57 Years ago, on a warm Friday night on the 6 February 1959 delegates from 54 rotary clubs in the District gathered in the beautifully decorated Killara Memorial Hall. It was packed to capacity to welcome our initial 26 members. The Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai was born.

Our first project was to assist Sir Eric Woodward Memorial School at St Ives for children with severe disabilities.

Many of our projects have continued for 20 or 30 years or more, supporting international, local, business and our youth communities. Some of the most notable include:

* Support for Lifeline Harbour to Hornsby
* Gordon Markets
* Rotary Youth programs, such as leadership camps, Model United Nations camps and overseas youth exchange
* Recognition of people in local businesses who go the ‘extra mile’ through our Pride of Workmanship awards
* **Achievement – a 3-day Management Workshop’** conducted annually for 15 years. 250 companies from all over Australia and New Zealand considered it a high value activity and nominated their young employees with management potential to attend. 1,250 young people benefited from the experience. The feedback from those companies gave us that ‘**warm fuzzy feeling’** of satisfaction - bolstered when we distributed the profits of up to $40,000 each year to needy organisations.
* More recently we providedsolar power for **Katuuso School in Uganda** which allowed for marked improvements in use of computers, night time use of the school with lighting, electronic filtration of water – and refrigeration of food for the school feeding program
* **One program that many of us may not have noticed, was in East Timor** – Some of our members assisted in the conduct of the first youth leadership training course in Dili. As the United Nations prepared to withdraw from East Timor, leadership was so desperately needed to avoid a return to anarchy.

East Timor had no other forum for training future leaders. This leadership course was a huge success and were followed by others. I believe some of the graduates were involved in the running of the country’s first free elections

**As Graham Timms said at the time: “This may well be one of the most significant international projects we have ever undertaken.”**

The Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai has been and continues to be involved in too many projects to list them all.

Many of us will remember that in 1998 only 15 club members had access to E-mail or regularly used a computer. In less than 12 months that number had doubled thanks to probably the most significant fellowship activity introduced to our club until that time. It was due to a computer training idea proposed by Tony McClelland. **Compaware**. So simple it was brilliant – that club members who know a little about computers teach those who do not, partners included.

To most of us these days, use of a computer is old hat.

But most of all Compaware enhanced the fellowship among members and their partners – the cornerstone of our continued success.

**Creating Genuine friendships**, fellowship and having fun while we busy ourselves helping those less fortunate. It gives us the ‘feel good’ feeling. That is the what we are about.

**Having fun while doing good is the greatest addictive drug in the world.** That is what helps us grow.

We are an exciting and vital Club that is doing great things

That is why we are such a successful club!

Please raise your glasses to the Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai.