

# CAMDEN ROTARY CLUB



Camden Local Government Area (LGA) is the fastest growing LGA in Australia with a population forecast to increase from the current 120,000 to nearly ¼ million by 2040. It covers a total land area of approximately 200 square kilometers (77 square miles). The small country town of Camden is about an hour's drive SW of Sydney and Canberra is a further 2 hours' drive SW of Camden

The Camden area, whose original inhabitants were the Tharawal and Gundungurra people, is associated with the early history of the Colony of New South Wales when it became known as *The Cowpastures*, named by Governor Hunter, after cattle that had strayed 75kms (46 miles) from the Farm Cove settlement in Sydney were discovered here in 1795. As the cows discovered it is prime farming country.

Due to the early European settlers, primarily the Macarthur family, who established flourishing wool, wine and wheat industries here, the area is said to be 'The Birthplace of the Nation's Wealth' as noted on the sign below located just outside the entrance to the town of Camden.

John Macarthur, who owned Camden Park Estate, named the property after Lord Camden, the Colonial Secretary, who had ordered Governor King to grant Macarthur 2,000 acres in the Cowpastures area.

In 1797 John Macarthur bought some Dutch-Spanish sheep to the new colony. In 1801 Governor King sent some of the fleeces from the stud to Sir Joseph Banks, supervisor of the Royal Merino Stud at Kew, for an opinion on their quality. British woollen manufacturers found the wool as good as the merino wools of Spain, which had had a monopoly of the English market. However, Spanish supplies, always limited, were being cut off by the French blockade.

Macarthur in England in 1803 saw his chance. Australia, he wrote, "could produce wool to any extent" in its "illimitable forests". Lord Camden allowed Macarthur to take to New South Wales the first pure merino rams and ewes ever exported from the Royal Stud at Kew, and they went on to develop the huge Australian wool industry.

**Camden Rotary Club** was initially chartered in 1947. It currently has approximately 50 members and meets at 7pm every Thursday night at Camden Golf Club. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and concerns, Zoom coverage is provided in addition to the normal face-to-face format.

Recent and ongoing projects include:

- ❖ Donations to local charities '*Right Start Foundation*' and '*Shining Stars Foundation*'.
- ❖ Golf Day and Christmas Raffle (our biggest fundraisers to support these and other charities).
- ❖ Participation in '*Polio Free Africa*' Rotary international project.
- ❖ Participation in '*End Polio Now*' international project (worldwide polio eradication with only Pakistan and Afghanistan remaining).
- ❖ Funding and support of the *National Youth Science Forum* (NYSF) students.
- ❖ *U Turn the Wheel* (youth responsible driving program).
- ❖ *Pride of Workmanship* (recognising members of our community who give their best in serving the community through their vocation).
- ❖ *Turning Point* (supporting homeless and disadvantaged families).
- ❖ Involvement in RYPEN and RYLA (supporting young people through leadership, vocational and life skills training).
- ❖ Providing lamingtons and coffee to Camden Hospital staff in recognition of their efforts during Covid-19 pandemic.

In recent years we have also been active in the international field supporting causes in Nepal, Cambodia and the Pacific Islands.

The twinning with the Rotary Club of Cirencester is seen as a very positive step and in line with Camden RC's earlier twinning with a Japanese Rotary club. Apart from joint meetings, it will allow members to learn about each other's countries, share ideas on potential projects, and also provide hospitality when members travel to the UK or Australia.