

# 1977-1978 Bill Durham

In 1977 the most popular film was Star Wars with Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Cushing and Alec Guinness. The most popular song was; Tonight's the Night (Gonna be Alright) by Rod Stewart.

The President of the Rotary Club of Bendigo for 1977-78 was Bill Derham.



Bill had taken over Bendigo Pottery when it was on its knees (The business began in 1858 in the gold-fields era) and with a clever marketing strategy, he started a resurgence and a renewed interest in local, handmade, Australian pottery.

Bendigo Pottery became a much loved and admired Bendigo and Australian icon. The National Museum has the Bendigo Pottery collection on display.

President Bill made it is his 'number 1' priority in his year to support Club member and District Governor, Ray Downey in staging the District Conference. Along with the assistance of the Rotary Club of Bendigo South and Inner Wheel, our Club held a very successful District Conference.

1100 Rotarians plus their partners and their guests attended the event.

Reports from the District Conference acclaimed it was the very best District Conference for many years.

*District Governor and member, Ray Downey. He is pictured here as Strathfield Shire's Citizen of the Year, with Shire President, Cr Nonette Gordon (left) and his wife, Ollie*





The Club held another successful Art Show which was held after the District Conference. The Art Show raised \$5,300. For the first time, President Bill introduced an opening ceremony with gifts for the award winners.

The winning painting was kindly donated to the Bendigo Base Hospital and Home.

In honor of member and Past District Governor, Ern Granger, who past away during the year, President Bill introduced the Ern Granger Memorial Apprenticeship Award.



Today, every year, the President awards the Ray Downey Award (in memory of District Governor Ray Downey) for a new member who has excelled with their commitment to the ideals of Rotary.

During the year, President Bill held a Past President's Day. Reports suggest that the Past Presidents had certainly not lost their touch in how to conduct a meeting and entertain the members!

During the year the Club received a visit from the 'Flying' Rotarians.

Members also enjoyed a trip to see Tiki and John's Theatre and Music Hall and then annual Xmas Party was held at the Golf Club. A 'Bowl's Night' was also enjoyed by members and their guests.



Projects during the year, raised over \$8,000 whilst the major fund raising efforts went towards a Gastroscope for the Bendigo Base Hospital. A life-pack was also provided for the Ambulance Services.

Large-print books were also given to the Base Hospital Home, Strath-Haven and McDonald House for the Deaf.

Our four-legged friends were not forgotten with significant donations to the RSPCA.

The Axedale Youth Camp recorded another year of record bookings and they received \$6,900 from the Department of Youth. The funds helped with all the maintenance, repairs and painting that was required.

The Youth Camp was becoming such an enormous responsibility for the Club that a second committee was formed to assist manage the camp.



Rotaract were very active during the year with raising money for Miss Country Victoria Charity Queen. They were also involved assisting Meals on Wheels and providing furniture, crockery, cutlery and cleaning equipment for the Mother's Centre at St Luke's.