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50 YEARS OF RANGERS MINISTRY IN AUSTRALIA



Petersham Royal Rangers Cica 1966 – Photo courtesy of Bruce Thompson

From small beginnings in 1965 at Petersham Assembly of God, the Rangers ministry in Australia has had an amazing impact on the lives of children, young people and their families across every state and territory of the Australian continent.

In 1965, Ps John Woodham (from Petersham AOG) and his family ventured on an overseas holiday which included England and the U.S.A. While in the U.S.A., Ps John heard about and saw a new ministry for boys called Royal Rangers. He immediately recognised its potential for Australia.

After the initial start of Royal Rangers in Petersham, a second group started in Newcastle. It was in November 1965 where Royal Rangers was officially approved as a recognised ministry for boys at the N.S.W. State Pastors Conference. It would be another year before girls would be included due to many girls also wanting to be involved.

1971 was a big year of firsts for the Rangers ministry here in Australia which included the first Gold Medal of Achievement, the first woman in the world to receive a Leaders Medal of Achievement, and the first National Training Camp for leaders held in Pennant Hills, Sydney.

The Gold Medal of Achievement (GMA) is the highest award that a Ranger can achieve. A little over 400 of these awards have been achieved. The first in Australia was presented to Bruce Thompson N.S.W. in 1971. Other first GMA's presented were Queensland (1973), South Australia (1973) and Victoria (1977).

Ranger leaders from Australia have also played an integral part of establishing the Rangers ministry in other countries such as Singapore, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Fiji and Kazakhstan.

The Rangers ministry in Australia has had highly dedicated national directors over the years who have been passionate about the children and young people of Australia. With a desire to see churches use the Rangers ministry as a way to evangelise, equip and empower children, young people and their families; Ps Will Thorne, Warren Billson and current national director Ps Liz Robinson have all played a part in the continuing development of Rangers in Australia.

Much has changed in the Rangers ministry over the years however one thing is certain, the core values of the Rangers ministry (our Pledge, Code, Motto, Golden Rule, our emblem and what it stands for) along with its aims and goals will never change. Our commitment to developing children and young people mentally, physically, spiritually and socially in accordance to Luke 2.52 will continue to be our focus as we continue to develop our children and young people to become active disciples of Jesus Christ.

The true history of the Rangers ministry is not the leadership training, Gold Medal of Achievements, Field Days, state camps, Camporamas and so on. The true history is the lives of individuals and families changed because Jesus was shared with others through the use of the Rangers ministry in a way that is best expressed by the local church to their local community.

HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY RANGERS

On Wednesday, 7th January 2015, 27 special guests arrived on site at Camporama. They travelled from Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and other parts of New South Wales to be a part of celebrating 50 years of the Rangers ministry in Australia.



Special guests included Ian & Dawn Phillips, former state directors for S.A.

Our special guests included from the past: a national director of Rangers, state commanders, national Committee members and others who have played vital roles in the continuing development of the Rangers ministry in Australia since 1965.



Special Rangers 50th Birthday party lunch for all attendees and special guests

A special birthday lunch was enjoyed by all followed by a Guard of Honour made up of all of those in camp who clapped in gratitude as our guests walked into the meeting room. A special afternoon rally was then held where young and old worshipped together in thanks to God for the blessings of 50 years of ministry. The rally included a brief history of the Rangers ministry in Australia followed by a video showing photos from the past to the present. National Director Pastor Liz Robinson spoke briefly

about the past 50 years, then focused on the future of the ministry and what lies ahead.



Bruce Thompson (N.S.W.) & Ps Alan Morris (Qld) at the 50 year celebrations. They were the first to receive The Gold Medal of Achievement in their respective states with Bruce also being the first G.M.A. recipient in Australia.

Rangers and young leaders were given the opportunity to dedicate themselves to taking the ministry into the future. Over 30 Rangers and leaders under the age of 25 repsonsed. Each was annointed with oil and prayed for individually.



Former National Director Warren Billson cuts the cake with the help of the two youngest Rangers at the 50th Anniversary celebrations at Camporama 2015

A large 50th Birthday cake was brought out and cut by two of our youngest Rangers at Camporama with help from past National Director Warren Billson. This was followed by afternoon tea where everyone could chat and view the historical display of photos and memorabilia. The Ranger children and young people enjoyed the pinatas that were made in the shape of the points of the Rangers Emblem. Prizes included event patches, novelty items, lollies and much more. On Wednesday evening, the inaugural Rangers Australia National Pinewood Derby was held with trophies being won by Rangers from N.S.W., Qld and Japan. A fun trivia and challenge night closed the day.

10TH AUSTRALIAN CAMPORAMA

The Great Ranger Family Reunion!

By Pastor Sean Godfrey

I have always enjoyed times when my greater family get together. You know how it is – all the aunties and uncles, cousins, grand parents and others who have become family by choice rather than by blood line.

A Camporama is exactly the same. A Camporama is the gathering together of the smaller Ranger families into one big Family Reunion. They only happen every five years so why not make the most of it. And so we did! Five days of fun and togetherness, united by choice through blood – the blood of Jesus Christ.

Present at this reunion was Peshurst, Henty, Shiloh, Hawkesbury and Blaxland. We were also blessed to have 11 Rangers from Malaysia and 7 Rangers from Japan.

Activities included Goliath (the largest Giant Swing in Australia), billy carts, abseiling, climbing challenges, bush walking, an afternoon at the beach, and the very popular Cryptex Challenge which was full of many challenges that required teamwork to complete. Every team that finished got to choose a prize and we are pleased to say that every team finished. We also held the inaugural Rangers Australia National Pinewood Derby.

The night rallies were filled with praise and worship followed by the sharing of God's word. Young people responded to the invitation to make Jesus their Saviour and best friend and others desired a closer relationship with God the Father.

For me, it was great just to be with my Rangers family, seeing friends again from interstate and making many more new friends both young people and adults (great to put faces to names I see on the computer). Of course the best part of Camporama for me was seeing children and young people excited in praising God.

There are many people to thank for Camporama: Rangers N.S.W. state committee for organising and hosting the event, the many leaders and junior leaders who ran the Cryptex Challenge events, the band, the singers, the speakers, the photographers, the Rangers 50th Birthday Party organisers and set up team, the leaders, the local Rangers group fundraisers, those who attended and the parents who sent or brought their children to camp, and The Tops Conference Centre for a great venue and fantastic food. Most importantly we thank God who is the reason why we were there and for giving us such beautiful weather despite the weather prediction of rain for that week.

I look forward to 2020 where we will get together again for another Camporama. I invite you now to begin planning to join with me as together we can celebrate our Master Ranger – Jesus Christ.



Own a piece of Rangers history today

These Camporama patches are a great prize give away for winning a stage competition at a local church Rangers Live Rally or as a simple token of encouragement to a Ranger for displaying a great effort.

Patch trading is fun and a great way to make new friends. Whether you are just starting as a patch collector or have been collecting for years, why not buy some Camporama 2015 patches now so you can trade with other Rangers. Other Rangers event patches are also available for purchase.

Order some patches today by contacting Lisa at National Supply House by email:

nationalsupplyhouse@gmail.com

Find out what other great prizes are in stock such as small LED torchs, bush survival wrist bands, clip on hat brim torches and more.

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