

## **Rotarians Against Malaria**

### *Annual Report 2006-2007*

I prepare this annual report having completed my term as Chairman of **Rotarians Against Malaria** with a sense of great satisfaction. The result of another year of remarkable dedication and enthusiasm by a relatively small number of Rotarians, who form the District and Regional committees within the RAWCS structure, is quite amazing even by the high standards of Rotary.

RAM continues to receive the support of Rotary Clubs across most Rotary Districts, with donations being directed to the Adopt-a-Village program in both Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. PDG Richmond Manyweathers maintains our record of these donations in an extemporary manner, making the task of record keeping and preparation of "Adoption Certificates" a much less onerous task for Ron Seddon and myself. Donations to the A-a-V program to the end of June 2007 total more than \$450,000.00. To this we can add the funds provided by Clubs and the Rotary Foundation through a number of Matching Grants, approx \$60,000, specifically for the supply of bednets.

Some of the success of the A-a-V program in both countries must be attributed to the well-presented websites. The PNG website, [www.ram.com.pg](http://www.ram.com.pg), was completely rebuilt during this year and is an excellent example of an interactive, easily navigated record of RAM activities. The Solomon Island website, [www.ramguadalcanal.com.sb](http://www.ramguadalcanal.com.sb), provides a full list of all donations and "adopted" villages as well as an excellent pictorial presentation of malaria control work.

Ron Seddon and his team in Port Moresby have been through some difficult times (not of their making) with their bednet supply contract for the national program funded by The Global Fund. Carefully scrutiny by the Global Fund has resulted in the restriction of fund distribution in several instances. I am sure that these difficulties will be resolved in due course and will have no bearing on the Adopt-a-Village program.

It is a great concern that fake malaria drugs are being found in PNG. Quality control measures need to be tightened and to this end RAM has acquired two mini-laboratories to assist with the testing of drugs.

The distribution of the 28000 bednets delivered to Honiara by RAM in May 2006, was achieved well ahead of schedule due to the tireless work of the Ministry of Health workers. Most of the rural communities of Guadalcanal had received bednets by the end of the year.

Our application to the Rotary Foundation for a 3H grant (US\$200,000) to assist with the control of malaria in the urban area of Honiara was successful. The Rotary Club of Kenmore (D9600) is the International Partner in the application and D 9830 (Tasmania) has provided the sponsor contribution of 10%. A cash flow proposal has been prepared and work will commence as soon as funds are available. The initial supply of bednets and residual spraying equipment and chemicals should be in place before the end of the year. I am sure that the extortionary success of the original 3H Grant helped greatly in the Foundation approval of this second application.

Direct donations from a number of Rotary Clubs and individuals allowed the installation of seven water tanks at Health Clinics around Honiara following a request from the Ministry of Health and WHO to assist in the implementation of an extensive trial of new antimalarial drugs for treating pregnant women. This practical assistance received considerable local media coverage.

RAWCS Volunteers will commence work on the construction of storage sheds and renovation of rural health clinic laboratories on Guadalcanal in July. Five teams from South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania, are in place to undertake six projects during the dry season. Materials have been ordered, site works prepared by local contractors, and weather permitting the work will be completed by the end of October. Plans are being prepared for similar work to be undertaken in another Province next year.

A very successful RAM Conference was held over the last weekend in May at Burpengary, Q'land, with RAM enthusiasts travelling from all areas of Australia, PNG and Solomon Islands. At the plenary sessions excellent presentations from Dr Jeffrey Hii WHO researcher in Honiara; Prof. Nick Hunt and RAM sponsored research student Leia Hee from the University of Sydney; and our own Ron Seddon from Port Moresby stimulated a great deal of discussion. The Saturday evening dinner, hosted by the Rotary Club of Caboolture, was an outstanding success. Dr Denise Doolan gave an interesting presentation on her work as one of Australia's top malaria research scientists. This gathering, totally self-funded, provides a great opportunity for us to exchange ideas and be updated with the latest news on malaria activities within our own region of interest and the wider malaria scene. The meeting ratified the proposal by incoming Chairman PDG Bill Dethlefs on the structure of the National RAM Committee for the future. It is proposed to hold another conference at the same location early in June 2008.

Having completed a three-year term as Chairman of the RAM committee I would like to thank all those who made my task so rewarding. The enthusiastic support of all District and Regional RAM representatives has been outstanding. I welcome the opportunity to continue on the National Committee as '*Solomon Islands Coordinator*'.

**Rotarians Against Malaria** is an excellent example of how Rotary Australia World Community Service is able to make a huge difference to the life and well being of others in need of our assistance.



*Peter Thomas*  
*Chairman 2004 – 2007*  
*Rotarians Against Malaria*