

# HISTORY DISTRICT 9640

## DISTRICT 9640

by David Lee

*Rotary Club of Stanthorpe, Qld.*

*District 9640 Past Governor (1995-96)*

### DISTRICT 9640 IN BRIEF

<b>Members:</b>	1413 Rotarians in 54 Clubs.
<b>Location:</b>	East coast of Australia (including areas of Qld. and NSW).
<b>Size:</b>	Area 100,000 sq. km. - 450 km. by 250 km.
<b>Climate:</b>	Sub-tropical, with a cooler mountainous belt.
<b>Industry:</b>	Products include sugarcane, bananas, avocados, macadamia nuts, wheat, cotton, soy-beans, feed grains, deciduous fruits, vegetables, dairying, beef, wool, wine production.
<b>Special Features:</b>	National Parks and famous Gold Coast beaches.

District 9640 came into being 1<sup>st</sup> July 1982 when Clubs from two Districts (963 and 965) were moulded with a new identity, yet a singularity of purpose. A big factor in the success of this District in its initial year was due to the man who was the inaugural Governor, Eric Flower and his wife Jean. It is no easy job to create something from nothing, but with Eric's wide administrative experience he formalized the District's organizational structure.

The oldest Club in the District, the RC of Lismore, was chartered on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1931 - sponsored by the RC of Sydney. The first recorded major project for this Club was in 1941, the founding of the Physical Fitness Camp at Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Head on 400 acres of government land. Funds raised by Lismore Rotarians came from very popular weekly boxing competitions conducted in a "stadium" (a paddock with tiered seating) behind the former Commercial Hotel. The camp over many years has had a far reaching effect on children from many parts of the State.

Lismore is renowned for devastating floods. Following the major flood of 1954, when the main shopping centre was inundated with water, the RC of Lismore in 1956 donated to the City of Lismore a flood boat named "The Rotarian".

The RC of Warwick, chartered by the RC of Toowoomba in November 1932, is the second oldest Club in District 9640. For a time during the war years the members had to make their own arrangements for food at Rotary meetings - mainly hot pies and chipped potatoes purchased from a nearby Fish & Chips shop.

The RC of Boonah, chartered in 1946 has been part of 9 different Rotary Districts. When this Club celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1996, the then DG David Lee had the unique opportunity of reinvesting the Charter President, Harold Palethorpe, as Club President and re-presenting to him the original Charter.

Nearly half the clubs in District 9640 are situated along the Gold Coast strip, and many of these Clubs have the privilege often of welcoming visiting Rotarians from many parts of Australia and overseas. Many southern retirees are almost classed as "Club Members" as they spend the winter months in the warmer climate of the Gold Coast.

The RC of Surfers Paradise was founded in the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Rotary International, sponsored by the RC of Southport to become the second club in the city of Gold Coast, population 30,000 in 1955. 50 years later Gold Coast has grown to 500,000 people and Surfers Paradise is the centre of its main industry, tourism.

An impression is left with all visiting Rotarians to the breakfast Club of Surfers Sunrise with its bikini clad girl featured on the bulletin cover. Located in the heart of the Gold Coast it is an ideal club for visiting Rotarians to make-up on the Gold Coast. But while the Club has for 20 years had a reputation as a maverick club, in more ways than just the banner, out of this club has come a very successful International project. On a trip to Fiji, club member Des LaRance noticed the appalling conditions crippled children faced in developing countries. He address the problem creating a low cost wheelchair, using components from discarded BMX bicycles. In June 2004, the 3,000<sup>th</sup> wheelchair was presented to a deserving child in Vanuata. 3,000 crippled children, in some 30 countries, have benefited from this project.

Perhaps the Districts most successful fundraising project would be “Opera in the Vineyard” organized annually on the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of May by the RC of Stanthorpe and Ballandean Estate Winery owned by PP Angelo Puglisi and family. Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year the Opera has grown in patronage from 400 to 2500 patrons annually. On the day over 2000 meals are served with table service and approximately \$80,000 raised for Rotary charities. Because of the success of “Opera in the Vineyard” the RC of Stanthorpe and Ballandean Estate established “Jazz in the Vineyard”, held each October.

District 9640 is today strong and healthy, with opportunities for Rotarians in the District to develop acquaintances, foster friendships, and enjoy fellowship and service to others within their own communities and country, as well as overseas.

## **Clubs in District 9640**

Lismore (1931)  
Warwick (1932)  
Grafton (1933)  
Murwillumbah (1937)  
Casino (1938)  
Glen Innes (1938)  
Coolangatta/Tweed Heads (1945)  
Southport (1945)  
Boonah (1946)  
Tenterfield (1946)  
Kyogle (1947)  
Mullumbimby (1949)  
Ballina (1949)  
South Grafton (1950) (Returned Charter 30.06.04)  
Stanthorpe (1953)  
Maclean (1954)  
Goondiwindi (1954)  
Surfers Paradise (1955)  
Burleigh Heads (1955)  
Beaudesert (1957)  
Lismore West (1961)  
Allora (1966)  
Kirra/Currumbin (1967)  
Southport North (1969)  
Kingscliff (1970)  
Tamborine Mountain (1971)  
Byron Bay (1972)  
Alstonville (1972)  
Broadbeach (1972)  
Nerang (1975)  
Palm Beach (1976)  
Surfers Paradise Central (1977)  
Murwillumbah Central (1978)  
Mermaid Beach (1979)  
Broadwater/Southport (1980)  
Mudgeeraba (1980)  
Goonellabah (1982)  
Lismore Central (1983)  
Tweed Heads South (1983)  
Yamba (1983)  
Gold Coast Central (1984)  
Ballina-on-Richmond (1986)

Runaway Bay (1986)  
Jimboomba (1986)  
Surfers Sunrise (1987)  
Iluka (1987)  
Coomera Valley (1987)  
Grafton Midday (1989)  
Ashmore (1990)  
Parkwood (1993)  
Summerland Sunrise (1996)  
Mt. Warning AM (2000)  
Warwick Sunrise (2000)  
Hope Island (2003)  
Coomera River Midday (2007)