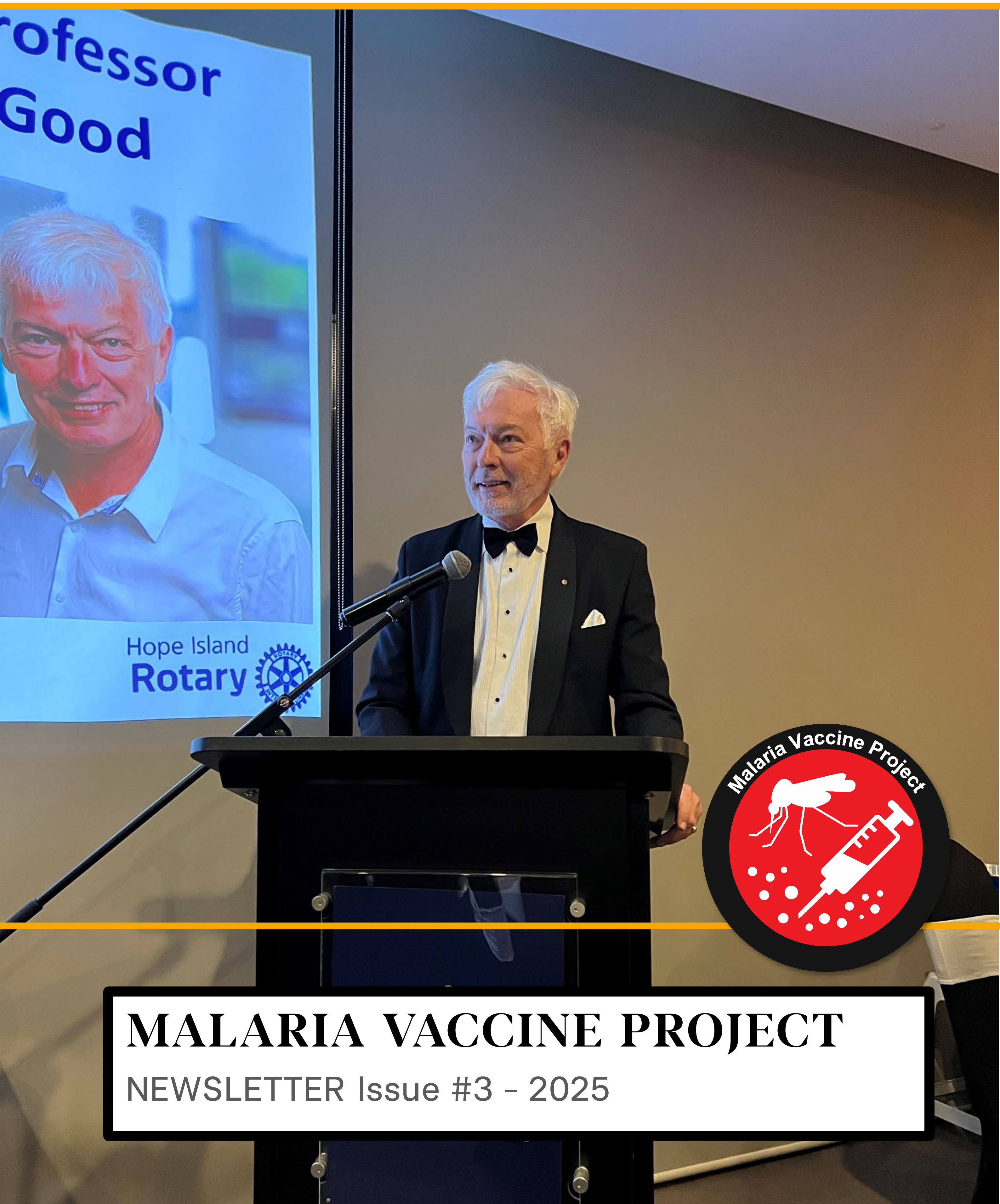
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY | INSTITUTE FOR BIOMEDICINE AND GLYCOMICS

Rotary District 9640



MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER Issue #3 - 2025

OUR HISTORY

In 2015, Sam and PDG Sandy Doumany attended a Rotary Against Malaria Conference, with Dr Danielle Stanisic from the Institute for Glycomics as the Guest Speaker. Danielle spoke about Malaria Vaccine research led by herself and Professor Michael Good AO at the Institute. She mentioned that their Laboratory needed a Separator which would cost $8,000.

