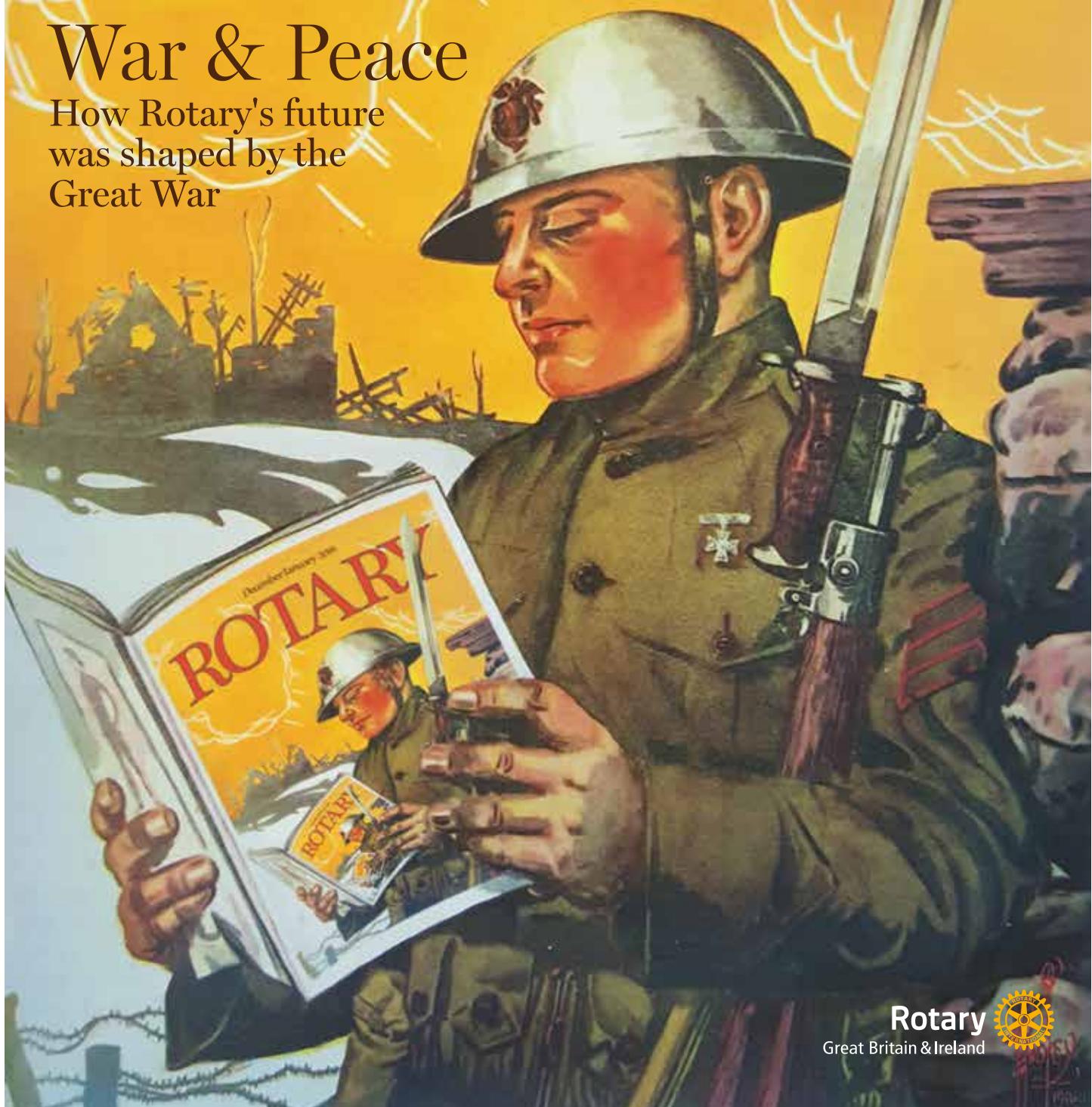


December 2018/January 2019

# ROTARY

## War & Peace

How Rotary's future  
was shaped by the  
Great War



Rotary  
Great Britain & Ireland



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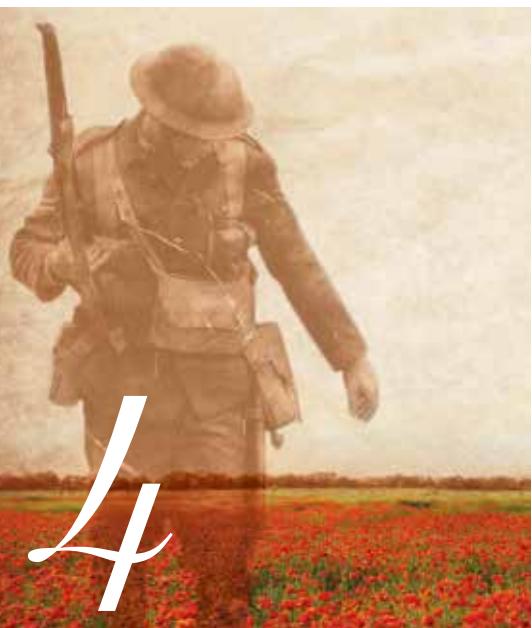


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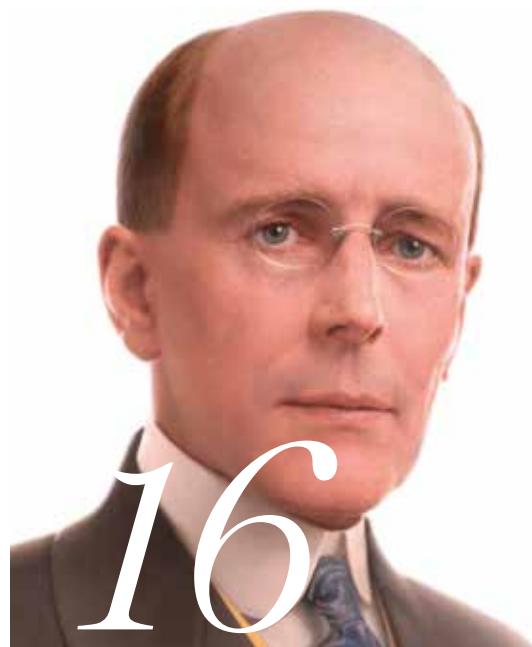
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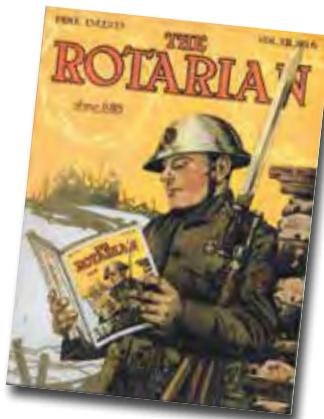
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### Rotary and war

The front cover recreates *The Rotarian* magazine from June 1918, based on a painting by Rotarian and US Marine, Alvan C. Hadley



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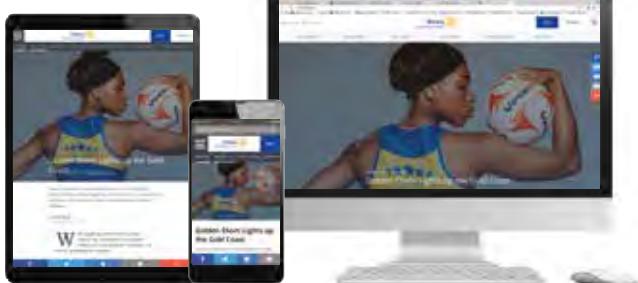
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# The war to end all wars

*In November, the world marked the centenary of Armistice Day, 100 years since the First World War came to an end. Over the following pages, we reflect on Rotary's role during the conflict.*



**I**T was on November 11th, 1918, when the guns finally fell silent to end the First World War.

The Armistice was signed at 5am, and came into effect five hours later bringing to an end four years of what was then described as 'the war to end all wars'.

This was a bitter struggle which had eclipsed all previous wars with its scale of destruction - historians estimate that 10 million men lost their lives on the battlefield.

*The Rotary Wheel* was the magazine which served Rotarians in Britain at the time.

Its leading article from the November 1918 issue stated: "At the time of going to press flags are flying, bells are ringing and there is general public rejoicing...although

peace has not yet been declared, to all intents and purposes this bloody war is over. But we must not rest because of that. It is certainly a matter for thankfulness, but we in Rotary know that instead of this being the end, it is only the beginning."

As we reflect on 100 years since the end of the First World War, what of Rotary?

When the war was triggered on June 28th, 1914, by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the British Association of Rotary Clubs, as it was then known, was still in its infancy.

And yet, there is a school of thought that the community spirit which bonded these isles during the war years was the making of Rotary.

The distinguished Rotarian, Roger Levy, a long-serving editor, and who was Deputy Secretary of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland between 1954 and 1959, suggested as much in his 1978 book about the history of the organisation.

He wrote: "Had it not been for the

war, the whole story of Rotary in the British Isles might have been very different and, conceivably much shorter.

"There had been a measure of antipathy to anything as brash and so American as Rotary, but entry of the United States into the war (in April 1917) had done something to bring the two nations closer together, and to engender a greater measure of trans-Atlantic ways."



*"Had it not been for the war, the whole story of Rotary in the British Isles might have been very different and, conceivably, much shorter."*

Undoubtedly, with the fellowship gained from the new clubs, Rotary was given a sense of purpose created by the need to help many people at home, to assist refugees, to aid employment for the returning wounded and to find ways to look after disabled servicemen, widows and orphans.

The casualties and fatalities had wrecked a whole generation and their families. The clubs had raised funds for the war effort and helped in times well before the National Health Service and the welfare state.

Rotarians had entertained troops, as well as the children and orphans of those away fighting. They had helped to extend hospitals and work in them. They had found numerous ways to exemplify the Rotary motto of 'service above self'.

Eighteen months before Armistice Day, *The Rotary Wheel* in its April 1917

issue, had addressed the subject of 'Rotary and the next war'.

The article discussed what it believed would be the inevitable fight that would take place once combat had ended.

It also discussed what would be needed for the future.

The article also foresaw that the whole energy of the British nation, and its Allies, would be needed, but how?

In 1917, the nation was engaged in looking after its own businesses, usually with greatly depleted workforces.

However, the article concluded that service organisations could fill the gap.

The article reflected: "Rotary is such an organisation. Rotary stands for co-operation and service; two factors that will be paramount in the near future, just as they are now.

"Rotary is a machine capable of doing much and varied work. We don't know at present exactly what work will be required of it after the war, but we do know that it is capable of doing much.

"Meanwhile, let us keep this machine well-oiled and in good running order, so that when it is required for the country's service it will not be broken and rusty.

"This is a simple matter, and quite within the powers of the busiest man.

"All that is necessary is to keep one's own club going by attending meetings regularly and by doing the little required of one as an individual member, as well as by helping, in such measure as one can, the spread of the movement to other centres."

Prophetic words indeed, and as true today as they were just over 100 years ago. ●





# Rotary Heroes

**W**ARS are won and lost on the home front. Rotary clubs in the British Isles between 1914 and 1918 were well placed, not only to help out the community, but also those servicemen returning from the bloody battlefields of war.

Here was a rare opportunity to live up to the motto of 'service above self'.

Having begun in Chicago in 1905, the Rotary movement had expanded internationally, initially to Canada and then landed in Europe by 1911, first in Dublin, followed by Belfast, London and Manchester.

By the outbreak of hostilities, clubs had been added in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Brighton and Hove, Liverpool and Birmingham. This geographically-spread fledgling group formed themselves into the British Association of Rotary Clubs (BARC) on May 4th, 1914.

Germany declared war on France on August 3rd, 1914. Belgium denied permission for German forces to pass through its territory to reach the French border and so was invaded by Germany.

Britain protested in accordance with a treaty, and on August 4th, the United Kingdom declared war on Germany.

The United States declared neutrality on that same date, not joining the conflict until April 1917, when German U-boats began sinking American merchant ships in the North Atlantic.

Regular reports in the BARC magazine of the time, *The Rotary Wheel*, catalogued the activities of the clubs as the conflict progressed.

Some club projects focussed on the recruitment of young men into the services.

The average age of Rotarians in these islands at the time was around 45 and many were successful local businessmen whose occupations may have precluded them from joining up.

