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NEWSLETTER: 25TH JULY 2025

NEW ROTARY YEAR 2025-2026



What a fantastic start to our New Rotary Year

We have four new members to kick off our next chapter in the Rotary Club of Cessnock.

At the Changeover Dinner President Helen inducted three members. Michael Barrett, Michelle and Shane Johnson.

At our last meeting our new President Vicki inducted Mina Van Bree as our newest member.
Now that is exactly the best start to a new Rotary Year.

Membership has always been a priority as well as a Problem. Sometimes it's difficult to attract new members and we now have four new members.

The Rotary Club of Cessnock Members wish all four of you a very warm welcome

NEW MEMBERS SHANE AND MICHELLE JOHNSON



Michelle Johnson is a passionate business owner who enjoys leading and coaching her team as well as fellow business owners. She is the current owner of the Laguna Village Providore and runs The Mindset Corner coaching business. She has established the Wollombi Valley Business Network in the last year which aims to provide opportunities for business owners to connect in the Wollombi Valley and is supported by the Wollombi Chamber of Commerce.

Michelle has been involved with Rotary previously as the wife of a Rotarian, and served on the District Board for Youth Exchange for District 9685 for three years.

Michelle is looking forward to contributing in a meaningful way to local causes in Cessnock. *Cessnock Rotary warmly welcomes Michelle Johnson, whose passion for leadership, business, and community connection will be an asset to our club and the wider region.*

Shane Johnson has been a member of Rotary since 2012 with the Umina Beach Rotary Club before spending 2 years traveling Australia in a caravan with his wife Michelle and their 2 primary school age children.

Shane is known for his strong project management skills and runs his own Pond and Property Maintenance business.

Shane is a past president of the Umina Beach Rotary Club, and the club received an award for achievement for Small Clubs under his leadership. In that year, his major project was in Papua New Guinea. The project involved supplying water tanks and solar panels to remote villages as well as delivering Days for Girls packs.

Shane enjoys working with youth and served for 3 years on the District Board for Youth Exchange in 9685. He is also an active member of the Laguna Public School P&C Association.

We're delighted to welcome Shane Johnson to Cessnock Rotary, bringing with him strong project management skills, a heart for service, and a wealth of Rotary experience, both locally and internationally.

NEW MEMBER MICHAEL BARRETT



Michael Barrett, I'm passionate about supporting the local community and being involved in projects that make a real difference to those in need. I value the opportunity to work alongside like-minded volunteers, all driven by the same goal, to have a positive impact. I grew up in a small country town in Central West NSW, and after finishing school, I started working on large farm machinery, eventually completing my apprenticeship. Sport has always been an important part of my life and continues to be something I enjoy and value for the connection and energy it brings. I recently retired after a long career with Youth Justice, having worked in the sector since 1982. While much of my professional life focused on supporting young people, I'm now looking forward to broadening my involvement. I'm open to contributing wherever I'm needed in Cessnock Rotary, and I'm excited to be part of a team that's committed to making a difference across a wide range of community projects.

We extend a warm welcome to Michael Barrett, whose dedication to community, team spirit, and hands-on approach will be a wonderful addition to Cessnock Rotary's work in the region

NEW MEMBER MINA VAN BREE



Mina Van Bree brings a wealth of life experience, creativity, and compassion.

I was born in the Netherlands and migrated to Australia as a child, a journey that taught me adaptability, resilience, and sparked a lifelong curiosity. I've travelled extensively, embracing different cultures and perspectives, always eager to learn from others. My studies in psychology and my wide range of volunteer roles reflect a deep passion for understanding people and contributing meaningfully to my community. Creativity has always been an important part of my life. I find great joy in painting and working with clay, art has been a powerful outlet for expression and connection. Now retired, I have the time and energy to give back, and I'm excited to share not only what I've learned along the way but also my enthusiasm for learning and my commitment to helping others.

Cessnock Rotary is proud to welcome Mina Van Bree, whose rich life experience, creativity, and compassion will greatly enhance our club's spirit of service and community.