Sam took that on board and approached PDG Graham Jones to see if the money required could be raised. Within a week, Graham, Sam and other Rotarians had raised the funds.

The Griffith Rotary Satellite Club was in the formation period and the cheque was presented to Dr Danielle Stanisic (a prospective member) at the next meeting. The Rotarians felt this sent a message to new members:

"This is the power of Rotary"

After learning more about Professor Michael Good and Dr Danielle Stanisic's research journey, a core of Rotarians developed a passion to be part of the quest to save the lives of so many men, women and children and eliminate Malaria from the world.

In 2016 Gerard Brennan had discussions with the Governor General's Office in Canberra which led to the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, launching the Malaria Vaccine Project at a function in the Institute for Glycomics on 27 March 2017.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

PDG Sandy Doumany OAM

COMMITTEE

Neil Jones (Treasurer)

Hon Sam Doumany AM

Teresa Dawson

Karin Kolenko

PDG Ross Smith

PDG Dai Mason

Bruce Howlett

PDG Harry Bolton

PDG Jeff Egan

NATIONAL AMBASSADOR

The Honourable Anna Bligh AC

HONORARY MEMBERS

Laraine Brennan OAM

Gerard Brennan OAM

MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

PDG Sandy Doumany OAM Committee Chair

Hon Sam Doumany AM Committee Member

James Endelman Advancement Manager Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics

MALARIA IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S DEADLIEST DISEASES AND REMAINS A MAJOR GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUE

Malaria causes fatigue, fever, seizures and, if untreated, coma and death.

Malaria is spread easily by the bite from an infected *Anopheles* mosquito and is endemic in tropical countries and regions such as Latin America, Asia and the sub-Saharan Africa.

One person dies from malaria every minute.

Over the past 5 years, it is estimated there have been over **1 billion** cases of malaria worldwide.

An estimated **2.9 million** people died from the disease.

76% of those deaths were **children under 5 years of age**.

Malaria has a devastating impact on the economies of some of our closest neighbours. It is our responsibility as part of the global community to help end malaria.

IMAGINE BY 2028 WE HAVE A GAME CHANGING, PROVEN VACCINE, AND THAT BY 2033 IT CAN BE ROLLED OUT TO THE COUNTRIES THAT NEED IT MOST.

For the past 10 years Griffith University, in partnership with Rotary, has been developing a vaccine candidate that could make this a reality.

Our team at the Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics is about to embark on a clinical trial for this game changing vaccine and we are now seeking philanthropic partners to support the $4.55m required for vaccine manufacture, ahead of Phase II trials.

Will you join us in this vital journey to end malaria – for good.

CHAIR MESSAGE

PDG Sandy Doumany OAM
Chair, Malaria Vaccine Project

I cannot believe we are already in November already, as you go into shops now faced with Xmas decorations, sad but true.

One of the most significant reports this year has been the identification of almost 100 cases of Malaria in North Queensland, following the extreme wet season. This statistic reminds us of the proximity of this deadly disease, and the urgent need for an effective Malaria Vaccine.

With this in mind I am sure we all agree that the success of the onshore human trials of Plas-ProtecT brings on the urgency for increased fundraising to take us forward to subsequent overseas field trials in Malaria endemic countries. This crucial next step will bring us a great step closer to realising a vaccine available world-wide, particularly in the developing world where malaria is such a critical problem.

Rotary Nationally and Internationally have always been strong supporters of this Project, with Clubs using many fundraising ideas to contribute. I would like to welcome the Ballina Satellite Club who donated $1000 to our Project. Our challenge is to expand this initiative and for the Researchers to complete their goal. To date, we have raised approximately $3.1 million which is a huge effort, and we continue to see funds coming in from Clubs across Australia.

Lastly, as we continue our mission to help fund the development and distribution of a malaria vaccine, I encourage you to take a few minutes to read a compelling article by Bill Gates titled “When Malaria Was an American Problem” (https://www.gatesnotes.com/home/home-page-topic/reader/when-malaria-was-an-american-problem). It’s a powerful reminder that malaria is not just a distant issue—it was once a major public health challenge in the United States. The article traces how malaria was gradually eliminated through coordinated public health efforts, scientific innovation, and sustained investment.

This history is a testament to what can be achieved when communities, governments, and donors unite behind a common goal. It also reinforces the importance of our work today. Malaria still claims hundreds of thousands of lives each year, mostly in regions without the resources that helped eliminate it in the U.S. Your fundraising efforts are part of a global movement to change that. Let this story inspire us to keep pushing forward—because with continued support, we can help make malaria history everywhere.

