funding to provide for the replacement of an ambulance for St John of God. The very first candidate

for a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship was identified and nominated by our Club. International standard entertainment (Julie Anthony and the Don Burrows quartet) performed at a function to assist with raising funds for ROMAC. Also, a new program was hatched for Grade 6 students demonstrating leadership potential to be held at Camp Getaway.

There were very many other organisations that benefited from funds during the year. For example: Bendigo Hospital, The Rotary Foundation, Bendigo Easter Fair, St Luke's, The Salvation Army and Rotary's Research Health Fund.



**Back:** (left to right): Dennis Potter, Ted Jenkins, Graham Newton, Charlie Martin, Garry Gunnell, Evan Trevorah.

**Front:** (left to right): Allan Thomas, Brian Kinross, Hugh Wheeler (President), Kevin Reilly, Janette Ball.

**Absent:** Valerie Broad, Ron Lake.