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RYPEN STUDENTS EXPERIENCE



We had six students attend RYPEN camp this year and four of the students came along to share some of their experiences with us. Rhea Yenuga gave a very informative speech describing it as transformational and sharing how it empowered her to speak out and significantly boosted her self-confidence. Rhea is also the President of the Cessnock INTERACT Club, she is a wonderful and talented young lady who gives amazing speeches. Stacy Jacobs has managed to boost the enthusiasm of all the students in the INTRACT Club and took the students to the camp at Bonny Hills

SHORT TERM YOUTH EXCHANGE WITH GERMANY



We were delighted to welcome Philipp, our short-term Youth Exchange student from Germany, who attended with his host family. Philipp has only been here 12 days but is already enjoying life in Cessnock and settling in well after a few days of jet lag. We were thrilled to present Philipp and his host brother Payton with tickets to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge, a true Aussie adventure. A big thank you to Philipp for presenting our club with a beautiful gold pennant from his sponsoring club, Göppingen Rotary Club.

President Vicki was thrilled to present both Peyton and Philipp with the Harbour Bridge climb from the club and Peyton's parents have so many wonderful events lined up to showcase our wonderful areas in some parts of Australia. Peyton loved Germany and the other surrounding countries he was taken to and no doubt that Philipp will experienced a lot of the Ausie life style and culture in his exchange



BIGGEST MORNING TEA



On behalf of the Rotary Club of Cessnock, we extended our heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported our Biggest Morning Tea at Marthaville Cottage. Whether you baked a cake, poured a cuppa, provided entertainment, donated generously, or simply joined us for a chat, your presence made the morning so special. Together, we raised much-needed funds to support Cancer Council's vital research, prevention, and support services, and every dollar makes a difference.

Special thanks to our wonderful volunteers and supporters who helped set up, serve, and clean up with big smiles and warm hearts. It was a beautiful morning of community, compassion, and connection. Our official guests were David and Amanda Roach and our MUSO extraordinaire Ron Jackson always gives that special nostalgic magic to any event.

♥ **Thank you for making a difference, one cup at a time**

WESTPAC HELICOPTER GOLF DAY



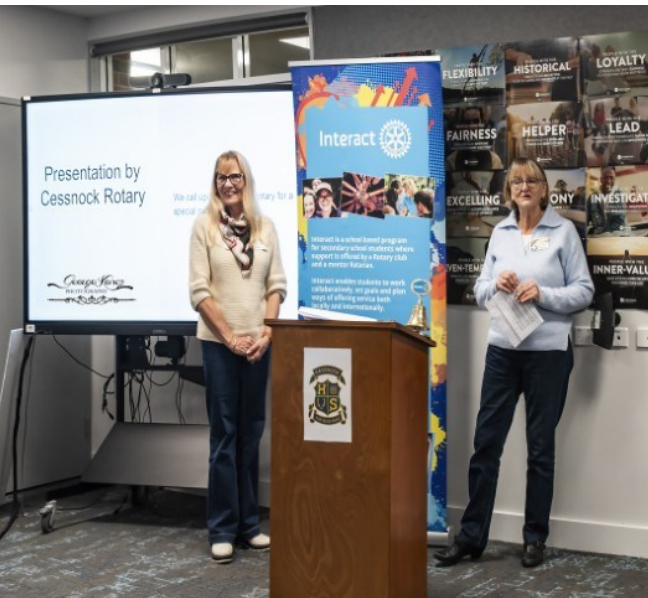
Cessnock Rotary were proud to support the Westpac Helicopter Golf Day at Cypress Lakes by serving up hot sausage sandwiches.

It was a fantastic day for a great cause, and we were thrilled to see so many happy customers enjoying the day and a snag.

Thanks to everyone, your support helps keep the Westpac Rescue Helicopter flying



CLUB FUNCTIONS



Our club is always busy. We are still small in numbers of members but we are always doing something. Scone Time every Friday morning, displaying our new teardrop banner outside Marthaville Cottage. Attending INTERACT meetings at the Cessnock High School. Doing Bunnings BarBQs or just having social nights for a bit of a change. Plus President Vicki with helpers doing breakfast and lunch every Wednesday at the Uniting Church Hall. Never a dull moment.