Nevertheless, the records show that by the end of the war in 1918, 195 Rotarians from 17 clubs in the British Isles had served in the Army, Navy or Royal Flying Corps, of whom 12 lost their lives.

Several were wounded during operations, and some spent years as prisoners of war. At least one, Sergeant Major D M Lowe, of 4th Royal Scots, and a member of Edinburgh Rotary Club, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery, gallantry and 'for distinguished conduct in the field'.

Peter Thomason, the third President of BARC (1916-17) joined Manchester Rotary Club, aged 30 (*see photograph*). Peter's work took him to Newcastle where he formed a club, and he then joined Glasgow Rotary Club.

Peter was called up for military service during his year of office, and entered the Royal Engineers as a pioneer. He served in France until, severely wounded, he returned to England. He recovered and gave over 50 years' service to Rotary and his club, until he died in 1961 aged 80. Incidentally, Peter was not elected as president of Manchester Rotary Club until 1919.

Other heroes joined Rotary after the war. Frederick William Hedges VC, joined the Leeds club, having been a Rotarian in Birmingham, and Alfred Knight VC, from Birmingham, joined York Rotary Club in



Peter Thomason

1932. Both won Victoria Crosses.

In fact, four members of York Rotary Club were awarded the Military Cross, the highest level military decoration for exemplary gallantry during active operations.

Many children and relatives of Rotarians also served and died during the war, not just in France and Belgium, but also further afield, such as East and West Africa, Basra, Mosul and Mesopotamia.

Back home during World War One, clubs in the spirit of service were heavily involved with raising funds for the war effort, supporting refugees, casualties and organising entertainment for the troops.

During the war, the following clubs were formed in BARC: Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1915); Leeds, Aberdeen, Leicester (1916); Portsmouth, Bristol, Perth and Cardiff (1917); Nottingham, Llanelli, Derby, Southampton and Bournemouth (1918) making a total of 22 clubs throughout the British Isles. ●

# Can your club help children like Claire achieve their full potential?

Rwanda's children are their country's future, but the lack of clean water facilities in school means that girls like Claire go to lessons thirsty and tired, unable to concentrate. Grades suffer and ambitions lose their sparkle.

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# The highest honour

## Alfred Joseph Knight, VC, MBE

Alfred was born in the backstreets of Birmingham in August 1888 where he worked as a clerk in the Post Office, relocating to Nottingham in 1912. There he enlisted in the Post Office Rifles Regiment in 1914, although his unit was not stationed in France until 1917.

His first engagement was at the second battle of Bullecourt where he returned wounded soldiers to the trenches and for his bravery was given a battlefield promotion to the rank of sergeant.

Aged 29, he was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry during an assault at the Battle of Ypres.

While his comrades were pinned down by enemy forces, he single-handedly stormed the German machine gun post and bayoneted the two men operating it, securing the enemy position.

Later that day, bogged down and up to the waist in mud, he calmly opened fire on the enemy killing six of them as they attempted a counter attack.

To finish off the day, with all of his officers dead or wounded, he led a successful attack to capture an enemy-held farmhouse.

Alfred later attained the rank of second lieutenant and back home was a celebrity both in Nottingham and Birmingham being feted with civic receptions and gifts.

Post Office workers gave him a marble clock.

On his return home to Radford in Nottingham, he told the *Evening Post*: "I

hardly know how it happened. The miracle of it all is that one comes through as I did without a scratch.

"Bullets rattled on my steel helmet, there were several significant dents and one hole – part of a book was shot away in my pocket, a photograph case and a cigarette case probably saved my life from one bullet which must have passed under my armpit."

Alfred Knight joined the Rotary Club of York in 1932, and left in 1941 when he went to Leeds as a Senior Wages Inspector.

On retirement he was appointed an MBE. He died aged 72 in Birmingham on December 4th, 1960, where a post box and a road 'Alfred Knight Way' are named after him.

● *With grateful assistance from Barry Campbell of Rotary York.*

## Frederick William Hedges, VC

Freddie was born in June 1896; he enlisted into the Queen Victoria's Rifles in London in 1914, and was duly posted to France.

After involvement in the first Battle of Ypres, Freddie suffered frostbite and was returned to England.

He went back to France in 1916 and was wounded in his right hand by shrapnel at the Battle of Arras and once more had to return to England.

His third tour to the Western Front saw him engaged in four battles, and during the Battle of the Selle on October 24th, Lieutenant Hedges won the Victoria Cross.

He captured six machine guns and

took 14 prisoners having crawled up a hill under cover of a hedge armed with only a pistol and a cane to wave his small company forward.

Ironically, Freddie was wounded yet again in his final battle in November 1918, gaining a "three and a half inch crack in the skull," and a bullet in his right shoulder.

He was evacuated to Southampton and the war for him ended in a hospital bed.

After the war, Freddie joined the Rotary Club of Leeds, having been a Rotarian in Birmingham.

His life ultimately ended in tragedy. He had married Mollie in 1919 and they had a son who sadly drowned, aged 17, in a ferryboat accident on the Thames in 1941.

Freddie's firm moved him and Mollie to an office in Leeds to help them to overcome the disaster, and there he continued his involvement with Rotary, classification: Insurance Services.

However, he never really fully recovered, despite his popularity as a branch manager, and he suffered from depression, possibly exacerbated by his wartime head wound.

Sadly he committed suicide in May 1954 aged 57. ●



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# Service Above Self during wartime

*Rotary clubs across the nation found creative ways of getting involved with the war effort, from fund-raising to putting on entertainment for the troops.*

**I**N the spirit of service, Rotary clubs during World War One were heavily involved with raising funds for the war effort, supporting refugees and casualties, organising entertainment for the troops, assisting with recruitment and helping to find employment during and after the war.

Some extracts from contemporary Rotary magazines and documents in the Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland archives reveal the following insights:

## Fundraising

Most clubs raised funds for the war effort, often joining in Government campaigns. Here are some of the examples:

**Belfast Rotary Club:** organised its first Flag Day in 1915 ably assisted by the Boy Scouts. On April 30th, no fewer than 1,700 ladies sold miniature Allied Nations' flags raising £3,000. This amount was administered by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association for the benefit of wounded servicemen in the city.

**Brighton Rotary Club** (originally Brighton and Hove): began a War Savings Group in July 1916 and during War Weapons Week they raised £24,631 (approximately £1.24 million in today's money). They only spent £15 to raise this sum! As a sign of the times, shortly after the outbreak of war, the club decided that evening dress would no longer be required for evening meetings and that their monthly gatherings





Bournemouth Rotary Club raised £24,122 in War Bond Tank Week during 1918.

should alternate between lunches and dinners.

Rotarians made donations to the Queen Mary Workshops and the Lord Roberts Workshops for disabled soldiers, the Red Cross Ambulance fund and other urgent causes.

They also raised a considerable sum to support the local hospital (now the Royal Sussex County Hospital), which had a debt of £4,000 in 1916 and was in danger of going bankrupt.

**Liverpool Rotary Club:** started a Roll of Honour Fund with a £1,000 donation, eventually reaching the sum of £92,491.

**Leeds Rotary Club:** managed to raise £1,935 for War Savings.

**Portsmouth Rotary Club:** In just one week, the club based at the home of the Royal Navy, raised £165,000 for War Savings for the Feed the Guns project.

**Bristol Rotary Club:** raised £800,000 towards the city's target of £2 million towards two cruisers. Within 10 days, they had sold £37,000 in War Savings Certificates, plus £56,000 for bonds. Rotarians and their businesses had put up a further £75,000. Altogether, they

raised an astonishing £844,000 within 10 days.

**Bournemouth Rotary Club:** raised £24,122 in War Bond Tank Week during 1918.

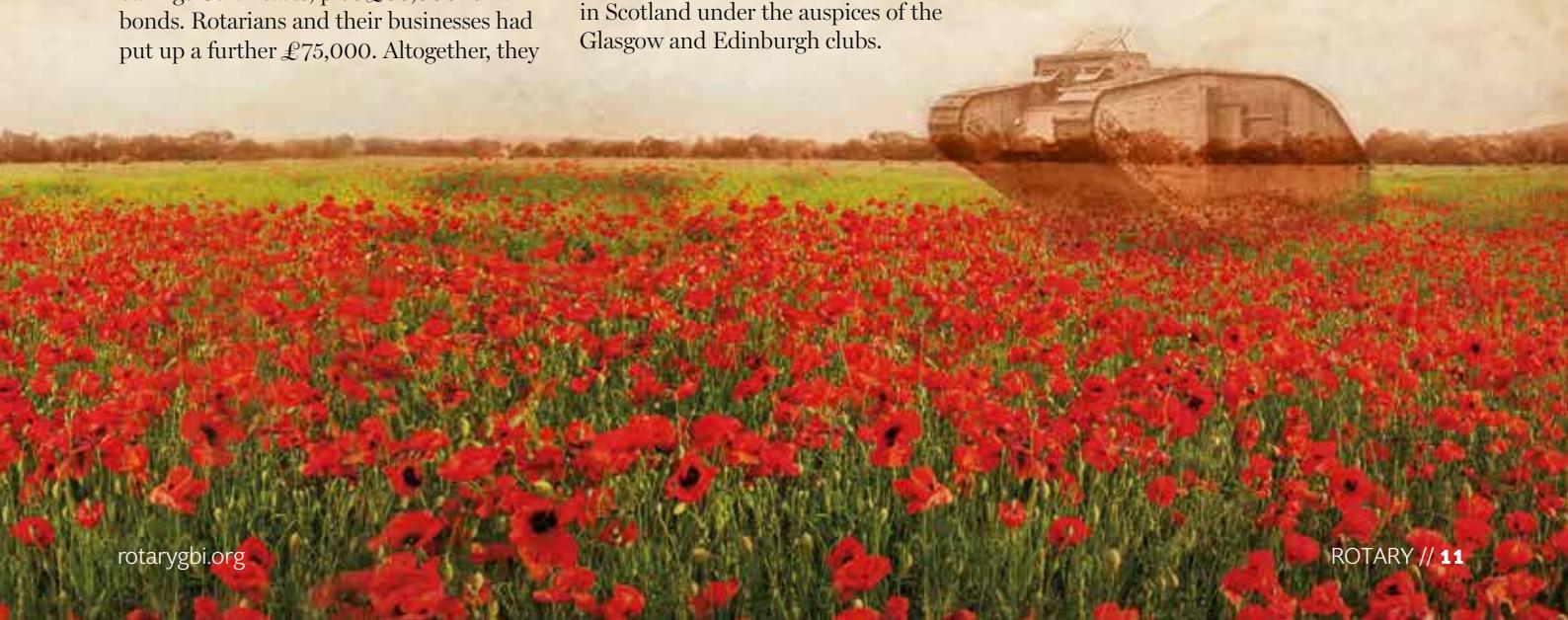
## Recruitment

**London Rotary Club:** was heavily involved in street corner recruiting and collecting items for soldiers including books, walking sticks, mufflers, stockings, caps, pocket knives and razors.

**Glasgow Rotary Club:** established a recruiting committee which gathered over 2,000 names. A battalion for men 'short of stature' (less than 5 ft 3 ins tall) was raised in Scotland under the auspices of the Glasgow and Edinburgh clubs.

A joint committee was envisaged, but Glasgow Rotary Club decided to work independently. Apparently, after frequent bar brawls in Glasgow, the cantankerous 18th Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry gained such a fierce reputation that they were nicknamed Devil Dwarfs by the locals. However, the adopted name was the Bantam Battalions.

**Edinburgh Rotary Club:** helped to form another Bantam Battalion, the 17th (Rosebury) Royal Scots, which comprised 1,000 men. Their clothing was made by an Edinburgh Rotarian in his own workrooms. The club recruited 3,300 men for the Royal Scots. ●





## Entertainment

**London Rotary Club:** The manager of the Victoria Palace Theatre was a member of the club, so 19 parties and entertainment events were put on for wounded soldiers at 400 a time. Each man was given a good meal and a wallet containing 20 souvenirs.

