

Bulletin – 16 February 2026

Rotary News

Brew Union Friday Drinks

Next Brew Union is Friday 27 February 2025.

Festival of Cultures

21-22 February – set up 7.45-8.30 am, volunteers from 10 am-3.30 pm.

Monday lunchtime 23 February 2026

Guest Speaker: Mayor Grant Smith



Mayor's State of the City Address

Manawatu Business Chamber combined event. Advise if you are attending (if you haven't already) by emailing

mary@davegaynor.co.nz

Intro	President Dave
Thanks	Amanda Linsley
Parting Thought	President Dave
Bulletin Editor	Dave Gaynor
Attendance	Martin Townend & Stu Schwartz

Summary of Darlene Westrupp Speech

Martin then introduces the guest speaker, **Darlene Westrupp**, noting her Inner Wheel leadership roles and connecting her talk to a previous visit by Dr Catherine Hamlin 20 years earlier.

Darlene's Presentation

Darlene describes her recent trip, along with Julie Watson, to Ethiopia with *Hamlin Fistula New Zealand*, an organisation supporting the prevention and treatment of **obstetric fistula**—a devastating childbirth injury affecting women who endure prolonged labour without medical care.



Julie & Darlene at Auckland Airport with 1750 baby beanies.

She outlines:

- **The Hamlin legacy:** Dr Reg Hamlin (from Napier) and Dr Catherine Hamlin (Sydney) founded the fistula hospital in Addis Ababa 65 years ago. Their work has expanded to multiple hospitals, midwife clinics, and training centres.



- **The condition:** Women can suffer incontinence, disability, and social ostracism due to obstructed labour. Many arrive malnourished, traumatised, and immobile.
- **Hamlin's "model of care":** holistic support including medical treatment, surgery, food, clean clothing, psychological care, physiotherapy, and post-surgery rehabilitation.



- **Her trip:**

- Delivered over 4,000 knitted baby beanies from New Zealand supporters.



- Toured the Addis Ababa hospital, met staff, observed care facilities, and learned about patient stories—including a 14-year-old survivor and the remarkable surgeon who began as a patient herself.
- Visited the “Joy Village” rehabilitation centre, where women learn literacy and vocational skills such as pottery, beekeeping, catering, and agriculture.



- Observed the Hamlin College of Midwives and its four-year programme.



- Travelled south to visit regional midwife clinics and hospitals, witnessing births, meeting midwives, and seeing the challenging but essential facilities.

Darlene shares statistics: 70,000 women treated to date, 1,000 new cases annually, 40,000 births attended by Hamlin-trained midwives, and growing outreach to find untreated women in remote villages.

She also reflects on the humility of Reg and Catherine Hamlin, their awards, their simple graves, and ongoing need for financial support.

Questions

Members ask about Ethiopia’s environment, problems in neighbouring regions, the role of midwives, and cultural practices. Darlene clarifies that midwife training is highly successful and essential, and that fistula is mainly linked to obstructed labour rather than cultural practices like genital mutilation.

Parting Thought

Enkay Onyema:

“I can’t change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.” – Jimmy Dean

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**