CESSNOCK ROTARY WINTER SOCIAL NIGHT



Hot Soups, Mulled Wine Pudding & Warm Hearts!

There's nothing like a cosy winter night filled with friendship, purpose, and a little mulled wine pudding to warm the soul.

Tonight, the Rotary Club of Cessnock hosted our Winter Social Evening, and what a beautiful night it was. Guests were treated to a hearty selection of hot soups, mulled wine pudding, apple pie and caramel pie all served with plenty of Rotary hospitality.

A special thank you to our guest speakers, Sue and Katherine from ShelterBox, who inspired us with their stories and the incredible global impact of the ShelterBox program, providing emergency shelter and tools for families robbed of their homes by disaster.

We also took the opportunity to unveil our brand new pull-up banner, part of our campaign to welcome new members and spread the word about the impact Rotary makes, both locally and globally. If you've been thinking about how to give back or meet like-minded people in the community, we'd love to chat with you.

WITH THANKS TO OUR VALUED SPONSORS

The Rotary Club of Cessnock gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our Principal Sponsors: Creightons Funeral Service, Gartelmann Wines, East Coast Law, Oswald Plumbing, and The Railway Hotel Cessnock. Your commitment to our community helps make our service possible. We also extend our sincere thanks to our Community Sponsors: Jurds Real Estate, JWN Electrical and Llynda Nairn Civil Celebrant for their valued support.

These businesses are not just sponsors, they're community champions who share our vision for a stronger, more connected Cessnock. We encourage you to support them whenever you can. By choosing local, you're helping those who help us all.



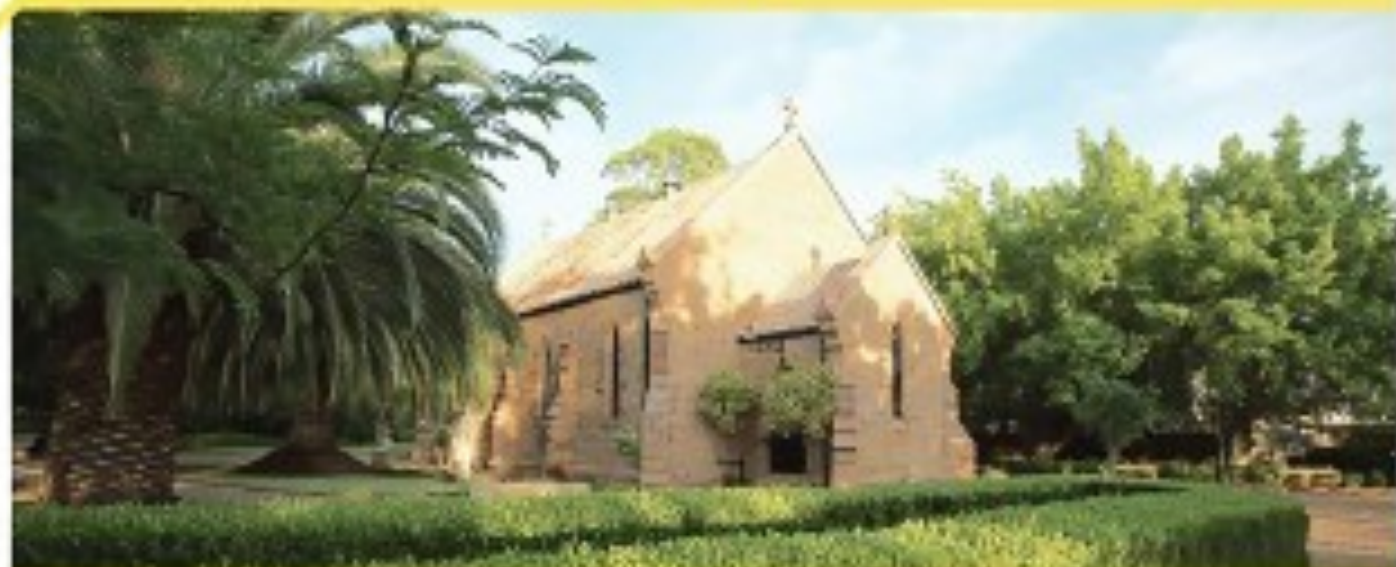
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