

President's Annual Report 2009/10

It gives me pleasure to present to you the Annual Report of Our Club as seen through my eyes during the 2009 /10 year.

The year started with a major objective in mind and that was that the Club was to host the District Conference. It was stated to me, that as a late arrival as your President that this Rotary year should more or less be some sort of caretaker year with the District Conference as the primary objective.

I really do not think that this was the case, nor did I think that our club would want that to be so.

The result of the year was, I believe, a success with us completing most of the goals which we set ourselves during the year. Indeed the only project which was not completed was the duck race. I am sorry about that.

That we have received the International Presidents Citation for 2009 / 10 is testimony to fact that we have met our major objectives during the year.

So what have we accomplished: It began with the receipt of Wheel Chairs from the Wheel Chair Foundation and then the visit from these people and a ceremony that led to the distribution of the wheelchairs to the needy. We then had the Silver Seniors Trip to the KNP, a favourite not only for the senior seniors but also for our club. We hosted the annual lunch, which was this year the 50th celebration of the Meerhof School 's visit to the Kruger National Park.

In the meantime preparations continued for the last District Conference of 9250.

Christmas parties took place at Masoi, the distribution of Christmas presents to the needy was successfully managed as was the donated football equipment.

Socially we had a number of fellowship meetings and a lunch was arranged at Klipkraal Dam which proved to be wet and cool but full of fun.

We continued to be involved in Books In Homes and a number of Rotarians not only assisted in the production of the books but also in regularly visiting Penreach and helping to sell and distribute the books around the country.

Again we were involved in the youth and your club's involvement in RYLA continues to ensure that leadership in our youth is acknowledged.

Short Exchange Students were interviewed, students were received and students were sent. A wonderful experience for all concerned.

In the meantime preparations continued for the last District Conference of 9250 and for Camp Quality.

The holidays came and went, our work continued and so did the fun. Excellent speakers graced our meetings and new members were inducted. The Anns continued as ever their support for the club. Their contribution to the well being of our club should not be overlooked and is deeply appreciated by all of us. An emphasis on Youth by members ensured that the Interact Club was resurrected. The Interact Club is now doing good work in our community and is an asset. If you remember they helped us with the "Pomp Dag".

An excellent Rotary information evening was held and Rotary information given to new members and to potential members.

Our club members also do much work in the background; these include work with loss of sight, arranging trips, looking after interest groups etc.

The 22nd Camp Quality took place, our club with some assistance from Nelspruit was fully involved. The Camp was a great success, was well organised, community based and shows that our Community cares for the needs of others. A true flagship project.

In the meantime preparations continued for the last District Conference of 9250.

Our Club Bulletin is streets ahead of any other bulletin in the District. The only preclusion of it not winning District awards is that members of the Club are the judges of the District's Bulletin.

I think that if our web site is managed properly then it will with time become a major vehicle of disseminating club information. It was extremely useful as a vehicle of booking for the conference and well as giving pre and post information of the District Conference.

We exceeded our annual giving to the Rotary Foundation, our Foundation is using these funds for amongst many other things, the final push to rid the scourge of Polio from the world.

In the meantime frenetic preparations were taking place for the last District Conference.

We were asked to assist in the Mpumalanga Wine Show. It was a success and we were given over 300 bottles to sell. These were donated by the vineyards represented.

Finally the end of April arrived and with it the District Conference. The District Conference due to excellent leadership and enthusiastic members turned the final 9250 Conference into a great success. Was it the best ever, I have no idea but some people said it was. I do know that it was well organised, had excellent structure and was a lot of fun for all. I think such a Conference, in the organisation and time required can make or break a club. In our case it added strength to the club and we can be justifiably proud in what we accomplished. District 9400 was born.

Behind the scenes some investigation of monies owed to the club by our Loan / Bursary Fund was being chased up and it is pleasing to report that monies that were due are now going to be repaid.

The effort of the Conference took some steam out of us and the Duck Race was cancelled, however the organising of the Golf Day continued apace. Although only a few days ago and final figures at the time of writing are not yet available, it appeared that the day was a financial success, sponsors eventually came to the party, the day was full and again some fun was had by the many Rotarians present.

Of course the year was not without its downs and it is with great sadness that we have to report the deaths of such people as Mavis Van Zyl, Jimmy Erasmus, Tony Richards, Alan Ransom, Charles Pentz, and Eugene McCarthy. Another Honourary Rotarian Charlie Baty is currently in intensive care after being attacked in his home.

These are wonderful people that not only contributed to Rotary but also made huge contributions to society in general. They will be sorely missed.

We also said “au revoir”, to Andrew Middleton who emigrated to Australia and we wish him and the family well.

Thankfully we also gained in membership. Patrick and Julie Mc Phail joined the club as did Ben Erasmus, John Gerrard and Mike Brandon. Kosi Dongo transferred from Ermelo . Ian Donaldson will transfer from Sandton and Joan Schorman from Nelspruit on the 1st of July and there are other possible inductions to take place in the near future.

Our club is strong and will continue to be so. But why? When numbers are declining in the Clubs of our District why does White River continue to thrive and to grow. I have given this a lot of thought and have come up with the following.

1. We have an excellent venue that gives us stability in the knowledge that we know where to meet and also what standard of food to expect. I know that we are a little peeved with Ingwenyama at the moment but believe me it is a good venue.
2. We have our Finances well in hand and together with strong Administration the Club has a solid structure to plan forward.
3. There is succession planning so the club knows who and what is coming and therefore what to expect.
4. An active Youth Programme which sustains an interest in the young but also creates a fertile ground for potential new Rotarians.
5. In this report I have used one word several times and that word is fun. We Rotarians give up our own spare time, we involve ourselves in the work of Rotary at zero cost to the organisation and

often go the extra mile in the projects which we believe in. If we make these sacrifices then let us at least have some fun doing them!

These are my five pillars. I am sure some of you say that there may well be others.

In the report so far with the exception of the names of those that are no longer with the club and those that are new to the club I have not mentioned anyone by name. I now would like to name just three.

One being Mary Sinclair who so unselfishly offered to be my “Queen Bee” for the year. She has done a fine job as President of the Anns this year and I really have appreciated her and the Anns help during this time.

Secondly our DG Albie. Mainly for being quiet and letting me get on with the job. There is nothing worse than being the president of a Club and the DG also a member of the club getting overly involved. Also thank you for your guidance when I have asked for it. Thank you Albie.

Thirdly there is our AG, Frances, also my wife, often not acknowledged but who quietly sits in the background giving me her thoughts and helping me in so many ways. Thank you Frances, you are my inspiration.

At short notice I accepted the job as your President and I asked for your support. You have all been wonderful in the help that you have given. Some, through circumstances, have been able to give more than others but all of you have played a part in making this year a very special one for me. I honestly think that I have learned much and have ended my year as a better person. For that I would like to thank you all most sincerely. You have made a difference!

Finally to Ricky and your team, you have a great year ahead with club members full of enthusiasm. I wish you every success and will of course give you all the support I possibly can.

That ladies and gentlemen, fellow Rotarians concludes the Presidents report for 2009 / 10

Thank you.

Brian Hyson

20 June 2010