



11 July 2011

Lions Australia Leader Makes History

- *Well known Australian Lion Barry Palmer AM elected 2nd International President at Seattle International Convention*
- *Expected to become International President in 2013*
- *First time in Lions' 94 year history that an Australian has been appointed*

Berowra Waters Businessman Barry Palmer AM first joined Lions Australia in 1976 because he wanted to make a difference – 35 years later, he's about to make history as the very first Australian Lion to be elected to the International Presidency.

Mr Palmer has just been named as the 2nd International President at the International Lions Convention currently underway in Seattle, and will be elevated to the role of President in 2013.

In addition to being a key driver behind and Chairman of the Lions International Convention in Sydney in 2010, Mr Palmer has been an active member of his local community and Lions for almost 4 decades. He was the motivator and instigator behind the successful "The Lions Children's Mobility Foundation" (also known as the Hart Walker program). He started the Lions Cord Blood and Childhood Cancer Research project in conjunction with the Children's Cancers Institute Australia. He was the founder of the "Education Builds Bridges" project in Indonesia with Durban Lions which now supports 120 children with the help of Lions and the public in Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Indonesia. He and his wife Anne also support an orphanage in Bangalore India with the help of his club.

While he boasts a long history of proving the Lions' motto of "we serve", like many of his fellow Lions, he's not unscathed by the anguish of those who are helped by Lions' relief efforts, particularly post natural disasters. He admits to still being haunted by the memories of the blank looks of the children of Banda Aceh, Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami.

"They were just staring into space. There was nothing there. They'd lost their families and there wasn't a thing they could do about it. That was devastating but the reward came in the smiles and joy of those people we were able to help by providing them with homes. That's what being a Lion is all about – making a difference."

"This appointment is a huge honour and is also recognition of the important work conducted by Lions Club Members in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. From making a difference in our own communities to helping people who have been devastated by natural disasters to supporting causes across a wide range of areas from Cancer Research to Drug Awareness to Spinal Cord Research, Lions do make a difference."

Barry Palmer will stand alongside Wing-Kun Tam, the new President of the International Association of Lions Clubs, and the first President ever elected from the People's Republic of China.

About Lions

Lions Clubs International world's largest service club organization, with more than 1.3 million members in more than 45,000 clubs in 205 countries and geographic areas. In addition to its efforts toward conquering blindness, the organization has made a strong commitment to community service and helping youth throughout the world.

Lions Australia is one of Australia's largest service organisations with almost 28,000 members and 1,500 clubs across Australia. Lions Australia raises over \$20 million per annum to assist in community and health projects, and funding for Lions foundations and programs. For more information visit: <http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/>

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