



# Rotary Clubs fostering Youth Driver Awareness



## Newsletter

WINTER EDITION, July 2009

Welcome to the latest edition of the RYDA Newsletter - we hope that you enjoy reading our quarterly update on events and developments with the RYDA road safety education program.

### RYDA Expands Footprint

#### New Venues

The RYDA program continued to grow with the introduction of new venues in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia.



Until recently, Mackay was as far north as the RYDA program had ventured. That all changed when, in April,

the Rotary Club of Airlie Beach hosted its first RYDA day. Congratulations to Pier Vallegra and his Committee for a very successful day.

In NSW, RYDA was invited to run its first program in the Newcastle area, when the management of Tocal Agricultural College offered use of their first class facilities for students from Maitland. This invitation followed the success of the RYDA program at Tocal's sister college, Yanco Agricultural College in Leeton, NSW. The Pilot day, supported by the Rotary Clubs of Paterson and East Maitland, was very successful and augers well for future programs at the venue.



A little further up the NSW coast, Murray Nicol led a team of Rotarians from Nelson Bay in conducting their first RYDA program. The program was very well received, with one teacher writing "volunteers and personnel were first class. Thank you all for your efforts and organisation".

Over in South Australia, Rotarians from the Clare Valley held their first program, hosting students from five local highschools. Congratulations to Dick Wilson and his team, who have already commenced planning for their next RYDA program.

#### Established Venues

Just as the team from St Ives were putting through the last students before a well-earned break, the Committee at the Penrith Venue were gearing up for a busy RYDA year. Liane Leslie, who has settled into her role as Sydney Bookings/Venue Coordinator spent most of the Autumn at the St Ives venue. She reports that "the dedication and commitment of the Day Managers, volunteers and presenters made it a very rewarding place to work".

On the South Coast of NSW, Rotarians from Bateman's Bay and Bega conducted two successful programs, seeing over 500 students from 11 high schools through their doors. Elsewhere in NSW, Ken Patterson and his team hosted RYDA at Taree for the fifth year. In all, 2,500 students from the Greater Taree region have been educated through the RYDA program thanks to the efforts of Ken and his team.

The Mt Cotton Training Centre (Brisbane South) was the first venue for District 9630. Four RYDA days have been run there in the last month and a further 10 are booked in the coming few months.

In Tasmania, Rotarians in Devonport and Hobart conducted their RYDA programs. Ongoing demand for the program in Hobart will see Rotarians expand their program in 2010, while the Devonport Committee saw a massive increase of 65% in student numbers this year.

Finally, Rotarians from Swan Districts in Perth have conducted their second RYDA program for students from Guildford Grammar hosting over 120 students while the Rotary Club of South Perth-Burswood hosted 171 students from Wesley College.



Rotary Clubs in NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, WA

## Out of the School ... in the Zone



Conducting the RYDA road safety education program at an out of school venue is a fundamental aspect of the program. Of course it would often be easier to conduct RYDA in a school using their classrooms and facilities however professional advice and our many years of experience indicates that taking the students to an outside venue dramatically highlights the road safety message.

In a busy school calendar we generally only have one day available so it is critical that we obtain the student's full attention and achieve maximum impact with our message in the limited hours available. An out of school venue makes the day special and memorable - students are also generally more alert and attentive when taken outside of their regular classroom environment. In addition, an outside RYDA venue gives students the opportunity to participate in the practical stopping distance demonstration – they get to see the distance it takes to stop a vehicle traveling at different speeds and to realise that an extra 10 Km/h can in some circumstances have tragic consequences. No video or PowerPoint presentation in a classroom can replace the life changing personal experience that students gain from actively participating in a real-life emergency car stopping demonstration.

The extra effort involved in taking students to an out of school venue is indeed a very worthwhile investment to help young people to stay safe on Australian roads.

**Greg Rappo - Director of Program Development**

## RDAC Meeting

Every year RYDA Australia hosts an important meeting for all RYDA District Leaders. This provides the opportunity for leaders to learn more about the exciting new developments occurring as part of the ongoing program improvements, meet with other RYDA District leaders, review program operations and much more. This year, the meeting will take place on Thursday 17th September and Friday 18th September 2009 at the BOC office in North Ryde.



