



President Garry Gunnell 1999-2000

I first came to know Garry when I went to Samoa in 2001. Despite my skill level with contributing positively to the volunteer team was found wanting, I was really impressed with the fact that Garry always treated myself as an equal, valued member of the team.

I can never remember Garry being very talkative in all the years I have known him. Regardless, I have always believed one's actions speak louder than one's words. In my years in Rotary, I have always known Garry to contribute in significant ways to the Rotary Club. For instance, whether it is for the Swap Meet, Art Show, Carols, or with volunteer work overseas.



When Garry undertook to become President in 1999, he immediately set the Club a couple of goals. Firstly, to stop membership numbers from dropping as it had been in previous years. Secondly, to ensure the backbone of the Club, the hard-working group of volunteers (affectionally termed as Dad's Army) were supported by other members joining in also to volunteer for fund raisers such as The Art Show.



President Garry did score a number of goals in his term. For example, membership numbers did not fall any further; on the contrary, they rose in numbers by 4.

The Club were able to gain the services of a huge identity in sport, Andrew Gaze, to attend the Dinner Auction. All members understood, if the Dinner Auction was to be a huge success, a well known sporting star would attract more people to attend the night. Without Andrew Gaze, there was little chance the Club would of raised the \$24,000 that they did.



The Art Show proved to be a huge success with funds during the year raising \$19,000. Apart from holding an outstanding Preview Night, President Garry continued to agree to hold both the Ceramics and Pottery section and Art Show at the one venue. Furthermore, it was decided to introduce a new Sculptor section. This would no doubt not only attract more local artists to enter, but would also attract a more diverse audience.

Most importantly, during the Art Show, newer members started to come forward and volunteer to assist with helping Dad's Army. For President Garry, this meant his second goal had been achieved.



Locally, the Clubs of Bendigo had recently worked brilliantly together in the past couple of years with the Swap Meet, and on a joint project to provide accommodation for those at risk of homelessness. Consequently, in President Garry's year, after 50 years of managing Camp Getaway, the Club decided to allow the Youth Camp to become a District Project. Hence, the whole District would be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the Youth Camp.

With the Club's project work in Samoa growing, President Garry felt it was important to find ways to ensure more funding became available for their important work. Consequently, the Club joined with Melbourne South Rotary with applying for a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant to assist a remote village school in Samoa.



During President Garry's year, it was not all hard work. The Club had a fun year also. Members held a fellowship gathering at Pratty's Patch with Melbourne South Rotary. A Foundation fundraising night was held at Jack Paynting's Nursery and a Wine and Cheese night was enjoyed by all those that attended.



Funds for Bendigo Health Care Group to develop a radiology service was provided during President Garry's year with a \$8,000 donation. The Club became a major sponsor for a Youth Expo in July with \$6,000 provided. The Axedale Youth Camp (now renamed Camp Getaway in President Garry's year) was provided with \$9,600. Some of the other organisations to benefit during President Garry's year include: The Rotary Foundation, Samoa, Royal Womens Hospital, The Salvation Army, Peter Harcourt and ROMAC



Gail Robertson, Hugh Wheeler, Andrew Hampton, Ros Bradbury, Barry Penna, Garry Gunnell, Larrie Winzar, Frank Lean, Colin Nankervis and Charlie Martin. Absent: Neil Burdon.

President Garry's comments:



Exchange student, Sophie, with myself and Larrie as her Counsellor

I was particularly happy with the year the club was able to devote towards the various Youth projects. The club was involved with the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN), Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA), for the first time National Youth Science Forum (NYSF), and Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA). The club already had a strong ongoing involvement with Rotary Youth Exchange and this continued. I was keen to focus on a different country and was able to attract the clubs first Exchange student from France, Sophie Hermant. A strong connection with Sophie was formed and have visited her and family in France on many occasions, she has also returned to Australia for several visits.