A visiting Rotarian, writing in *The Rotary Wheel* in March 1917, commented: "There are some who say our wounded men do not really enjoy such entertainments, but put up with them to cheer up those at home. But this was not what I witnessed, the soldiers 'came as guests, but left as brothers'. This is what I saw: the club president and treasurer stood in the vestibule shaking hands with the wounded men as they arrived. Over 400 came from different hospitals around London and District. To see the stream of men, or portions of men, coming in familiar blue suits, some minus legs or arms, others swathed in bandages, all more or less broken in body, but not one of them in spirit, was an impressive sight. It makes one realise what the boys are doing for us out there, and what they suffer in consequence. Opposite every man's chair was placed a packet of cigarettes, a box of matches and a packet of chewing gum. There was also an illuminated card of greeting, bearing the flags of the Allies and the Rotary emblem, together with appropriate words."

On the site of the old Tivoli Theatre in the Strand stood a large, temporary building known as the Eagle Hut. It was erected by the Americans and hundreds of servicemen used it every night – on Tuesdays, London Rotarians were in

charge. One of the club members arranged 28 variety shows and 1,200 men were given hospitality at some time during the 1918 Christmas holidays.



*"A great turkey dinner was given at his store to allow the London Rotary Club to entertain the American Army and Navy on Thanksgiving Day."*

At the invitation of Gordon Selfridge, the American-British retail magnate who founded the London-based department store, Selfridge, a great turkey dinner was given at his store to allow the London Rotary Club to entertain the American Army and Navy on Thanksgiving Day.

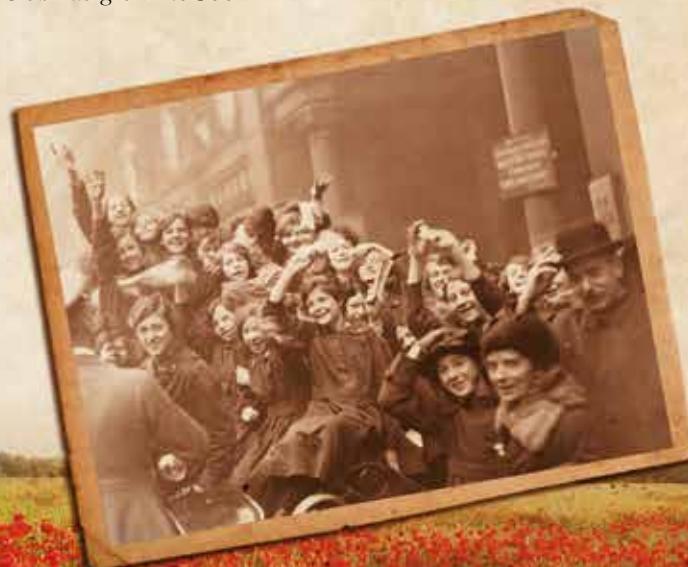
The Rotary club marked the entry of America into the war in 1917 with a large dinner at the Savoy Hotel. By 1919, the London Rotary Club had grown to 306 members.

**Edinburgh Rotary Club:** The club's annual Christmas treat for the children of soldiers and sailors entertained nearly 50,000 youngsters over five successive years. Each child was given free tram transport and received a toy, plus a box of sweets on leaving the theatre.

**Liverpool Rotary Club:** The club pioneered a scheme to entertain American soldiers on leave. Rotarians offered hospitality in their homes for American Rotarians and their sons on active service in France, to enable them to have the comforts of home and the assurance of a warm welcome.

Several other clubs took up the idea under the Guests in British Homes Scheme and 2,000 servicemen benefitted.

**Brighton Rotary Club:** In August 1917, club members could be found as stewards at a baseball game between the USA and Canada in Preston Park. ●



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## Community

**Dublin Rotary Club:** provided fortnightly entertainment for wounded soldiers and took 270 of them "in a most hospitable manner" to different golf clubs and to nearby Howth Head to the north of the city. The club's venue, the Metropole Hotel, was completely destroyed following the 1916 Easter Rising. Much regalia was lost and many Rotarians' places of business were also severely damaged.

**Belfast Rotary Club:** raised over £19,000 to construct facilities for servicemen and merchant seamen arriving in the city to have a clean bed with clean linen for one shilling a night, and a meal (breakfast, dinner or high tea) for another shilling. Initially, accommodation was for up to 100 men, but this was soon increased to 300.

Staffing of the Service Club was by Rotarians, their wives, families and friends. Much organisation was needed and equipment was purchased such as a sausage-making machine, which turned out about a ton of sausages every week, sometimes also made available to local hospitals.

In 1917, the club provided a Christmas dinner for soldiers based at Victoria Barracks. The facility also provided workshops for training and employment of wounded servicemen.

**Manchester Rotary Club:** In response to a national appeal, the club formed a 50 strong Rotary Special Police Force, a group of Special Constables. They went on an eight-mile Rotary Route March and were relieved when not one member fell out of line.

The club was very concerned about the plight of Belgian refugees. A scheme was adopted for their reception and accommodation, often at very short notice, and a hostel was equipped almost overnight. A small auxiliary hospital was equipped and put into operation for the adoption of war orphan boys and also to find them employment.

That service continued until 1930 and was co-ordinated with the rehabilitation of wounded ex-servicemen.

Food parcels were sent to Manchester prisoners of war in Germany, while books, magazines and periodicals were delivered to some 14 ships of the Royal Navy.

The club also supported a Rotary Club Ward of four beds at the Britannia Auxiliary Home Hospital, where members also acted as orderlies for the war wounded soldiers.

**Glasgow Rotary Club:** The number of sleepers at their Overseas Club during one wartime November month set a record of 3,870. At a Christmas Day lunch, there were more than 200 overseas visitors - Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans and American soldiers and sailors.

**Edinburgh Rotary Club:** provided garden allotments for disabled soldiers, and supplied valuable funds and equipment to local Red Cross hospitals.

**Leicester Rotary Club:** was involved with a scheme to provide hospitality for overseas servicemen. In 1918, they provided a workshop for wounded soldiers at a base hospital and when the intended use changed, this was handed over to a boys' school.

**Southampton Rotary Club:** was involved with the Jobs for the Demobbed project and assisted with emigration fees to Australia, Canada and USA for unemployed ex-soldiers and boys who couldn't find work at home.

## Employment

**Liverpool Rotary Club:** at the request of the Ministry of Pensions, co-ordinated employment for war orphans and arranged Jobs for Demobs.

**Manchester Rotary Club:** saw the need in post-war years for the rehabilitation of wounded ex-servicemen and established a similar Jobs for Demobs scheme.

**Portsmouth Rotary Club:** directed their wartime activities chiefly towards the needs of the wounded and finding employment for disabled soldiers and sailors. In June 1917, the club assisted the funding of invalid chairs for the wounded. Later, a Rotary Room was provided at the YMCA for disabled soldiers and sailors.

**Birmingham Rotary Club:** Much activity was taken up with work connected with the war, with many members having experience of working with munitions.

The club also promoted the idea of capturing German and Austrian trade for Birmingham and the country generally, and pressed for a trade fair, which gave birth to the British Industries Fair.

The club arranged entertainment for disabled soldiers and sailors and helped to find work for them. In 1915 the club opened offices, assisted with training, and found work for 1,000 discharged and disabled soldiers. ●

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- The Rotary Wheel: The Magazine of the British Association of Rotary Clubs
- The Rotarian: The Magazine of the International Association of Rotary Clubs (later Rotary International)
- Numerous Rotary members and Rotary archivists from clubs around Great Britain and Ireland
- Rosie Anderson at the Rotary Support Centre for her help with the research

# York heroes

*Not content with just one World War One hero in A. J. Knight, VC, the Rotary Club of York also had four Military Cross recipients who later joined its membership.*

## Noel Blenkin, MC, OBE, TD

Noel joined the Rotary Club of York in 1950.

During the Great War, he served with as a Lieutenant with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (Miners' Battalion). Noel was awarded his Military Cross for conspicuous courage and devotion to duty.

The citation said: "When commanding his company in the front line which was broken at the village of Couronne in April 1918, he displayed great skill in regaining touch with the troops on his right, and obtained valuable information as to the enemy's dispositions before being wounded."

Noel was a freelance journalist in York and much involved in amateur dramatics and a governor of the York Theatre Trust.

He was seconded to the Entertainments National Service Association during World War Two as a Lieutenant Colonel and was in charge of troop entertainments in the Middle East.

He was President of the Rotary Club of York in 1956, died in 1975, and was described as 'an absolute gentleman.'

## Leonard Evans MC

Leonard joined the club in 1927. He was employed by Robinsons of Bristol, a paper bag and packaging company, as their representative in the York area.

During the Great War, Leonard was a Private with the Royal Army Medical Corps before becoming a Second Lieutenant with the Devonshire Regiment.

On November 1st, 1917, he received treatment for a revolver bullet wound to his right cheek. It cannot be confirmed if this had anything to do with the MC. He received a Silver War Badge in 1919 which was given to those soldiers discharged as wounded.

The Military Cross was awarded for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. The citation read: "When sent to reconnoitre the front line and bring back information, he was wounded and completed his task in broad daylight and reported the dispositions of the line to battalion headquarters before going to the aid post."

Leonard became a Special Constable in 1941 and reached the rank of Inspector. He was President of the club in 1957 (following Noel Blenkin, so two Military Cross holders in succession).

His only son was killed in action in 1944 and Leonard died on Christmas Eve 1975.

## Harold Gardner MC

Harold joined the club in 1951. He was Station Master at York and died in 1953.

Harold served as a Second Lieutenant with the Sixth Battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment, which was attached to the 13th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry.

His Military Cross citation was for conspicuous gallantry and able leadership on October 24th, 1918. The citation read: "During the attack at Rue du Pont, he led his company with great skill through the belts of wire in face of very heavy machine-gun fire, and finally overcame the enemy resistance. After the objective had been reached, he personally supervised the consolidation of the position."

## Alan Moncrieff MC

Alan joined the club in 1937. He worked for Cooke Troughton and Simms, a York firm of scientific instrument makers, later taken over by Vickers Instruments and no longer in existence. Unfortunately it has not been possible to track down his medal citation or anything else about him. ●

*With thanks to Rotarian Barry Campbell, Rotary York*



# *Paul Harris: restoring the legacy of Rotary's founder*

*For many Rotarians visiting Chicago, a pilgrimage to the home of the founder of Rotary, Paul Harris, is a must. Dave King follows that trail and speaks to the movers behind plans to renovate the founder's home.*



**A**s you take the half hour train ride from downtown Chicago to the station at 111th Street/Morgan Park, there's a sense that you are walking in the footsteps of Paul Harris.

A century ago, it was this commute which the founder of Rotary made daily from his law practice in the city to the family home in the district of Beverly, on the south shore.

From the 1900s to World War Two, this leafy suburb with its wide boulevards was where Chicago's well-heeled lived.

The tidy home, built on a steep bank in 1905 - the year Rotary was founded - was named 'Comely Bank', after the street and neighbourhood in Edinburgh where Paul Harris's wife, Jean, grew up.

And it was here where Rotary took root. Those early meetings took place at Comely Bank in a low-ceilinged basement as the organisation grew from the Rotary Club of Chicago to become a global entity.

Coincidentally, the first President of

Rotary, Sylvester Schiele, lived right behind the Harris's, so there was a well-worn path between the yards as the two men and the Board of Directors chartered a future course of Rotary.

Comely Bank also hosted heads of state, captains of industry, and Rotarians from around the world.

The Harris's lived in this suburban setting for 35 years, from 1912 until 1947, when Paul Harris died in the home following a brief illness.

Fast forward to today, and Comely Bank is part of a major renovation project under the umbrella of the Paul and Jean Harris Foundation, to restore the legacy and so preserve the history of Rotary.

Robert Knuepfer is the leading light behind the \$5 million initiative. He was the centennial president of the Rotary Chicago, the founding club of the movement, when the project was kick-started in 2005.

"After Paul Harris's death, Jean Harris stayed for a year before she put the home

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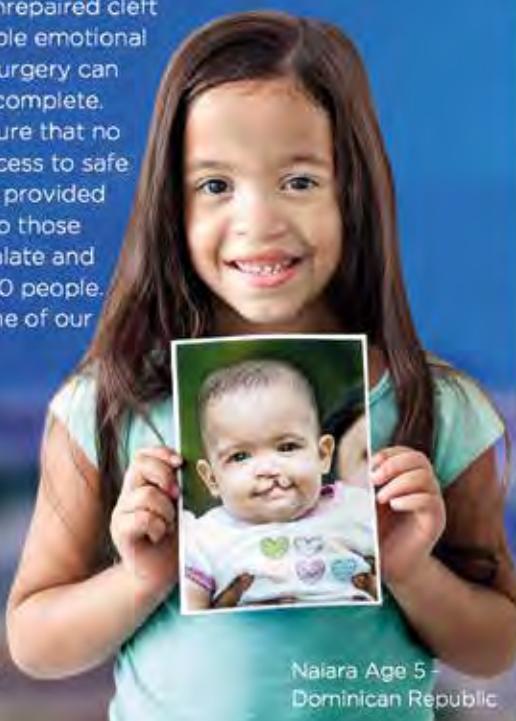
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► up for sale and returned to Edinburgh to live with her brother, a Presbyterian minister,” explained Robert.

