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NEWSLETTER: 30TH AUG 2025

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE



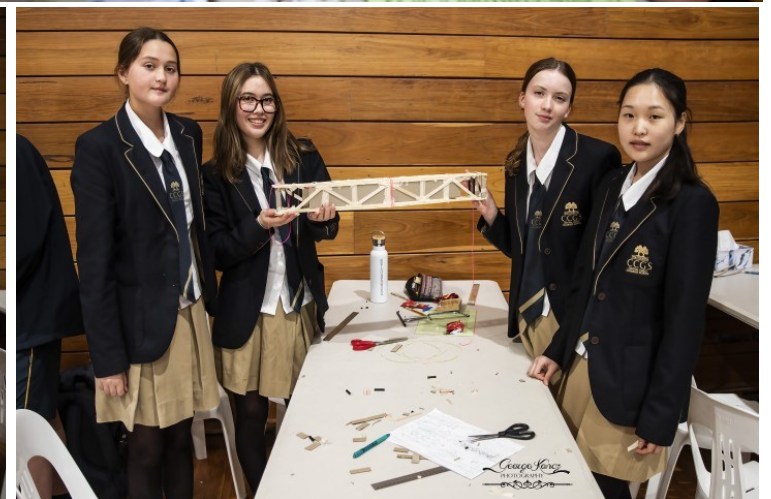
Thursday 28th Aug was the State Final of the 25th Year of The Science and Engineering Challenge at Newcastle University for students from NSW schools.

Congratulations to all the students and a special mention to the students from Emmaus college who won the State Final today.

The Science and Engineering Challenge (SEC) is a nationwide STEM outreach program, established by the University of Newcastle in Australia in 2000, to inspire students in years 5-10 to pursue STEM careers through hands-on, practical activities. The program grew from information nights in rural areas and was a collaborative effort between the University and Rotary clubs, with the first SEC event held in 2000. The SEC has become a significant national program, expanding across states and involving over 500,000 students and 3,600 volunteers in its first 25 years



SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE 2025



Sad to say that this has been my first time in attending this marvellous programme that has been going on for 25 years. In the past years, our members that attended related how good this programme was, but it wasn't really highlighted in today's visual format. I hope that this small effort of mine might just open a few more members' minds, in realising just how much this could help in some of the students in their future career choices. There were a lot of challenges that each school group had to try and solve, in a relatively short amount of time. Each project was based on an understanding of principles of science and an engineering outlook of solving each challenge. I was amazed at the level of competence that the students put into trying to come up with a solution that would not only solve the problem but to outdo the other schools in the final outcomes.

ROTARY PARTICIPATION



There are so many programmes that simply wouldn't exist without our Rotary members. My old friend Brian Atkins has been the force behind this challenge since we were Club Presidents about the 25 years ago period in which this programme started. We car pooled and helped out in some of the events and judging by the photos, it was a well worth effort. Congratulations to all the students that put in such a great effort and to all the volunteers who helped out. Overall it is a very huge commitment but so well worth the effort put in by everyone involved.



A huge thank you to Creighton's for letting us use the window display on the corner of Vincent Street

GUEST SPEAKER BRIAN MORGAN



We had the privilege of hearing from Brian Morgan, who shared his incredible adventure trekking to Everest Base Camp earlier this year with 13 others, average age 67 and the eldest being 80.

The team set out in April 2025, facing freezing nights at, minus 18°C, sleeping two to a tent, and going without showers or baths. Food was often challenging, and not everyone was able to finish, with several requiring medical evacuation. Of the 14 who began, 6 completed the trek including the 80-year-old.

Despite the hardships, their determination raised an amazing \$60,250, which was then matched by the Gates Foundation, making a total of \$120,500 to End Polio Now.

Brian, a seasoned distance runner, said the hardest adjustment was learning to walk slowly. With no roads, every supply had to be carried by Sherpas or animals, all against the backdrop of truly spectacular Himalayan views.

It was wonderful to be joined by members of the [Rotary Club of Kurri Kurri](#), the [Rotary Club of Singleton](#) and [Rotary Club of Singleton Sunrise](#) who came along to hear Brian's inspirational story.

CESSNOCK LEAGUES CLUB GRANTS



A Heartfelt Thank You to [Cessnock Leagues Club](#) The Rotary Club of Cessnock would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Cessnock Leagues Club for their generous financial support of our community service programs.

Their contribution directly supports two of our ongoing initiatives that touch the lives of many in our local community:

Friday Night Sausage Sizzle for PCYC – Every Friday evening, Rotary members serve up a classic sausage sandwich at PCYC Cessnock. This weekly event provides a safe and welcoming space for young people to connect.

Weekly Meals at the Uniting Church Hall – Each week, Rotary works to prepare and serve hot meals for those in need. This program ensures that some of our most vulnerable community members have access to nourishing food and a friendly place to gather.

The financial backing of Cessnock Leagues Club helps us keep these programs running consistently and effectively. It's a reminder of what can be achieved when local organisations joining together with a shared commitment to care for others.

On behalf of our members and the many people who benefit from these initiatives, we say a big thank you to Cessnock Leagues Club for standing with Rotary and supporting the Cessnock community.