RYDA & Rotary have received positive press at venues around Australia during the past few months. RYDA is a 'good news' story, of great interest to local media and provides Rotary with a golden opportunity to promote increase community awareness about the great work undertaken by Rotary.

## Spotlight on...

### Pat Parker District 9680 (NSW) St Ives



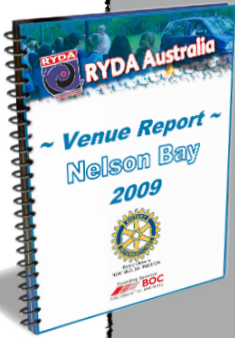
Pat was born in the NSW country town of Coonamble and came to Sydney in 1957, after obtaining a position as a junior clerk with the Sydney Turf Club. He was appointed Racing Secretary at aged 24 and Chief Executive at 39, a position he held until his retirement in December 2000.

Pat joined the Rotary Club of Pennant Hills in 1979 and was President in 1991-92 and is still actively engaged in the Clubs' activities. He became aware of the RYDA program when his club sponsored the Pennant Hills High School to attend the St Ives facility and some years later, after seeing a notice in the District Governors' newsletter, he volunteered his services as a Day Manager. Pat hopes that one day the RYDA program will be available to all year eleven students in Australia, because he believes that our youth are the nations greatest asset.



## New Resource Available Student Information Magnet

RYDA Australia has developed a new resource as a way to encourage more students to attend the RYDA Program. The idea is the Student Information Magnet is sent home with the school permission note about a month before they attend the Program. Please let the National Office know well in advance when you need the Student Information Magnets for your students.



## Venue Reports : How did it all go?

It is always important to review and evaluate the conduct of any Rotary program and this is especially important with delivery of a professional road safety education program for young people. Of course this review is often done as an informal gathering of Rotarians after the event to discuss what worked well and what could be done differently next time. RYDA Australia has recently developed a formal written Venue Report that is provided to venue committees to assist in the process of evaluation and review.

The Venue Report provides a wide range of information and feedback including details on school attendance, Rotary involvement, delivery of program content, media coverage and general operational issues specific to the venue. Importantly the report includes details on the Student and Teacher Evaluation surveys conducted during the various program days – this survey information allows venue committees to benchmark their presentation of the RYDA Program versus the national average.

## Commonwealth Bank Community Grants

Applications for the Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Fund Community Grants program are now being accepted. The grant is open to those groups/projects that support the health and well being of Australian children. Applications close at 5.00pm (EST) on Friday 31 July, 2009.

More information can be found at [www.commbank.com.au/communitygrants](http://www.commbank.com.au/communitygrants)

## Presenter Spotlight

LTrent is a leading New South Wales based driving school that was established in 1969. LTrent have nine branches in the Sydney Metropolitan, a fleet of over 120 cars and a company creed to “ensure that new drivers are taught to drive correctly and safely so they are equipped to survive on the roads”.

When Rotarians were establishing the Penrith Venue in 2006, they went looking for a team of driving instructors who were skilled in the art of classroom teaching and could commit to a program of Penrith’s size - three driving instructors per program day for over 40 days per year. Trent Driving School presented as the perfect fit. Since then, the dedicated and professional team from LTrent have participated at many RYDA programs, including Homebush and have even jumped on planes and travelled to some of our more remote venues when a suitable local presenter could not be sourced. We wish to acknowledge LTrent - the company and the individuals - for their dedication to the RYDA program and the safety of our youth.

Right: LTrent Manager, Jeff McDougall (left) with RYDA Narrabri Chair, Bill Phillips (centre) and Rotarian volunteers  
Bottom: LTrent instructors with students from Homebush Boys High



## Our Police – Your Choice

Police officers across Australia play a vital role in presenting the “Your Choice” session in the RYDA program. In NSW, a specially trained team of 40 School Liaison Police (SLP) are available in six regions across the state to assist in conduct of the RYDA program. The SLP group was established in 2007 to help young people build stronger relationships with the community and to help shape the attitudes and behaviour of our next generation of adults.