PDG Sandy Doumany

REPORT FROM THE GLOBAL MALARIA ERADICATION CONFERENCE – CALGARY, JUNE 2025

By Ross Smith
Rotary International District 9640 Governor, 2002/2003
Malaria Vaccine Project Griffith University Gold Coast Committee Member

During recent travels, I had the honour of representing Australia at two significant events: the Global Malaria Eradication Conference (GMEC) held in Calgary, and the 2025 Rotary International Convention.
One exciting development during my visit was a meeting with Jason Keyser, Managing Editor of the North American Rotary Magazine. Having met Jason previously, I arranged to visit him at Rotary HQ in Evanston, Chicago, where I shared copies of our MVP brochure with him and his team. Jason expressed strong admiration for our district committee's long-standing commitment to Griffith University and the MVP. He is keen to feature our work in the magazine and has proposed assigning a freelance science journalist—Ruby Prosser Scully, based in Sydney—to cover the story at his expense.
Prof. Michael Good and Associate Professor Danielle Stanisic are now working with Ruby on this exciting article which we hope will excite some international interest in the vaccine.

Highlights from GMEC 2025 – Calgary
The conference brought together around 90 participants from five continents, representing both research and strategic implementation sectors. Notable attendees included:
• Jenny Andrews, Executive Director, Malaria Partners International – gracious and highly effective in managing the day's proceedings.
• Phillip Welkhopf, Malaria Director, Gates Foundation – shared personal insights, having experienced multiple malaria outbreaks growing up in Haiti.
• Professor Sir Adrian Hill, Chair, Jenner Institute, Oxford University – spoke candidly about the challenges in developing the R21 vaccine and the historical complexity of malaria vaccine development, noting over 105 attempts since 1910.

Below are a few sessions I attended and some of the insights I learned.
Malaria Knowledge & Strategy Overview
Malaria 101: What, Where, When
• Malaria was once known as "swamp fever."
• The Anopheles mosquito is the true vector.
• Africa and Asia bear the highest mortality rates.
• Four Plasmodium species infect humans; P. falciparum is the most aggressive.
• Climate change is aiding mosquito spread.
• Genetic modification of mosquito hosts is emerging as a treatment strategy.
Malaria 201: Smarter Strategies
• Insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) are less effective due to wear and inconsistent use.
• Blood smearing is now automated, enabling multi-disease detection.
• Zambia's data-driven approach highlights the importance of case workers.

Malaria 301: Cutting Edge Developments

• Oxitec's gene-editing program targets mosquito reproduction.
• Djibouti's innovative mosquito management includes a mosquito factory.
• High-efficiency vaccines are the future (great to hear this as our Malaria Vaccine Project definitely fits this role).
Malaria 401: The Future
• National elimination is achievable; global eradication requires unity.
• Rotary's leadership is pivotal.
• A unified voice is essential — rivalry must be set aside.
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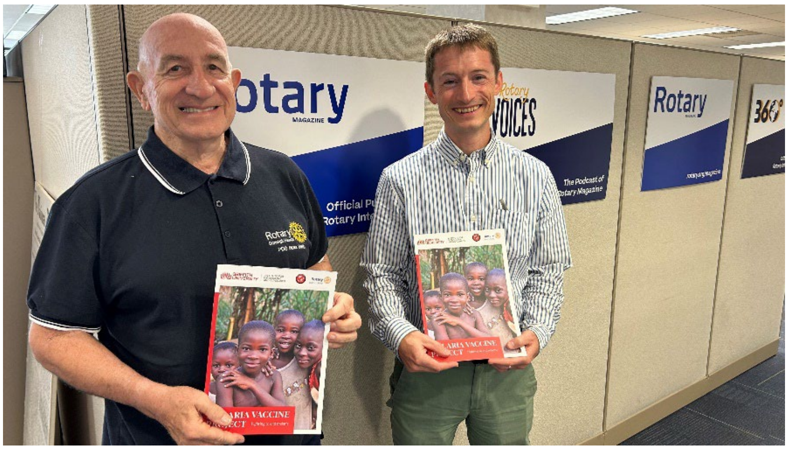
I was honoured and overwhelmed by the depth of knowledge, collaboration, and innovation shared at GMEC 2025. The momentum is real, and our collective efforts are making a difference.