“In 2005, which coincided with the 100th anniversary of Rotary, we got a call from the home’s owner, who was a Rotarian, to say that he was putting the house up for sale, would we like to make him an offer?

“So weeks before the Chicago convention, we bought the home for \$550,000, thanks to a \$500,000 loan which is owned by the Rotary Club of Chicago and \$50,000 from volunteers, who have an interest in Rotary history.”

The renovation project has spluttered in fits and starts since 2005, but over the past 18 months it has gathered pace with the hope that next year the home will receive its first visitors.

Keith Larson from the Rotary Hinsdale, Illinois, is the project architect.

“It has been challenging to make sure what we do is authentic by using photographs as a reference point, but doing so using current building codes and in conjunction with the local historical preservation society,” he said.

“Fortunately, we were able to buy the house next door 18 months ago, which has made access much easier to the property, and which will enable us to use part of the land as a car park.”

As Robert and Keith take you around the tight, steep-staired, three-floored property, both men cannot hide their passion for a project which has been a long time in the making.

“In American terms, this is Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington,”

*“A further \$2 million is being directed towards an endowment, which will pay for the expenses of this home in perpetuity, with the rest of the money allocated to building costs.”*

added Robert. “For Rotarians, this is where it all began.”

Besides renovating the interior and recreating a peace garden out front, there are also plans to establish a Rotary Room which can host club events and meetings, as well as a theatre seating 40 people showing films of Rotary’s history and Paul Harris. Disabled access will also be provided by elevator.

“We have been in fits and starts ever since, but we are on the last lap,” said Robert. “We have a commitment from Rotary International to extend us some more credit and we hope to finish the house this calendar year.”

The total fund-raising goal is \$5 million. The Foundation needs to repay loans to the Rotary Chicago and another to Rotary International which totals \$1 million. A further \$1.5 million has been spent on renovation, including \$410,000 for the next door property.

A further \$2 million is being directed

towards an endowment, which will pay for the expenses of this home in perpetuity, with the rest of the money allocated to building costs.

Rotarians from around the world have already embraced the project which Robert hopes will continue with naming opportunities for rooms, to \$1,000 named bricks being sold, as they look to find a final \$3 million.

With Paul Harris’s grave nearby at Mount Hope Cemetery, well-tended by volunteers and marking his contribution to Rotary, it is hoped that Comely Bank will become part of a Rotary heritage trail.

So what would Paul Harris think of the restoration project? Robert Knueper suspects he would feel awkward. “I think his modesty would have embarrassed Paul Harris, making him believe that we were over the top in terms of honouring him,” he said. ●

## FACT FILE

### PAUL HARRIS HOUSE

- Paul Harris would commute daily from his law practice in the city to the family home
- It is from this house that Rotary started
- Paul Harris lived in the house for 35 years, until his death in 1947
- The total fund-raising goal is \$5 million

 For more information visit:  
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# The lightbulb moment of peace

*Former US soldier, Zach Cooper, is one of 10 Rotary Peace Fellows studying at the University of Bradford. As he graduates at the end of this year, Zach reflected on his desire to find peace.*



Zach Cooper

**I**MAGINE trying to rest, in a fortified compound in the middle of Afghanistan, when you hear the dull thud of an explosion.

As a soldier, all sorts of thoughts go through your mind. Has one of your colleagues been killed or severely injured by a roadside bomb, has one of the villagers, possibly a child, suffered a similar fate, or was this a controlled detonation carried out by the bomb disposal team?

Lying atop his bed in a wooden hut in the heart of Helmand Province, these were some of the thoughts of Zach Cooper, a US Marine, who served as a field radio operator during his deployment in this war zone.

"The place where I was working was nicknamed IED alley," explained Zach.

"What I was seeing was how these home-made bombs, which were meant for us, were impacting on the local community. Little kids playing football, people walking to the market, or carrying out their daily chores.

"On a daily basis we were finding IEDS (improvised explosive devices). We would have fathers and mothers carrying their injured children to the gates of our base pleading 'help us, please'. We would do everything we could to help them.

"These IEDS are indiscriminate and that really affected me."

Zach, a 33-year-old married man from Cleveland, Ohio, was talking in the unassuming surroundings of the University of Bradford, where he will graduate in December as one of 10 Rotary Peace Fellows.

It's difficult to imagine a battle-hardened former US Marine, who has

experienced first-hand the horrors of war, talking reflectively about peace. But for Zach, that tour of Helmand, was the lightbulb moment.

"This was start of my path to peace. Seeing what was happening in Afghanistan, and also when I returned home to the United States, witnessing the mental and physical toll which conflict can have on people, was really difficult. I realised there had to be a better way."

This from a man whose family is steeped in military history, and whose grandfather served with the American Navy in three different conflicts.

After being honourably discharged from the Marines in 2012, Zach enrolled at



Zach Cooper speaking at the Rotary Peace Conference



Ohio State University to study for a degree in security and intelligence, with a minor in Arabic.

While working towards his bachelor's degree, he served as a veteran liaison for a non-profit organisation called '1 Day for the K.I.A.' (killed in action), as well as acting as a student-veteran advocate for the university.

His aim was to help military veterans make the smooth transition to civilian life, as well as raising money to create scholarships for the families of veterans who had been killed or were missing in action – or who had been disabled in service.

During his time at Ohio State, Zach visited Northern Ireland to see how the peace process was working, and he also toured Israel and Palestine.

He recalled: "Up until this point, Israel and Palestine was a conflict which I cared about a lot but when you get to put your feet on the ground to see the conflict up close and meet the people who these conflicts affect, it changes everything."

"I spent some time in a Palestinian

---

“*The place where I was working was nicknamed IED alley*”

---

village which was in danger of being demolished by the Israeli military.

"There is a school in this village which is home to 150 children.

"When this village is destroyed, they will be relocated and these kids will have no opportunity for education. Education is not a privilege, it is a right."

"When I was there, the villagers heard they had received an injunction preventing the demolition.

"This was only a temporary injunction, but you could feel the joy and passion."

It is these experiences which Zach has carried with him to Bradford as he completes his studies with nine other Rotary Peace Fellows from around the

world, and each with their own stories.

Where the path now leads Zach, who knows? But he admitted his 15 months in West Yorkshire has helped to re-assess his life and future goals.

He added: "When I was in Helmand, I could see the change in people physically and mentally. The experience affected me in a lot of ways too.

"I had to sit down and ask myself, why do I feel the way I feel sometimes? I had to address those personal issues.

"But, over time and coming here to Bradford, those are things I have worked on. I certainly believe that seeing it, understanding it and working to change it, has impacted my approach to waging peace.

"Peace is an effort. There are many ways to demonstrate peace in each of our daily lives. It is being kind to each other, using empathy to try to understand someone else's perspective and eliminating violence to create something which is lasting, which creates a level of quality and opportunity which everyone can enjoy." ●



# Not bitter, but a supporter of peace



Ken Robertshaw

**K**EN ROBERTSHAW knows all too well the horrors of terrorism. In 1997, his aunt, her daughter and granddaughter were among 62 people, mainly tourists, who were killed at an archaeological site in Luxor, Egypt.

Militants, disguised as security officers, stormed Deir el-Bahari, one of Luxor's major tourist attractions, and indiscriminately opened fire.

There are no thoughts of anger, or revenge, instead the Halifax Rotarian has become a mainstay of the Rotary Peace Fellows programme at the University of Bradford.



*"I am a huge supporter of grass roots peace work," he insisted. "Those who killed my family claimed to be Islamic terrorists, but they weren't. They were just criminal terrorists."*

Ken has just completed a three-year term as Host Area Co-ordinator, but has been involved with the Bradford project for most of its 19 years.

"I am a huge supporter of grass roots peace work," he insisted.

"Those who killed my family claimed to be Islamic terrorists, but they weren't. They were just criminal terrorists."

"I have a long-held belief that the ones

who perpetrated these acts are the ones who have been indoctrinated.

"They are weak-willed people, but if we can get into the grass roots, such as the Peace Fellows do, and educate the younger end to stay away from that sort of thing – then we are having an impact."

The University of Bradford is one of six centres which provide Rotary Peace Fellows with an opportunity to pursue a Master's degree in conflict resolution, peace studies, international relations and related area.

Each year, 10 students are taken on the 15-month course at Bradford, Tokyo, Uppsala (Sweden), Duke University and the University of North Carolina, Brisbane and Thailand.

These Rotary Peace Fellowships cover the students' costs in the hope that they will become catalysts for peace and conflict resolution, as well as prevention.

As Host Area Co-ordinator, Ken's role has been as a link between The Rotary Foundation, which pays for everything, the Rotary staff in Evanston, who administer the project, plus liaising with the university and Peace Fellows.

Ken has seen the programme grow over the past 19 years.

Rotary, he believes, is the first

organisation in the world which has done anything like this, bringing people together from different walks of life to study conflict resolution and peace negotiation.

The Peace Fellows programme is attracting a diverse range of people globally who are in positions where they can make a difference.

"I am proud of the fact that Rotary is affecting some big organisations, the US military in particular," added Ken. "This year we have a senior police officer from Brazil in the graduation class."

"We are getting more people involved at grass-roots level, people who then go on to positions of influence. It is becoming a graduate management programme."

"They graduated from university, they have gone to work in the peace and conflict field in the widest sense. They come here for an extra piece of kit in the toolbox and then they go back to a higher management position where they have an effect."

"One of the Peace Fellows has been head-hunted to work for the Carter Centre in Atlanta, another young lady has been approached by a major European organisation based in the UK."

"It sounds awfully smug, but Rotary is having a big clout in peace and conflict resolution." ●



The archaeological site in Luxor, Egypt where the atrocity took place

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# Celebrating 50 years of Concorde

*As Neil Armstrong took his 'one small step' to become the first man on the moon, British and French engineers achieved another 'giant leap' that same year - the first flight of the world's only successful supersonic passenger aircraft: Concorde.*

**C**oncorde 001 made her maiden flight from Toulouse on March 2nd, 1969, with the first British Concorde taking to the skies a month later. Concorde 002 made her maiden flight from Filton, to the north of Bristol, on April 9th, 1969.

It was the beginning of a remarkable era of supersonic passenger travel.

Capable of crossing the Atlantic in under three hours - the record journey from New York to London was an astonishing 2 hours, 52 minutes and 59 seconds - Concorde cruised at over twice the speed of sound and reached an altitude of 60,000ft.

Her passengers would marvel at the curvature of the Earth, as they travelled at 1320mph and sipped Champagne on the edge of space.

The last Concorde flight touched down for the final time in November 2003. Tens of thousands of people gathered in Bristol, and a global TV audience watched on, as Concorde Alpha Foxtrot landed back home at Filton, her British birthplace.

Today, Alpha Foxtrot - the last Concorde ever to fly - is the centrepiece of a new museum, Aerospace Bristol, which opened to rave reviews in October 2017.

The museum tells the amazing story of Bristol's world-class aerospace industry and takes visitors on a fascinating journey through history.

Beginning in the earliest days of powered flight, it is a journey through two World Wars, the drama and technological advances of the space race, the Cold War, and on to the modern day, where visitors discover the latest technologies of today's aerospace industry.

Whether self-guided or accompanied by one of the museum's expert tour guides, visiting groups will enjoy an exhibition that includes aeroplanes, helicopters, missiles, engines and space technology, and tells an inspirational story of ingenious design, engineering innovation and remarkable social history.

Of course, Concorde is the star attraction. Stunningly displayed in a purpose-built hangar and with a breath-taking show projected on to the side of the supersonic jet, visitors are able to see Concorde up close and even step aboard.

