

Social networkers celebrate

The Rotarians on Social Networks Fellowship is gearing up to celebrate both its first anniversary as an official global networking group and its 1000th member.

Over 50 of those members hail from our region.

Inaugural chair Simone Carot Collins, an Australian Rotarian, is pleased with what the fellowship has achieved in its first year.

“Although we initially focussed on Facebook, the largest social networking platform, we have expanded our support for a wide variety of networking sites,” she said.

“The members section on our website at rosnf.net is itself a mini social network, providing a central hub for Rotarians and Rotaractors to meet, regardless of whether they like to hang out on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or any other site.”

The Rotarians on Social Networks Fellowship was formed primarily to assist Rotarians to learn how to safely and effectively use social media, which is important for connecting with under 40s. While the younger generations are prolific users of social networks, the over 55s is the largest growing demographic, particularly as grandparents join to keep in closer contact with children and grandchildren.

“Amongst our membership are ‘Champions’ who have nominated themselves to help establish social media presences in their club, District and/or zone, and ‘Experts’ who are willing to assist others learn how to use specific platforms,” Simone said.

Fellowship members played a large role in two social media webinars organised by Rotary International in February, with all four panellists in the first webinar and three of the four panellists in the second, including Simone from the Rotary Club of Freshwater Bay, WA, and Brendon Walker from the Rotary Club of Engadine, NSW.

The benefits of social networking to Rotary Clubs has been apparent in the rapid communication of information, from successful projects that can be duplicated around the world to the quick coordination of disaster relief.

Simone found Facebook invaluable for providing a quick response to the

devastation in Queensland.

“At our club meeting on the Wednesday of the week of the floods in Queensland, I was able to report that a ShelterBox response team was on the ground assessing the needs, and that donations made through District 9830 would be matched dollar for dollar by the Tasmanian Government,” Simone said.

She heard a member of her club passing on the news to a Rotarian in another club at a National Youth Science Forum dinner

on the Friday. “They wondered how I had heard that news so quickly. The answer was simple: Facebook. Rotaractors around Australia were retweeting the news about the District 9830 appeal, which I likewise passed on through Facebook and Twitter, and I follow ShelterBox Australia, as well as the other ShelterBox pages, on Facebook, so I see their updates straight away on my wall. I don’t need to watch the news anymore. If something significant happens, I’ll see it on Facebook straight away.” ■

President Ray’s Vice-Regal visit



Rotary International President Ray Klingensmith and Judie visited Australia several times during this memorable Rotary year and there were many highlights. However, the big success story was his visit to Adelaide, South Australia, where more than 800 people attended a combined dinner for Rotarians, partners and friends in Districts 9500 and 9520 (see story page 15, May, RDU). While the Klingensmiths were in the City of

Churches, Rotary District Governors Malcolm Lindquist (District 9520) left, and Ed King (District 9500), right, arranged a Vice-Regal reception with the State Governor of South Australia, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce and his wife, Liz at historic Government House, which provided a wonderful backdrop for official photographs in front of some of the building’s beautiful stained glass windows.