Ross Smith
20 September 2025
Toulouse, France



ABOVE: Ross Smith (left) with Managing Editor North America Monthly Rotary Magazine **Jason Keyser** (right)

RIGHT: Ross Smith (left) with **Professor Sir Adrian Hill**, Chair, Jenner Institute, Oxford University (right)

Rotary-Funded Researcher Guilherme de Souza Advances Malaria Vaccine Development at Griffith University

Rotary International's commitment to global health has been powerfully demonstrated through its support of Guilherme de Souza, a postdoctoral researcher from Brazil, whose work at Griffith University's Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics has contributed significantly to the development of a promising malaria vaccine.

Funded by a Rotary International Scholarship, Guilherme joined the Laboratory of Vaccines for the Developing World in late 2023, where he played a key role in advancing the vaccine candidate PlasProtecT, now preparing for Phase I clinical trials. His research focused on two major areas: the development of an in vitro parasite killing assay, which evaluates the parasite-killing capacity of vaccine-induced immune cells, and the evaluation of adjuvant combinations—specifically PHAD liposomes and Alum—to enhance vaccine efficacy and longevity.

Guilherme's work involved both in vitro and in vivo studies using murine models, measuring immune responses through cytokine production, antibody levels, and parasitemia control. His contributions have helped to provide additional pre-clinical data on the vaccine's formulation and provided critical data to support the use of a novel in vitro parasite-killing assay to evaluate the immunogenicity of PlasProtecT in clinical trials. He also actively engaged with Rotary Clubs in Australia and the U.S., presenting his research and fostering community awareness about malaria and vaccine development.

Farewell to Guilherme: A Celebration of Impact and Friendship

On 25th September, the Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics hosted a heartfelt farewell celebration for Guilherme de Souza, marking the conclusion of his Rotary-funded postdoctoral fellowship. The event brought together colleagues, researchers, and Rotary supporters to celebrate Guilherme's scientific achievements and his contributions to the malaria vaccine project.

The gathering was filled with warm tributes, shared memories, and expressions of gratitude. Guilherme spoke about his journey—from his early work with anti-malarials in Brazil to his time at Griffith University—and thanked Rotary for the opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful global health initiative. His humility, dedication, and collaborative spirit were praised by both his peers and mentors.

The farewell was not just a goodbye, but a recognition of the enduring impact Guilherme has made. His research will continue to influence the next stages of vaccine development, and his connection to Rotary remains strong, with plans to stay engaged and share future updates with the community.

Black Tie Dinner 2025

The Rotary Club of Hope Island hosted a Black Tie Dinner to raise funds for the Malaria Vaccine Project on the 11th October 2025.

PDG Sandy Doumany & her committee along with the Rotary Club of Hope Island gave 121 attendees a wonderful night at the Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club. The night was filled with a very happy and positive atmosphere with all enjoying good company and good food and of course good wine.

Most of all though, attendees opened their hearts and wallets to the exciting array of Live & Silent Auction items & Raffles.

The Mystery Wine Raffle had 50 amazing bottles of wine including the much sought after Penfolds Grange for the lucky winner. A fun little bit of trivia: in 3 different years, the Grange was the very last wine selected! Good things come to those who wait.

The Rotary Club of Hope Island are hugely pleased to let our community know that a grand total of $86,443.28 was raised on the evening!

A big thank you for making 11th October **the most successful Black Tie Dinner in 13 years**.

DGE Deb & Craig

Neil Jones Marion & Graham Jones

Michael & Jenny

Naomi & Chris

Matt Gates & Team

Max & Amanda

Ann Glennister & friends

Robert & Louise

Michael Sandy & Jenny

DGN Gareth IPDG Lisa DG John PROPER

Prue & Pat Berry

ROTARY CLUB OF HORNSBY'S FOREIGN COIN PROGRAM: TURNING LOOSE CHANGE INTO LIFESAVING IMPACT

Stephen Bruce
International Director
Rotary Club of Hornsby District 9685

Since the early 1990s, the Rotary Club of Hornsby has been quietly transforming unwanted foreign coins into meaningful contributions to global health. Through its innovative Foreign Coin Program, the club has raised over $6,000 directly for the Malaria Vaccine Project, supporting this vaccine vital research and development at Griffith University.

