

## BATLOW ROTARY CLUB



Following the disastrous bush fires of the summer of 2019/2020 as expected we as Rotarians wanted to help in the only way we know. This was no ordinary fire season and between July 2019 and 13 February 2020, the NSW Rural Fire Service reported that **11,264 bush or grass fires burnt 5.4 million hectares** (13 million acres), destroyed 2,439 homes, and approximately 24 megalitres (5.3 million imperial gallons; 6.3 million US gallons) of fire retardant was used. There were in all 34 people who died as a direct result of the fires and 445 as an indirect result (smoke inhalation). On top of this disaster was the tragic loss of our wildlife which began early, at the end of the country's hottest and driest year on record, in September 2019, by February 2020, the Summer of Death fires had killed more than [1 billion animals](#).

The board decided NOT to act in haste as there was so much money being raised. On top of this many areas affected were receiving materials such as fencing supplies. It was not the time for knee jerk reactions to this disaster.

Over \$500 million was donated to [bushfire appeals during the 2019-20 fire season](#), which is believed to be the biggest ever amount raised in response to an Australian disaster.

Around \$282 million of that was received by three main charities; The Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and St Vincent de Paul.

During this time Daryl Breust was our President and eventually we decided on supporting Batlow and to find out what was really needed for that community. Several members went to Batlow and met up with the members of the Batlow Rotary Club. It was suggested that we become Twin Rotary Clubs with Batlow and during a visit by several members of the Batlow RC we signed a Twin Club agreement. Below President Daryl Breust and Secretary Margaret Isslemann signing the agreement on [Monday 24th February 2020](#).



Following the Batlow RC visit Covid 19 hit the world. The situation of rebuilding Batlow took another turn and mental health became an issue. The Batlow Rotarians decided to look at building a Men's Shed for the wellbeing of the mental health of the men in Batlow.

Our club then decided to put our money that we keep for a rainy day towards the building of the Batlow Men's Shed.

During our [50th Birthday Party celebrations](#) Coolamon RC donated \$10,000.00 to the Batlow RC President Sam Hughes by Coolamon RC President Elect Albert Suidgeest.



The official opening of the Batlow Men's Shed will be held on Friday 25th February in Batlow at 11.00am and we have been invited to attend. Please let John Glassford know of your intentions.