Orana Local Area Command school liaison officer Martin Paice (photograph courtesy of the Daily Liberal)



Senior Constable Graeme Canty talks with students from Penrith High School at the RYDA program

A typical member of the SLP is Senior Constable Martin Paice who is based at Dubbo in the Western region of NSW. The story of Senior Constable Paice and his involvement in the RYDA program was recently reported by Anna Yeo in the Dubbo Daily Liberal newspaper – following is an extract from the full page article.

At RYDA, Senior Constable Paice shared his story about delivering “the knock”, describing it as one of the hardest things he has ever done in his time as a police officer. “To tell a daughter or son that their 70- or 80-year-old father or mother has passed away is difficult, but to tell a father that his 17-year-old daughter has been killed in a car crash is ... very hard,” he said.

“I was asked by my supervisor to tell the parents of a 17-year-old girl who had been killed in a car crash in Victoria that their daughter was dead. “I remember walking up to the front door and asking this girl’s father if it was okay for me to come in. “It’s hard because you know that at that stage they know it’s going to be bad news.

“I sat her father down and told him that his daughter was killed in a car crash ... I just saw the life get sucked out of him. “I can still see that man’s face clear in my mind, as if it was yesterday. “It is something that will stay with me for a long time.”

Speed was a factor in the crash that killed the 17-year-old girl that day, and today - six years on - Senior Constable Paice said it was frustrating to see that the message still wasn’t getting through to drivers.

He said he didn’t see car crashes as accidents, but rather as foolish acts. “These people aren’t thinking about their loved ones when they speed or drink-drive,” he said. “It’s not just fatalities, some people are left with serious injuries like brain damage or the loss of limbs. “They aren’t thinking about all the people who could be affected. “Car crashes are so easily prevented by sticking to the speed limits, wearing your seat belt and not driving when you drink.”

Senior Constable Paice has been involved with the RYDA driving program for the past two years and hopes to continue his role for years to come. He believes the program (RYDA) is the right education young drivers need to be safe on the road and hopes that extra education about dangerous driving behaviour will save the lives of people on our roads.



Rotarians from The Rotary Club of Paterson with Senior Constables Brian Coffey and Julie Perry at the recent Maitland RYDA program



Pictured: Bega's RYDA page contains photos, quotes & media articles celebrating the success of their recent program.



## Changing of the Guard

As the annual Rotary cycle clicks over we will see four new RYDA District Chairs appointed to RDAC. In District 9600 (Brisbane Nth/Sunshine Coast), we welcome the first appointed District Chair, Merv Paddison. In Districts 9630 (Sth East Brisbane), 9690 (Western Sydney) and 9830 (Tasmania), longtime RYDA champions Marie Grant, Len Winter and Kevin Preece have decided to step aside from the role of Chair, making way for Phil Robinson, Judy Kell and Charles Cook to take their (respective) places. RYDA supporters since the program began in their districts, the four new Chairs will be great additions to the team of RYDA District leaders. We wish to thank Marie, Len and Kevin for their invaluable contribution as District Chairs. We look forward to their continued involvement in their local programs.

## Keep Your Venue up-to-date on the Web

RYDA's new and improved website is an excellent resource for students, teachers, presenters, sponsors and other interested members of your community to learn more about your local RYDA program.

Each venue is assigned its own page, linked from the main site. Venue pages are uploaded with personalised critical information about your program, such as dates, directions to the venue, information for teachers and details of local sponsors and supporters. Also added to the page are photographs from your program, quotes from students and teachers and links to media articles.

There is no better way to share information about your program than through the RYDA website. Like any website it is important that information is kept relevant and up-to-date but this is even more important now that students are encouraged to visit the website regularly through reminders on their wrist-bands and Certificates of Attendance. You don't need to be a web-wizz - we'll do the hard work for you. Just think about what you would like your webpage to contain and contact Brooke at the National Office ([brooke@ryda.org.au](mailto:brooke@ryda.org.au)).

Why not wander around the website and have a look at what other venues are up to? You'll not only learn more about other programs, but you may pick up a few ideas for your own page.