CESSNOCK LEAGUES CLUB GRANTS



\$8,000



Rotary Club of Cessnock: Feeding the Needy

To provide free breakfast and lunch
one day a week to the homeless, needy
and vulnerable in the Cessnock LGA



\$2,500



Rotary Club of Cessnock: PCYC Weekly BBQ

To provide a free BBQ for the children
who attend PCYC Cessnock's
U-Nites program, every Friday night



VRA CESSNOCK DISTRICT RESQUE SQUAD



Cessnock Rotary was honoured to attend one of Cessnock VRA's training evenings this week. We witnessed firsthand the dedication, skills and teamwork of this incredible group of volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure they're always prepared for any rescue situation. We were especially impressed by their much-loved and much-needed new heavy vehicle rescue truck, and it was heartening to see how well they care for all their vehicles (one truck looked brand new but is in fact 22 years old). On the night, our club was proudly presented with a framed photo of the new rescue truck, a project that so many in our community, including Rotary, donated towards to make possible. 🚒💙 Our Rotary team fired up the barbecue and served hot tea and coffee, which the VRA volunteers thoroughly enjoyed



What a beautiful morning. Vicki & Penny were out at [Starline Alpacas Farmstay Resort](#) today, and they will be back tomorrow cooking up a big country breakfast for the families of Camp Quality. There was plenty of bacon & eggs, hot coffee on tap... and a few curious alpacas keeping a close eye on the BBQ. For those who don't know, Camp Quality brings fun, laughter and support to kids impacted by cancer and their families. It was wonderful to see so many happy faces, full tummies and giggles around the paddock. We also had A big thank you to Bunnings Cessnock for letting us use the Awareness Table and for donating the Ryobi Home Essential Kit. We really appreciate the support in helping us connect with our community.



LAGUNA ART SHOW



The opening night dinner was such a fabulous event, sitting under the fairy-light lit marquee with floating candles on the tables created such a magical atmosphere. The bush theme was beautifully echoed throughout the marquee, with branches of native trees stretching right up to the ceiling. Guests enjoyed a delicious two-course meal paired with a wonderful selection of wines from local wineries. I'll definitely be making it an annual tradition to attend.

We're especially proud to see our sponsor [Llynda Nairn Celebrant - Your Ceremony, Your Story](#) sharing two beautiful pieces, and our very own Rotarian George showcasing four stunning works of artistic photography. Our member [Michelle Johnson](#) was busy all night assisting with catering, and we understand the produce for the delicious meals were from Michelle's store [Laguna Village Providore](#)

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.



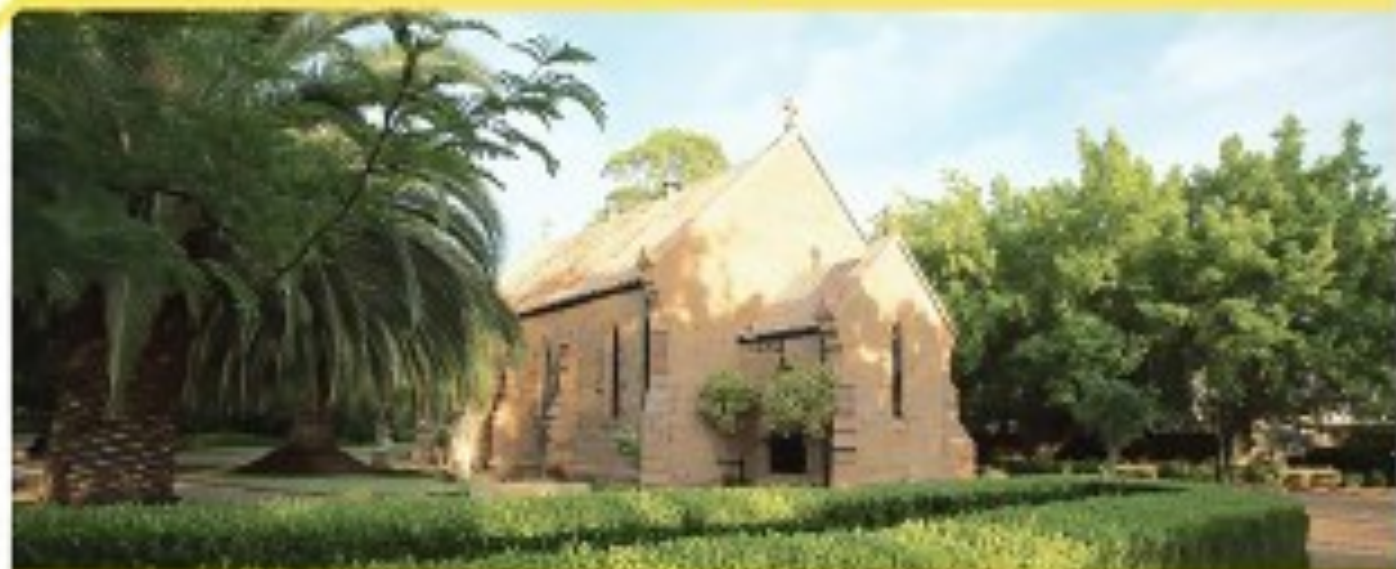
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