Depending on your location, the museum offers Community Speakers who can visit Rotary Clubs and give an introductory talk about what the museum has to offer.

And to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first Concorde flight, Aerospace Bristol is offering a special Concorde50 group visit package for 2019, including discounted group rates, a Concorde tour and exclusive dining.



For more information about group visits or to book, go to [aerospacebristol.org/groups](http://aerospacebristol.org/groups), email [groups@aerospacebristol.org](mailto:groups@aerospacebristol.org), or call 01179 315 315. For individual and family days out, please see [aerospacebristol.org](http://aerospacebristol.org). Individual tickets are available to purchase in advance online or upon arrival at the front desk.

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# All Rhodes lead to Songs of Praise

*For 31 years she has been one of the main Songs of Praise presenters, she works for a number of charities and runs a cattery at the family home. Meet Pam Rhodes who talks about her passion for life and community work.*

**S**HE affectionately describes herself as the 'mad cat woman of Biggleswade', but, for many people, Pam Rhodes is the face of the BBC's Songs of Praise.

Incredibly, Pam has been presenting the popular Sunday evening programme for 31 years.

"When you think about Songs of Praise, it is a programme about ordinary people," reflected Pam.

"It is wonderful to just let people talk, because everybody has got a story to tell. It enriches you when you hear what people have been through, the strength they have found and how generous they are by sharing the lessons learned."

Songs of Praise was first broadcast from the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Cardiff in October 1961 and is one of the longest running programmes of its kind anywhere in the world.

Pam has been part of the team for 31 years, joining in the days of Cliff Michelmore, Roger Royle and Alan Titchmarsh, and her first programme was presenting a young people's pilgrimage from St Albans' Abbey on Easter Monday.

"For years I never had a contract," admitted Pam. "They just kept ringing me up, I kept doing them and I am still there. I don't think they have found me out yet!"

The multi-cultural face of Great Britain and Ireland has changed hugely since Songs of Praise, a religious programme broadcasting Christian hymns, was first aired.



©Peter Croan

Pam Rhodes speaking at Rotary Conference in Torquay

According to the UK Census in 2011, the number of Christians born in Britain fell by 5.3 million to 59.5% of the population, followed by Islam (4.4%), Hinduism (1.3%), Sikhism (0.7%), Judaism (0.4%), Buddhism (0.4%), and other religions (0.4%).

The census also recorded 25.7% of the population admitting they had no religion – 7.2% did not state their religion.

So in the face of growing multiculturalism, how relevant is a Christian programme like Songs of Praise on prime-time television?

Pam Rhodes responded: "I have always

thought that, although Songs of Praise is Christian to its heart, it is not exclusive, because if you get someone talking about bereavement, does it matter if the person watching is a Christian, from another faith or no faith at all?

"These are just ordinary people sharing what they have been through.

"Yes, we live in a multi-faith world now and I remember when Songs of Praise has broadcast from synagogues or we have had Muslim friends come along. There have been lots of opportunities to recognise what we share with people of faith, as well as how we interpret things slightly differently.



Stock image

"The wisest thing that I have ever heard was the Chief Rabbi of England, Jonathan Sacks, saying to me some years ago how there is only one God, but he speaks many different languages."

Pam affectionately describes Songs of Praise as "the biggest karaoke in the world" now the words to the hymns appear at the bottom of the screen.

She said it was a job she loves, meeting people talking about their varied life experiences.

To the viewer, the circumstances might be different, but usually these stories often echo their own lives.

"There are so many interviews which have touched me," admitted Pam. "I remember a lady in Ethiopia's Rift Valley where the people lead a terribly rural life, telling me how all the little boys have their heads shaved with just a tuft of hair at the front so that God can pull them up to heaven when they die, because so many die young."

"As a mother, myself, that really resonated."

"I hear stories of helplessness, frustration, pain or fear."

*"She also runs a cattery from the family home in Bedfordshire which, at any one time, can house up to 40 felines."*

Different circumstances for everyone, but these are emotions which are common to us all."

Pam's public profile means she is heavily involved with a number of charities. She also runs a cattery from the family home in Bedfordshire which, at any one time can house up to 40 felines.

"If you want something done, you ask a busy person," reflected Pam, with a wry smile.

That charity work includes The Leprosy Mission, and earlier this year, as Vice President, she visited a leprosy hospital in Nepal which had been badly damaged by floods and earthquakes to broadcast an appeal.

She is also Vice President of the Church Army, and is also involved with the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity, and Mercy Ships.

For 30 years, Pam has been a patron of the Methodist Homes for the Aged, where she has taken a particular interest in dementia, particularly music therapy which unlocks people in an advanced state of dementia.

"Rotary has taken a great interest in dementia sufferers, and dementia is something which most people of a certain age fear more than anything," she said.

"The fear is there not just for yourself, but for those you love as well and how it changes those relationships at the end of a life in a way that is incredibly sad.

"I have been lucky enough to be asked to get involved with quite a lot of charities.

"I am also aware of other people's charity work and I have come across Rotarians in so many walks of life over the years to recognise what brilliant work they do." ●



To join Rotary visit: [rotarygbi.org](http://rotarygbi.org)



**Rotary GBI President**  
Debbie Hodge

# Become the change you want to be

**N**OVEMBER 11th, 1918 the guns fell silent, and poppies now grow in Flanders Fields where many died in World War One. The peace was short-lived and, almost every year since, a part of the world has known war.

Out of war has come significant ways of working which brings peace to the world and to local communities.

The United Nations was formed in 1945 and amongst those who drew up the charter documents were 49 Rotarians.

The Mission Aviation Fellowship grew from RAF pilots who wanted to build, rather than destroy.

Rotary seeks to create a peaceful world in all its work, through education, provision of clean water, effective health care and the support of social enterprise to build sustainable communities.

Rotary's passion for peace is also seen in programmes that bring young people together through the Youth Exchange programme and Vocational Service Exchange, through Global Scholarships, as well as the support and funding of 100 Peace Fellows around the world every year, ten of which study at Bradford University's Department of Peace Studies.

In communities around the world, young people, teachers and Rotarians are coming together to learn how to resolve conflict in 'peaceful ways' with the support of The Peace Project, because if we all learn to resolve conflict in 'peaceful ways' our communities will become more peaceful – because we have created peace in ourselves.

Perhaps one of the best-kept secrets of Rotary is what it gives to its members. The Rotary Vision statement reminds us all that while we do good in our communities and

across the globe, Rotary is also good for us!

"Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves."

Research shows that volunteering works on so many levels, from improving our mental well-being, to expanding our network of friends. Volunteering can also teach us new skills, help us develop as

leaders and bring positive change to our community.

This coming together, this working as part of a team, this making a difference is a vital cog in the wheel of society and the cog labelled Rotary, is one that is trusted and valued because it delivers on its promise, works in open and transparent ways, and ensures that the recipient of the service delivered is treated with respect and dignity.

It is these intrinsic values which are the hallmark of Rotary. The values that we work to, the values which we share in our business lives and in the work we do to serve our communities.

In the Rotary calendar November is designated Foundation month when we champion the work of our own charity, The Rotary Foundation.

The mission of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International is to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty.

It does that by transforming monetary gifts into service projects that change lives both close to home and around the world. During the past 100 years, the Foundation has spent \$3 billion (£2.31 billion) on life-changing, sustainable projects.

Our Foundation, sitting alongside our values, make us one of the most trusted and most active membership organisations in the world and, through our friendships, we bring lasting change across the globe and in our own back yard.

If you are a Rotarian, thank you for all you do. If you aren't and you want to change the world – begin by joining Rotary, and become the change you want to see! ●



# Looking for a defibrillator?

A defibrillator is a medical device. It needs **Governance** to make sure you meet all liabilities, and appropriate storage to ensure the safe keeping, with regular maintenance and checks to keep it in working order. It is not a TV you just buy from the internet, and then forget, or something where you buy the cheapest available, just to tick the box. This is about saving lives.

The **Community Heartbeat Trust** is a national heart charity, that is dedicated to helping communities place defibrillators addressing the equipment, the Governance, the liabilities and the long term support. We look at projects *holistically* and *sustainably*. We have an active programme of donating AEDs to needy causes. CHT is the *preferred supplier* to Rotary GB&I.

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# Safe water and sanitation for all

*The charity Village Water was founded by Rotarian David Dixon 14 years ago and, in that time, it has made a major impact in Africa.*



## FACT FILE

### VILLAGE WATER

- Since 2004 Village Water has supported 191,000 people in 1,015 communities
- 94% of the 653 pumps installed between 2004 and 2017 pumps are still operational
- From 2015-2017 cases of eye infections dropped by 84%, cases of diarrhoea dropped by 83% and girls' school absenteeism dropped by 84%



For more information:  
[villagewater.org](http://villagewater.org)  
 email: [info@villagewater.org](mailto:info@villagewater.org)  
 or call 01743 241563

**P**ROVIDING access to water, sanitation and hygiene through sustainable initiatives has long been a focus for Rotary. And with good reason.

When people's basic needs are met, better health means they can take advantage of educational and economic opportunities. These are stepping stones needed to move away from poverty.

For over 14 years, Village Water has been dedicated to helping communities in Zambia and Mozambique to access these basic, yet life-changing, facilities and knowledge. Rotary has supported its mission from the start.

Founded in 2004 by David Dixon, a Rotarian with the Ironbridge club in Shropshire, Village Water has grown into a charity which has helped more than 191,000 people access safe water close to home or school, a private toilet and a place to wash their hands.

These are all simple, tangible things which make a huge difference to people's lives.

The charity is still small compared to the global giants. Their annual income is around £500,000, but their size often works in their favour. They run a lean, cost-effective organisation, employing just six people, focusing on simple, locally-owned solutions which have a lasting impact.

For Village Water, local ownership starts with community involvement: each village or school is asked to elect a water committee and start a maintenance fund for spares and repairs.

Everyone attends hygiene, sanitation and menstrual health training sessions, which remove the stigma about periods which stop girls from going to school.

Then, they're shown how to build their own simple sanitation facilities from freely available materials. Tippy-taps (hand washing devices) are made from sticks, string and an empty bottle, covered latrines and bath shelters from long grass – so even the poorest families can participate.

The water committee mobilises the community to build their own facilities.

Once they are open, defecation-free and every household or school has a latrine and hand washing device, a protected water point is installed. The water committee is given a tool kit and trained in basic maintenance and repairs.

Ongoing support and monitoring ensure the changes are long lasting.

It's a simple, tried and tested approach that works. And Village Water can prove it.

Its award-winning monitoring system clearly shows the impact of its work on health, school attendance and productivity.

Data collected at every visit, combined with photos, videos as stories direct from the people who have benefitted shows how life-changing its work really is.

It is this local ownership and Village Water's ability to show Rotarians the huge difference it has made which has inspired 112 Rotary clubs to sponsor a community, so changing the lives of 180,000 people.

Better health is just the start. It means more time and energy for school, work or starting a business. It's the chance to live healthy independent lives.

Village Water's vision is for Africans to be able to manage their own water and sanitation. This is something it believes can only be achieved by building the skills of local organisations at every level.

It doesn't employ staff in Africa, preferring to invest in long-term



Children enjoying a newly-installed water pump

partnerships that can help trusted local organisations move towards independence.

It seems to work. Village Water Zambia, its main partner, is now one of the most respected, independent water and sanitation Non-Governmental Organisations in Zambia, delivering projects for many donors, including a current five-year project for the European Union.

It has also helped six teams of men and women start their own manual drilling businesses. The charity has supported them with practical and business skills training, as well as supplying the equipment they need to get started.

This has increased the drillers' income by an impressive 363%, which means affordable ways for people to improve their

own water are available for all.

This approach has inspired the charity's latest appeal - Safe Water and Sanitation for All. The project has been selected for the Department for International Development's UK Aid Match Scheme.

This means that all public donations given between November 19th and February 19th to Safe Water and Sanitation for All will be doubled by the UK Government. The funding from the government will support Village Water's work in George Compound, one of the poorest parts of Zambia's capital, Lusaka.

Working in partnership with local people, it will improve hygiene and develop businesses to improve water quality, build toilets and safely deal with waste. Public donations will be used to support the

charity's work to improve access to safe water and sanitation for families in rural Zambia and Mozambique.

It's a project that is desperately needed. George Compound is home to 187,000 people but has no formal sewerage system.