The program began with a simple idea: collect foreign coins and notes that Australians often bring home from overseas trips but find difficult to exchange. Initially, coin collection boxes were placed in major banks, where returning travelers could donate their leftover currency. The program gained significant momentum thanks to the support of Bendigo Bank, which embraced the initiative and helped expand it across their national network, recognising the value of community-driven service.

Because foreign currency is generally non-negotiable outside its country of origin, the club developed a clever solution. Rotary members and supporters who travel internationally help repatriate the sorted coins and notes, exchanging them in their respective countries and returning the equivalent value in Australian dollars. These funds are then deposited into a dedicated foreign coin account, with no commission deducted, ensuring maximum impact.

Over the years, the program has grown from a handful of locations in Sydney and New South Wales to over 150 collection sites across Australia, thanks to partnerships with Rotary Clubs in nearly every state. Each participating club chooses which international aid project to support, based on the funds they raise through repatriation.

In total, the program has repatriated more than $750,000 to targeted charities, with RAMS and the Malaria Vaccine Project receiving over $100,000 in the past two decades. This grassroots initiative exemplifies Rotary's commitment to service above self and showcases how small contributions—like forgotten coins—can make a global difference.

To learn more about the program and how you can get involved, visit:

https://www.hornsbydistrictrotary.org/foreign-coins

Rotary
Club of Hornsby District

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Neil Jones

Donations to the Malaria Vaccine Project passed a new milestone to total $3,124,140 as at 31 October 2025.

This new level included personal pledges made at the recent Rotary Club of Hope Island Black Tie Dinner but the eventual inclusion of all other fund raising on the night will bolster the total and the club contribution significantly.

Donations this calendar year to 31 October total $198,640 and already exceed the total for the whole 2024 calendar year.

On this occasion we recognise the top contributing Rotary Clubs:

Hope Island	$ 138,483
Hornsby	$ 48,538
Surfers Paradise	$ 38,697
Gold Coast	$ 30,138
Mermaid Beach	$ 20,500

We thank those Clubs for their significant contributions as indeed we express our heartfelt thanks to all donors, large and small, for your support. Every dollar donated helps to sustain the Malaria Vaccine Project and bring it ever closer to success.

Neil Jones

31 October 2025

Pathway to success

2013

THE FIRST PRE-CLINICAL STUDIES evaluating PlasProtecT were published. These studies demonstrated that PlasProtecT was broadly protective against different malaria parasite strains.

2015

THE RESEARCHERS PUBLISHED details of the first cultured malaria cell banks that would be used to manufacture PlasProtecT for use in clinical studies.

2014-2015

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY CONDUCTED a world-first pilot study to evaluate PlasProtecT in malaria-naïve human volunteers demonstrating that it was safe and could stimulate a parasite-specific immune response.

2017

THE MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT was launched as a fundraising partnership between Rotary District 9640 and Griffith University to support further development of the malaria vaccine.

2018 – 2020

A WORLD-FIRST PILOT CLINICAL STUDY CONDUCTED BY GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY to evaluate whether PlasProtecT could stop malaria-naïve individuals from developing malaria infection. The majority were completely protected from developing a malaria infection.

2021

THE GRIFFITH RESEARCHERS PUBLISHED pre-clinical studies demonstrating the efficacy of the field deployable form of their whole parasite blood-stage malaria vaccine in the prestigious journal mBio.

2024

The clinical-grade PlasProtecT vaccine has successfully passed mandatory toxicology assessment and will now proceed to a full Human Research Ethics submission to enable commencement of the clinical trial.

2025

WITH THE SUPPORT OF KEY PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS Griffith University will conduct a Phase I clinical study to evaluate a field-deployable version of PlasProtecT in malaria-naive human volunteers

COMMENCING MID-LATE 2025 WITH DURATION OF 12 MONTHS.

2026 – 2028

OUR CORNERSTONE PARTNERS AND A LEADING GLOBAL PARTNER WILL CONDUCT a Phase II clinical trial to evaluate PlasProtecT in a malaria endemic country.

FUNDING REQUIRED: $23M

2028 – onwards

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY WILL FORM part of a global consortium to roll out and evaluate PlasProtecT across multiple sites in malaria endemic countries.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

We welcome the opportunity to host individuals or groups and showcase the research lab at Griffith University. Come along to see where this research happens and meet the researchers working on this life-changing vaccine.

Contact Jamie Endelman, Advancement Manager at j.endelman@griffith.edu.au

OUR PARTNERS

malariavaccineproject.com • facebook.com/malariavaccineproject