## Message from the Chair (Terry Birss)

### On the road again, and again, and ...

After driving for about 120 hours from Sydney to Perth – the Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) hours required in NSW and Vic - would this experience make you a better driver, assuming you started out as a novice behind the wheel? This question was posed by the Sydney Morning Herald (editorial 21/5/09). 'Most likely not, it answered .... it's a question of quality time'.

The GLS imposes a significant burden on busy parents, however research is indicating that strengthening the driving experiences and

supervision of new drivers through GLS can lead to significant reductions in crashes both before and after obtaining a driver's licence.

Queensland gives a credit for learner drivers undergoing professional driver instruction (a one-hour lesson with an accredited driver trainer will count towards three hours in the logbook). Research also indicates that motivation and learning are important ways that could contribute to reduction of crash risk. The RYDA Program is conducted by accredited professionals and plays an important role in developing and reinforcing messages that help keep young Australians safe.

We will initiate discussions with each State government to determine how a GLS credit for attendance at the RYDA Program might be achieved.

# Competitions

Feedback from our web-based competition has been very positive. Recent winning entries came from Cecil Hills High School (Penrith, NSW), Marist Regional College (Devonport, Tas) and Normanhurst Boys High School (St Ives, NSW).

When asked: *What did you learn from RYDA?* Ayla from Marist Regional College replied "I now realise how easily crashes occur from just one simple decision. [The program was] very informative and well worthwhile".

## BOC - Founding Sponsor

There are no higher priorities for BOC as an organisation, than the health and safety of their employees, customers, suppliers and the broader community. As part of this genuine commitment, they provide their employees with internal safety schemes, such as the BOC Healthy Choices initiative and the benchmarked BOC Driver Safety programme, which promotes safe driving behaviour 100% of the time.



2008 RDAC Leaders outside BOC Offices in North Ryde

The RYDA Program therefore has great synergies with their own BOC safe driving culture - and this is why they have been keen to support the development of this Youth education initiative for younger drivers. BOC employees participate as volunteers at many of the workshops and provide background administration support to help ensure the ongoing success of the RYDA Program. They are subsequently most proud to be the Founding Sponsor of RYDA.

BOC became the founding sponsor of the RYDA Programme in 2004 when it was a small yet growing program. Through the sponsorship money BOC have contributed, RYDA have been able to expand the programme from being a local NSW initiative to venues across NSW and interstate to Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.



## RYDA Calendar

### July

NSW: Maitland, Penrith  
QLD: Bundaberg, Caloundra

### August

NSW: Homebush, Penrith,  
Woolgoolga  
QLD: Mt Cotton, Nambour

### September

NSW: Armidale, Homebush, Penrith  
QLD: Mackay, Mt Cotton

## RYDA - What's Happening

~July-September 2009~

July-September is traditionally a quieter time for the RYDA program with many schools favouring attendance in the last term. However, there's still plenty of activity planned, including several pilot programs.

In NSW, Rotarians from District 9690 will be kept busy overseeing two large venues, Homebush and Penrith. The team from the Rotary Club of Paterson will be back to support a second RYDA day at Tocal College (Maitland) and we will see two new venues from District 9650 open at Armidale and Woolgoolga.

In Qld, demand from schools has resulted in a further ten program dates being booked at the Mt Cotton venue. Rotarians from Bundaberg will run a pilot program in July and further North, the Mackay team has plans for a five day RYDA event, expanding on last year's two day program.

Caloundra and Nambour on the Sunshine Coast have their first RYDA days booked for July and August respectively. This will be a great test for the venues with the eventual goal to make RYDA available for the 3,000 year 11 students across this region.

We wish organisers and volunteers very best wishes for successful programs.

When planning your RYDA program, don't forget to get in touch with the National Office early and make sure you get your program Day Book, wrist bands, student cards and other goodies designed to make your days run smoothly.



For information about RYDA,  
please see [www.ryda.org.au](http://www.ryda.org.au)  
or contact 1300 127 642 or [info@ryda.org.au](mailto:info@ryda.org.au).

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