Waste disposal is a huge problem. Toilets are in short supply and when they get full, people have no choice but to open defecate - one of the main causes of the 2017 cholera outbreak which killed 93 people.

Village Water is a charity that has not only proven its impact over the years, but it is also an excellent example of how sustainable development projects are working, and how Rotary is playing a huge role. ●



# *The Rotarian who created the Paralympics*

*Dr Ludwig Guttmann was a highly respected Jewish neuro surgeon living in Nazi Germany. He managed to escape his homeland shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War and he has left a legacy to disabled sport, 70 years on.*

**B**ACKED onto a hospital in a town in the heart of the Buckinghamshire countryside, it looks just like any other sports centre – a running track close to the car park, with a sports hall, gym and swimming pool tucked inside.

But Stoke Mandeville has history. For it was here, 70 years ago, that a German-born Rotarian became the founding father of the modern day Paralympics.

History now pays homage to Pierre de Coubertin, the French Baron regarded as the architect of the Olympic movement.

But few will have heard of Ludwig Guttmann, an innovative neurologist who had fled to Britain from Nazi Germany in 1939, and whose journey ended at Stoke Mandeville where he established the National Spinal Injuries Centre in 1944.

This was Britain's first specialist unit for treating spinal injuries, and it was here that the doctor, who was later knighted in 1966, revolutionised the treatment, initially with Allied soldiers returning from the Second World War.

Martin McElhatton is the Chief Executive of WheelPower, a charity based at Stoke Mandeville, which champions disabled sport. Martin was paralysed from the waist down following a bicycle accident when he was just 18.

"I never got to meet Dr Guttmann, but I was doing my rehabilitation in 1979/80 and he passed away in 1980," recalled Martin.

"He was very experienced treating people with spinal injuries. What you have to remember around the Second World War is that the life expectancy of those coming to Stoke Mandeville from the war was just

months. Soldiers were coming back with pressure sores and urinary infections, so it was a tough time.

"He looked around and found the best ways of treating people with spinal injuries and introduced a system of medical care, physiotherapy and occupational therapy."

Sir Ludwig also loved sport, believing it as a vital component in the rehabilitation of servicemen. Initially, he got them involved in archery and athletics, such as the javelin, but later this developed into wheelchair polo, netball and even rugby!

And it was in sport which Sir Ludwig, who became a member of Rotary Aylesbury, became renowned for. To coincide with the first post-war Olympic Games held in London in 1948, Sir Ludwig organised an archery competition on the lawns of Stoke Mandeville Hospital between patients at the spinal unit, and the Duchess of Gloucester rehabilitation home.

Fourteen men and two women took part, and that was the spark for the Paralympic movement - 'para', meaning the Greek word 'beside'.

"He was a bit of a public relations guru at the time in terms of making that parallel link," added Martin. "From the start, he said that one day he would like to have an Olympic Games for the paralysed. Now, it has become much more than that with all the different impairments."

In 1952, a number of Dutch war veterans took part in the Stoke Mandeville Games which featured 130 competitors and by 1960, Sir Ludwig's dream was realised when these Games were held alongside the official Summer Olympics in Rome.

Described at the time as the 9th Annual International Stoke Mandeville

Games, and organised under the umbrella of the World Federation of Ex-Servicemen, these are now recognised as the first Paralympic Games.

In 1956, he was officially recognised by the International Olympic Committee when presented with the Sir Thomas Fearnley Cup for his 'meritorious achievement in service to the Olympic movement through the social and human value derived from wheelchair sports'.

And in 1961, Sir Ludwig founded the British Sports Association for the Disabled.

Today, the Paralympic movement is an astonishing force for good in disabled sport. At the 2016 Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro, 4,350 athletes from more than 100 countries took part in 22 different sports

Today, Sir Ludwig's daughter, Eva Loeffler OBE, lives in Peterborough. She is a former Chairman and now Vice-President of WheelPower, his son Dennis is a Patron and Vice-President, and the family still regularly visit Stoke Mandeville.

Next March, a heritage centre will be opened within the stadium tracing the history of Sir Ludwig and the Paralympic movement he helped to found.

"He was an inspirational man," added Martin. "I think he was affectionately thought of by his patients, but he was quite autocratic and he had to be quite fierce to get what he needed to treat the patients."

"We have a lot to thank him for because he was the catalyst to enable disabled people to play sport." ●



For more information visit:  
[wheelpower.org.uk](http://wheelpower.org.uk)



**Barry Rassin**  
Rotary President 2018/19

## CHANGE DIRECTION

It's traditional that the first Rotarian magazine of the Rotary year carries a profile of the incoming RI president and his or her family. I've always read those profiles with interest, never giving much thought to the possibility that one day, I might be the one bringing a writer from the magazine to my Rotary club meeting! I have never liked a lot of attention, and the idea of having my picture on the magazine cover made me a bit uncomfortable. But when I saw the photo the editors chose, I smiled. Because the star of that picture definitely isn't me, or even my wife, Esther. It's the flock of flamingos, none of which could care less about Rotary, all strutting past us in the same direction. All of them — except one.

I couldn't think of a more appropriate image to reflect the message I want to convey to Rotarians. That one flamingo, going the other way, represents so much of what we need to do in Rotary. That flamingo knows everyone's going one way. She sees it. But she also sees that maybe the path they're on isn't the best path. Maybe, just maybe, there's a better path over there, and she wants to get a good look before she goes marching on with her friends. And if, when she does stop and look, that new path does seem better, she'll call the rest of the crew to come over and check it out with her. And maybe, just maybe, they'll all choose that better path together.

Change is hard. And the longer we've been going one way, the more friends we have with us, the harder it is to be the one who turns around and does it differently. But change — not change for its own sake, but careful, considered, goal-directed change — is essential for any organisation that wants to evolve, stay relevant, and move forward in the right direction.

So, take a look at that picture, but don't look at me. I'm not the one that cover's about. That cover is about the flamingo. It's about having the curiosity, the courage, and the conviction to look at different paths that might be better — whether you're out for a stroll on a beautiful Bahamas morning, or helping chart the course for our organisation. ●



**Ron D. Burton**  
Trustee Chair 2018/19

## FAMILY VALUES

For many of us, December is a time of reflection about the year that is about to end. We think about the things we resolved to do and compare that with what we actually got done.

Many times, we surprise ourselves when we realise we achieved even more than we had hoped. We also start thinking about the new year and, with the best of intentions, commit ourselves to even greater accomplishments.

It is a time when our thoughts turn to the things that are important to us — and nothing is as important as family. We are grateful for those we love and for those who love us.

For Rotarians, that encompasses a large number of people around the world, because our concept of family includes, not only our immediate relatives, but also those many friends we have made over the years sharing Rotary. Each of us is much like a stone thrown into a pond, creating many ripples. When our ripples intersect with the ripples of our family and friends, we truly have an impact on our world.

We also think about the organisations that are important to us and that exist because of our generosity as well as the generosity of others. We voluntarily support these organisations and generously contribute our time, talent, and treasure to further their work and make our world a better place for all. And through this work, our family gets even larger.

Our family and our impact continue to grow each year through our commitment to and support of our Rotary Foundation.

Working together creates a synergy that allows one person to truly make a difference. And when we all work together and commit ourselves to a cause, there is no limit to what we can accomplish. In that process we are bound together and become an even more close-knit family.

So, at this special time of year, as you reflect on your family and the good things in your life, think about your Rotary legacy.

Now is the time to make your lasting commitment so that the important work of our Foundation will continue in perpetuity. ●



**Brian Stoyel**  
RI Director 2017-19

## MOVING FORWARD

I write to you today from having emerged from a week of RI Board meetings, World Polio Day live streaming event, joint Board and Trustee meetings and induction of Arch Klumph Society members — I can only be enthused by the impact Rotary has on so many lives.

Since my last report I have been invited to many district meetings and conferences, attended RIBI and RI meetings in person and with my headphones for audio and video calls across the globe.

So I am pleased to say life continues to be very hectic what with - Family Health days, Disaster Relief discussions, Limb Camps, End Polio Now promotions, London Malaria symposium, an awareness session of the responsibilities for project Trustees, culminating in our 'Be The Inspiration' weekend and the visit of RI President Barry and Esther Rassin to Stratford, Alcester and London — this took a great deal of organising for which I sincerely thank our RIBI staff at Alcester, Judith Diment and PRID Keith Barnard-Jones & the committee.

As a Board, the future of the RI committee structure and events continues to occupy much of our thoughts — logically are they of good value in time and money and do they promote Rotary awareness and involvement?

The RI Operations and Review Committee, on which I sit, is bringing interim reports in readiness for the next magazine.

Our four strategic priorities certainly should help all of us to: Increase our Impact - Expand our Reach - Enhance participant engagement - Increase our ability to adapt, in order to show we are the organisation of the future. It is up to every member to stretch their imagination to think outside the box.

As we approach the half way mark of this Rotary year 'Growing Rotary' must be our priority. Rotary2 - new clubs are gathering momentum, delivering what potential members need to become involved and committed. Rotary and Rotaract - networking to increase business, joining for a sociable life, using Rotary to fulfil their desires to help the disadvantaged - this must be encouraged.

Together with our family, Maxine and I wish you all a peaceful and joyous Season of Goodwill and we look forward to seeing you on our travels in 2019. ●

## Have you thought about your legacy?

Leave a gift now that won't be delivered until you are gone. Like many charities Operation Smile has seen an increase in gifts in wills. Legacies received in the last year have helped us to support more than 2,300 surgeries in over 25 countries, for children like Tommy from Madagascar. Teased and excluded for four years because of his cleft lip, Tommy is now a changed boy. No longer teased, he is at school with a bright future. Help us to help more children like Tommy.



Operation  Smile

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Charity Reg No: 1091316  
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Arrange a speaker at your Rotary Club to learn more about Operation Smile. For information about how your legacy can give children with a cleft condition a new smile contact our Legacy Manager Pippa Fawcett.

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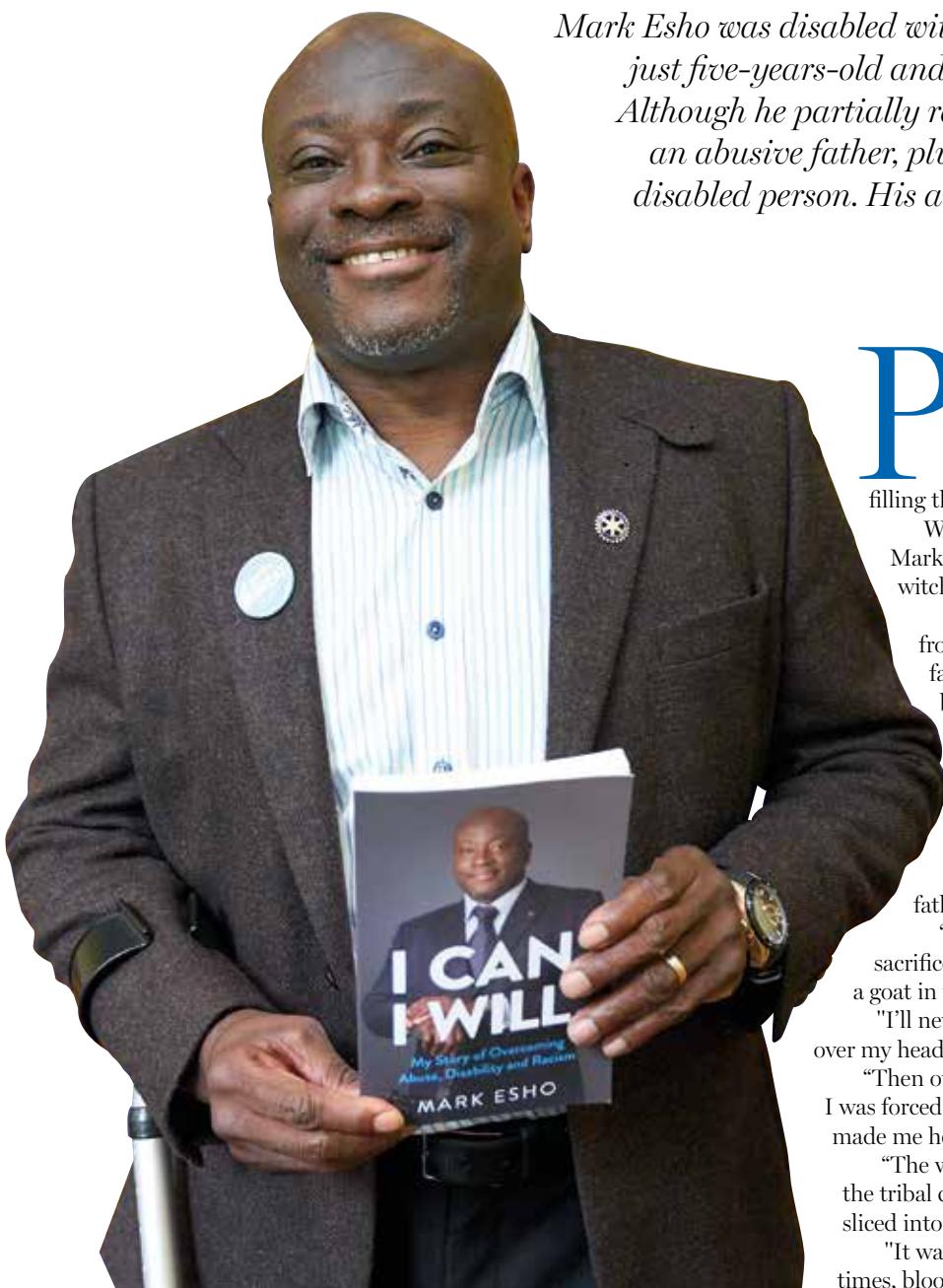
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# The night a witch doctor tried to cure my polio

