

The Klingensmith Challenge



Helping hands across the land

Technology with a dose of creativity is leading to many new ways for Rotarians to engage and organise themselves. In the case of the Rotary Nomads, a new, innovative form of club has been created, targeted towards a particular lifestyle group. Adaptability, as is often the case, is key.

THE members of the Rotary e-Club of Australia Nomads are usually thousands of kilometres apart, spread all across the country.

As the club name suggests, the majority of members are travellers, who go on frequent treks via caravan, motorhome or camper trailer. Their unique model sees Nomads meet weekly online, utilising easy-to-use software that operates on either a computer or a smartphone – a format that works well with their roving lifestyles. Members then “muster” together at various points in the year to lend extra hands to existing rural Rotary clubs.

Chartered in January 2015 with 11 members, the club has quickly grown past 40 members. Many of those involved would otherwise miss out on the chance to serve their community through Rotary, were it not for the Nomads’ flexible structure.

The Nomads recently assisted at the Henley on Todd Regatta in Alice Springs, NT, and helped the Jodi Lee Foundation in the Victoria Goldfields raise \$107,000 towards bowel cancer awareness. Since their inauguration, the club has been involved in supporting the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Days for Girls, Food Bank, Purple House, ShelterBox, Australian Rotary Health, District 9630 Drought Appeal, Calperum Station and more.





Evolve your club experience

Rotary carries a rich history of traditions within its projects and events, the community and, of course, the meetings themselves. But when left without evaluation, tradition can get confused with complacency. Is your club empowering its members to drive its direction? To mix things up where needed? To try out new projects, new formats and new leadership opportunities? Or is fear of change holding your club's membership hostage from evolving and ensuring a vibrant club experience?



Julie Aubry
Regional membership officer for Australia and NZ

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In November, over 30 members, partners and friends of the club gathered on Bribie Island for four days of activities, including a cruise up Pumicestone Passage, learning to play croquet and Christmas festivities. The event was predominantly a chance to build fellowship, however, the members also undertook the planting of 400 trees to stabilise sand dunes on the island.

According to charter president Greg Fallon and his wife Meg, being involved in the club gives their travelling a sense of purpose and adventure, with their desire to lend a hand bringing them to towns they may not have otherwise seen.

“I guess we’re driven by our enthusiasm to help. You get a chance to contribute; it’s all about giving back,” Greg said.

The Nomads’ success is a testament to the virtues of creating a club based on a niche group tailored to their unique needs. It continues to grow through marketing within the RV community and other travelling groups.

If your club could use a helping hand from the Nomads in a community service project or at a fundraising event, visit www.nomads.rotaryclub.asn.au for more information or contact public relations director Wayne Kemmis via blueprint7@bigpond.com.

Even if you feel your club experience is excellent, it couldn’t hurt to check in with members as a precautionary measure. Here are a few places to start:

- Check your club’s pulse with the Rotary Club Health Check – it’s an easy way to evaluate your club’s health and find remedies for club ailments. Make it a fun and engaging club exercise.
- Survey your membership at least once annually to meet the changing needs of members and the community. Providing a membership satisfaction survey is a great way for members to take ownership of the direction in which the club goes. Take a step further by polling potential members and targeted demographics to find out ways Rotary could appeal to them.
- Learn about new flexibility options in membership types and meeting formats. Discuss potential opportunities where this new flexibility may meet the needs of your club and the community. Uncertain about making changes? Give it a trial run by implementing a new option for six to 12 months to see how it fits.