*Mark Esho was disabled with polio from the neck down aged just five-years-old and told he would never walk again. Although he partially recovered, he had to battle against an abusive father, plus discrimination as a black and disabled person. His autobiography, 'I Can, I Will', has already received rave reviews.*



**P**ICTURE the scene. It's midnight, and nine-year-old Mark Esho is woken by his father and driven to the forest. The frightened youngster was carried along a darkened track, with the sound of wild animal noises filling the darkness of the night.

When they reached a hut with a thatched roof, Mark came face-to-face for the first time with a witch doctor.

"This strange-looking man scared me just from the sight of him, with odd markings on his face and weird clothing adorned with beads, bones and feathers."

"He was like a half-human, half-creature," recalled Mark, who had been taken by his family from the UK to Nigeria, to start mainstream school and where they believed old medicine could cure his polio.

Mark did not want to be there and told his father, who threatened him with a slap.

"The witch doctor practised some rituals and sacrifices, which involved slaughtering a chicken and a goat in front of me."

"I'll never forget the beheaded chicken being held over my head with its blood dripping down on me."

"Then other strange things were rubbed into my head. I was forced to drink foul-smelling concoctions which made me heave."

"The worst part, which left me traumatised, were the tribal cuts. The witch doctor took a sharp blade and sliced into my skin at the tops of my knees."

"It was agonising as he slashed into my flesh many times, blood dripping everywhere."

"My limbs were not numbed first, just cut into savagely. Then a horrible and stinking paste was rubbed into the cuts. The pain was acute.

"As he rubbed the paste into the gashes I nearly went through the roof of the hut. The torture seemed to last for ages."

It is simply unbelievable, and is one of the stand-out passages from Mark's book, 'I Can, I Will' (Rethink Press), which was published in September and shot straight to the top of the Amazon best-seller list.

Mark is a Rotarian and a member of Rotary Leicester Novus – his wife Diana is a member of Rotary Leicester.

At the book launch at Rotary London headquarters near Great Portland Street, ironically near to where he first met his wife almost 30 years ago, Mark reflected on the cruelty which was inflicted.

"In my dad's mind, he thought polio was a curse," he said. "He must have thought he was doing the right thing, but all he was doing was traumatising me."

The book, which took 18 months to write, is an extraordinary story of how Mark contracted polio from the age of five, was told he had a 10% chance of living and how he would never walk again.

Mark recalls the moment vividly in

1967 when he woke up in the middle of the night, walked to the toilet and returned to bed – not realising that would be the last time he would walk.

"When I got back into bed I had this fit. It's something you never forget," he said. "I was shaking all over and then I blacked out. I woke up in the morning in an isolation ward at the hospital and I couldn't feel a thing."

"I was very scared, frightened and I remember crying 'why me?'"

At the time, Mark was living with foster parents in Leicester. He had not been immunised.

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***"My father was going to abandon me when he realised I was paralysed."***

---

Although he partially recovered, the battle had only just begun. Mark also had to battle an abusive father, bullying

at school, as well as discrimination as a black and disabled person. Not only did he survive, but Mark thrived.

His father died a couple of years ago. Mark admitted that when that happened, he didn't feel a thing. "I forgave him, but I never liked him. He was just cruel; not just to myself, but to my siblings.

"Looking back, maybe that was his way of coping, ignoring my disability and treating me as if I was normal.

"It was a sense of shame. My father was going to abandon me when he realised I was paralysed. He told my mum, but she said no. In Africa, being disabled is regarded with a sense of shame, which is why disabled people are treated this way."

The book is an extraordinary story which wraps up polio, discrimination, adversity, racism, abandonment and child abuse into one absorbing tale.

In a blog, Mark once wrote: "Being disabled presents many changes, so does being black. Combine both and it's a pretty toxic mix of double discrimination."

It's a statement he stands by today. "Things are a lot better than they used to be, but we live in a very visual society when those first impressions are important," he added.

However, life is good for Mark Esho, a successful businessman who is enjoying what he does, and who has been pleasantly surprised by the positive reaction of the book.

Asked whether he feels cheated by polio, Mark replied: "Sometimes. You can't not. When you look at some people's lives with the way they are, you wonder why did I have to go through these struggles to get where I am when others have breezed through?"

"I'm definitely in a good place right now. I want to retire early so I can do charity work."

There are no future books planned, but Mark said that if ever anyone sold the film rights, he'd love Denzel Washington to play his part! ●



Rotary Editor Dave King interviewing Mark Esho

**i** The book can be purchased from Amazon for £12.99 via: [iWillOrderNow.com](http://iWillOrderNow.com)

To find out more about Mark visit: [markesho.com](http://markesho.com) or to see a video, visit: [iCaniWill.me.uk/video](http://iCaniWill.me.uk/video)

# Cycling without age

*How do you engage the elderly? The answer is through cycling. Nick Corke from Rotary Framlingham, and a Past District Governor, describes how their innovative two-wheeled project is having an impact in East Anglia.*

**C**YCLING WITHOUT AGE was founded in Copenhagen in 2012. It brings generations closer together by sharing experiences by bike and is now a feature in more than 1,000 care homes in 30 countries worldwide.

We were so impressed with the impact this project was having, that we wanted to do the same in the East of England, so we set about raising £7,000 to purchase and insure our first trishaw in October 2017.

These specially-designed trishaws allow volunteers to visit local care and senior citizen facilities around the community.

They also offer residents an opportunity to be a passenger on the trishaw, relive their cycling days and, once again, feel the wind in their hair.

As demonstrated in Denmark, for the elderly passengers these trips overcome isolation, they can enjoy an enhanced quality of life, create new relationships, refresh the memory of a lived life and recall places once known, as well as simply being able to sleep without sleeping pills.

In Denmark, a nursing home resident who used to spend 90 % of his time lying in his bed, is now out of bed every day, motivated simply by the trishaw rides offered on a daily basis at the care home.

A study by the University of Bath, said that low levels of physical activity in older people are linked to physical and mental health problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, some cancers, dementia and a decline in physical and cognitive function.

Long periods spent in the home can also lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation among people in this age group.

Increased community involvement has the potential to reduce the risk of these health problems. It can help older people to undertake daily living activities, keep physically fit, maintain their social networks and enjoy their later life more fully.

Whenever possible, and if the person wishes, family, friends and carers should be involved in these activities. This will help to ensure that activity is meaningful, and that relationships are developed and maintained.

As has been shown around the world, a ride in a trishaw with a friend has a real impact on the residents, and is life-changing; not only for the elderly residents of care homes, but also for the volunteer pilots.

Having decided that this was a project we want to pursue, we set about raising the £7,000 to purchase our first trishaw.

We started by trying the Rotary crowd-funding route which, to be honest, was not very successful. It also cost us a lot more commission than we had expected. So, we wrote to every local organisation that we could think of including county, district and town councils, local businesses and, of



course, we applied for a District Grant.

Within three months we had raised £16,000, which was quite amazing - the project had caught the public imagination.

Each trishaw costs £6,000 per vehicle and then there is insurance and public liability. We also received a District Grant of £1,000 towards the project.

This enabled us to not only purchase the traditional two-seater, but also the wheelchair version, plus a trailer to transport them. We have spent the last

four months fine-tuning our routes and training volunteer pilots - as the pedallers are known.

Our first official trip was on June 13th, when we led off the Women's Cycling Tour of Great Britain, which started in Framlingham, Suffolk.

Currently, we are working solely with one care home, Mills Meadow, but we are in also discussion with another home which is three miles outside Framlingham.

We have also just started offering the

trishaws as an alternative to our community cars with taking elderly residents to doctors, dentist and opticians appointments.

We have also added the day care centre in Framlingham to our list of beneficiaries. They would like us to add another day, which we will do when we get another pilot.

To date, we have averaged six people per week, some of whom are repeat trips but, with the day care centre, that number will double.

We tend to take them out for a half-hour ride once a week. The route travels on public roads, but obviously we only go on the quiet back lanes, which is safer, but also it gives the passengers more to see.



*"Long periods spent in the home can also lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation among people in this age group."*

Before this project, most of the elderly people in the care home would probably sit in their rooms or the lounge, and maybe get involved with some of the activities laid on for them – such as the weekly outings we take them on in our minibus. Now we had something different to offer.

The manager of the home admitted that when the Rotary club first mentioned the project to her, she had no idea how big the impact would be on the residents.

Now the manager is in no doubt about the profound impact it has.

I would like to be able to buy one more two-seater to help more of the elderly who live on their own, and to get them out. That is part of our plans for next year.

We are still fine-tuning our service, but it is without doubt having an impact in the community and we would be more than happy to help any other Rotary club set up a similar project in their district. ●



Trishaws being used

For more details contact:  
[nick.corke@ic24.net](mailto:nick.corke@ic24.net)  
[hourcommunity.co.uk](http://hourcommunity.co.uk)



# Rotary PEOPLE OF ACTION

## LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

### HELP REBUILD KERALA

**R**OΤARY clubs in Kerala are seeking to forge partnership projects with clubs in Great Britain and Ireland as the Indian state rebuilds from the worst flooding seen in a century.

Last August's extraordinary south-west monsoon unleashed floods in 44 rivers, throwing the south-east Indian state into a deluge unseen in 140 years.

The Kerala floods affected 5.5 million, according to official data. Some 483 people lost their lives, 10,000 kms of roads and 510 bridges were destroyed.

In addition, 500,000 poultry died, 60,000 hectares of farmland were washed away, and 12,452 hectares of fish farms are now in ruins. The state finance department estimates that it will take Rs 300 billion (£3.15 billion) to rebuild Kerala.

Sunil K Zachariah is a past District Governor for 3201 in south-east India, who has been heavily involved with the relief efforts.

Now that the worst is over, and the refugee camps have been cleared, there is much work ahead.

"I understand that Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland has been raising funds for flood victims in Kerala. Can you kindly

connect me to the concerned Rotarians please?" he asked.

"We want to invite them to partner with our Rotary Foundation Global Grant project to rehabilitate the flood victims."

The Rotary Foundation Global Grant Project 1980057 is to help flood victims in Kerala who have lost their livelihoods.

#### For example:

- A micro-enterprise making cotton beds had its equipment fully damaged in flood. They need a micro grant to buy equipment to restart.
- An auto-rickshaw driver, whose wife is a cancer patient: water submerged their house completely and his vehicle was fully damaged. He desperately needs a grant to buy a second-hand vehicle.
- A mobile phone store entrepreneur needs a grant to restart his business.

This Global Grant project fits into Rotary's sixth area of focus - Economic and Community Development.

Sunil K Zachariah explained that the projects would create measurable and enduring economic improvement in the lives of flood victims and communities by:

- Strengthening the development of local entrepreneurs and community leaders, particularly women, in impoverished flood ravaged communities in Kerala.
- Developing opportunities for decent and productive work for underprivileged flood victims in Kerala.
- Helping mini, small and micro flood-affected enterprises in Kerala to restart their means of livelihood.
- Rebuilding of a school or college.

The initial capital required is \$300,000 (£229,500) which would be contributed by benefactors from around the world. And the project beneficiaries will be from different parts of Kerala.

The local club at the heart of the project is Rotary Kalamassery in Cochin, in the Indian Rotary District 3201, with Rotary Kandy in Sri Lanka serving as the international partner. ●



The principal contact is:  
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## TAKING PRIDE



**A** Rotary club in north-west England is making plans to stage a ground-breaking event in the town next summer.

Rotary Silloth, which is based in a town which sits on the shoreline of the Solway Firth and is based 22 miles west of Carlisle, is hatching plans to host the first ever Silloth Pride.

Pride Parades have become a colourful feature of towns and cities across the world celebrating lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender culture and pride. Most take place in June to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City.

Now Silloth, which has a population of just under 3,000, wants to show how diversity and acceptance in small, rural communities is a very important issue.

"A lot of the time, people in smaller communities struggle to openly be who they are," said Owen Martin, the 28-year-old President of Rotary Silloth, and chair of the pride committee.

"Due to being scared of repercussions and victimisations, in 2018 we should not have this stigma attached anywhere in the world."

A venue or a precise date has yet to be agreed. This will be one of the smallest communities to host a Pride parade, and Owen believes this could also be the first one ever organised by a Rotary club, which is working closely with Cumbria Pride.

"Rotary is about helping and supporting communities throughout the world, and this will be a great addition to help its peace efforts promoting acceptance," added Owen ●

## CLEANING UP THE OCEANS



**R**OTARY members in Wales have pledged to work together to turn the tide on plastic.

They have been inspired following the 'Ocean Summit' which was held in Cardiff earlier this summer.

According to the environmental charity, Greenpeace, an estimated 12.7 million tonnes of plastic - everything from plastic bottles and bags, to microbeads, ends up in our oceans each year.

Now, as part of a concerted effort by the two key Rotary districts in the Principality, Welsh Rotarians are joining forces to develop a project which will tackle the issue.

Some of the great industrial rivers of South Wales, the Taf, the Ely, Cynon and Rhondda empty into the Cardiff Bay lagoon and join the ocean through a very narrow point in the barrage.

Elsewhere in Wales, agricultural plastic is not effectively recycled and, along with other waste, this reaches the ocean via rivers - something which happens in

over 80% of all cases of marine pollution worldwide.

"There is something we can all do here, in addition to simply making the right choice, and that's not to buy single-use plastic products," explained Steve Jenkins, from Rotary Cardiff Bay.

So, inspired by initiatives already started in North Wales, Rotarians across the Principality have met online to develop a strategy where Rotary clubs in Wales can co-ordinate with key partners to reduce plastic pollution.

Key partners include the Welsh Government, Keep Wales Tidy, Wales Coastal Path, Natural Resources Wales and the Environmental Sustainability Rotarian Action Group.

HRH Prince Charles, in launching the Cardiff Ocean Summit noted: "These Ocean Summits are a vital part of the collaborative steps that are being taken to tackle the ubiquitous pollution of the ocean with plastic debris as well as the broader threats to the ocean's health." ●

## RECORD BREAKERS

**T**HEY'RE in the Guinness Book of World Records - and it's official.

Rotarians in Dorset have received confirmation that their attempt to organise the longest line of letters is a world best.

Former Rotary Wessex District Governor, Chris Slocock, was instrumental in the record attempt in Wimborne in the summer of 2017 as part of a polio

campaign promotion.

The record for the longest line of letters was performed by 268 people each holding a letter of a message promoting the polio campaign. Eve Conway, who was then Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland President, and even the town's mayor joined in the attempt - the longest human representation of a text.

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## FOODBANK SUPPORT

**T**HE Bognor Regis Foodbank in West Sussex is benefiting from a financial boost from the town's Rotary club.

Bognor Hotham Rotary has agreed to donate £1,200 over the next year which will be used by the foodbank to supplement food donations with the more basic essentials which enable the operation to run smoothly.

Brian Clarke, press officer with the Bognor club said: "Many people, even locally, are just one unforeseen problem away from not being able to feed themselves or their children."

Foodbanks work with frontline professionals to identify people in need and issue them with a foodbank voucher.

These professionals include local organisations such as children's centres, housing associations, welfare agencies and community mental health teams who are best placed to assess need.

There are more than 400 foodbanks across the UK supported by The Trussell Trust, a charity which ensures there is someone locally to provide food to those in need.

Bognor Hotham Rotary President, Terry Farnell, presented a first cheque to the foodbank store in the town. The club has committed to donate £100 a month for 12 months. ●



## WARTIME GP REMEMBERED



**T**HE life and work of a surgeon and GP who saved the lives of many Dunkirk soldiers and civilians during World War Two has been remembered.

A plaque paying tribute to Dr Gertrude Mary Beatrice Toland was unveiled by her son, Gordon, at Buckland Hospital in Dover, Kent.

Among those who attended the moving ceremony was David Fisher, President-Elect of Dover Rotary, as well as a number of Rotarians since it was the town's club which commissioned the memorial.

Son Gordon singled out Peter Sherred, Past President of Dover Rotary, for his initiative in ensuring both that an original plaque had been placed in the former hospital in 1991 and also arranging for a replacement plaque in memory of Dr Toland to be erected in the new hospital.

Gordon recalled how his mother operated in wartime in underground

bunkers at Buckland Hospital. During the nine days of unstinting work at the time of the Dunkirk evacuation, teams of surgeons, one of which was led by his mother, worked side by side on two operating tables ministering to the wounded, many of whom had arrived at the hospital wearing their dirty field dressings.

More than 350 wounded troops, who had fled the French port in 1940 when it was besieged by the Germans, were operated upon, with 300 surviving.

Dr Tolland also attended many people injured by the constant shelling of Dover, known as Hellfire Corner, from the German guns in Calais.

She remained in Dover throughout the war driving to different hospitals in her Morris car often at night in the blackouts which was dangerous. She and her husband retired from their practice in 1968, he subsequently dying in 1979 and she in 1985. ●

## UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

**A**NGLIA Ruskin University has forged a novel partnership with Rotary in Essex.

The university, which has campuses in Chelmsford, Peterborough, Cambridge and London, has signed a partnership agreement with Chelmsford Rivermead Rotary which will benefit the local community, as well as Anglia Ruskin students.

The Chelmsford club and other Rotary

clubs in Essex will have access to the university's facilities, while Anglia Ruskin students will have an opportunity to get involved with Rotary-organised events.

The Chelmsford club has also developed a project in Kenya at the Rotary Namucha Community School.

The university hopes that the project could tap into its expertise in health, social care, education and arts as part of the five year agreement. ●

## DORSET ADVENTURE

**S**I XTY West Midlands youngsters spent a week in Dorset thanks to a Rotary-funded venture.

Since 1926, Rotary clubs in District 1060 which covers an area centred on Birmingham and the West Midlands, including parts of Warwickshire, have funded the annual summer camps.

They have traditionally been aimed at children aged between seven and 11-years-old, based on the recommendations of teachers as youngsters deserving a holiday.

Often, these are children who are carers in the family home, or who come from difficult backgrounds.

This year's week-long camp moved from its traditional Lincolnshire base to Corfe Castle.

The youngsters took part in a number of activities during the week, including archery and orienteering.

The cost of the trip was around £15,500, with District 1060 clubs providing the funding.

## RELAXING HOSPITAL VISIT



**G**RAVESEND & Meopham Rotary has helped visitors to Darent Valley Hospital Special Care Baby Unit to relax.

They have raised funds to purchase eight specialist, reclining chairs for every beside in the unit.

The reclining chairs at the Little Buds Special Care Baby Unit will allow parents to have some comfort while staying over with their baby during what can be very traumatic times. It will also allow for families to remain together.

Gravesend & Meopham Rotary raised £9,500 through events such as canoeing and a sponsored walk along the River Medway, a quiz night, garden parties and their annual ball at Cobham Hall. The club also received a \$1,000 matching grant from

their Rotary district.

For President, Sue Crocker, fund-raising for the Dartford hospital had a special meaning. Her granddaughter had problems at birth, which meant both her daughter-in-law and baby spent a month at the unit.

During this time, the only place for Sue's son - the baby's father - to spend the night with his wife and daughter was in an uncomfortable chair or on the floor.

Sue said: "It has been a fantastic achievement and every member of the club rose to the challenge helping to raise this staggering amount of money."

"Not only were we able to buy the chairs, but we have also raised funds to purchase eight pulse oximeters which are vital to check babies' oxygen levels."●

## IT'S ROTARY RADIO UK

**A**NEW radio station hit the airwaves earlier this autumn.

Rotary Radio UK went live on October 13th and it will be broadcasting around the clock, accessible worldwide on the internet.

The Kent-based project was the brainchild of Rotarians Steve Wood and John Robinson.

It was in the spring of 2017 when Steve and John, who are members of Rotary Sittingbourne Invicta were working at a hospital radio station and discussed why Rotary did not have its own radio station.

"As this idea grew, a number of advantages for Rotary emerged," explained Steve. "For a start, it would become a method of broadcasting the achievements and successes of individual Rotarians, their clubs and the whole organisation to a wider audience.

"It would be a useful tool in the drive to improve recruitment levels, and a way of attracting young people into Rotary.

"And it would be a source of entertainment for Rotarians and people outside the organisation."

With the backing of the Rotary District 1120, involving clubs in east Kent, the green light was given and studios were found on the Isle of Sheppey at The Criterion in Blue Town, Sheerness.

Steve said that by being an internet-based radio station, this will enable them to reach a national and even an international audience.

You can listen to Rotary Radio UK by logging onto: [www.rotaryradiouk.org](http://www.rotaryradiouk.org) and click 'listen now'.

## GET IN TOUCH...

Got a story for us? Send it in (with a good quality picture) to [editor@rotarygbi.org](mailto:editor@rotarygbi.org)



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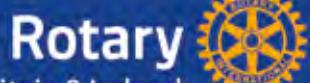
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# And finally...

These are extracts from a letter written in 1918, from the muddy trenches of Flanders by Liverpool Rotarian, Ernest W. Tickle. It was sent to Chesley R. Perry, Secretary of the International Association of Rotary Clubs and later published in *The Rotarian*. It's hard to imagine how, amid the horror and carnage of war, those early Rotary ideals had taken root. The words, phrasing, the 170-word sentence, and even the parenthesis remain untouched, as Ernest's powerfully poetic words surely serve as the best 'And Finally':

**A**midst all these scenes of war, my thoughts often turn to Rotary and Rotary ideals. I want to show some of my companions exactly what the Rotary ideal is and on Thursdays my mind at 1 o'clock is sort of transmigrated to the Bears Paw, and over my Dixie can of Army stew, my gastronomic mind dwells on the Rotary luncheon.

Ah, little did I think when grumbling and 'grousing' (British army idiom for subdued dissatisfaction) about the quality, quantity and price-for-value of that meal a day was coming when, amid the devastation of places where the great guns roar, I would almost sell my soul for the congenial company of that table, and amidst the "mud of Flanders" most sincerely and whole-heartedly apotheosize that self-same meal.

The war zone is hardly a place to expect a living revelation of the Rotary belief, but if the inner history of the men out here could be known and the acts of their lives recorded, how many, many truly Rotary deeds could be recorded?

Our English motto (which I do not really care for nearly as much as the Sheldonian original) "Service - not Self" is really a truism of thousands of men out here. You can have no idea of the many, many little kindnesses and helps a newcomer out here gets from the old stagers and how many of us men unused to hard manual labour have had timely help and encouraging words from those who are really used to the life.

In Rotary we have a force, still largely latent, which when our movement does actually become truly and really International, then nations will learn

that each for itself is a basis for business, civil and national life which is fundamentally wrong and is rotten to the very core: and through the operations of the relationship of Rotarian with fellow Rotarian, of Rotary club with Rotary club, of national association with national association, will the whole world's politics be brought, through individual civic and national understanding, to the true ideal of "Each for all and all for each" in which such atrocities as wars and international wrangles and jealousies will be condemned not merely as inexpedient, but as absolutely immoral: and nation will realise its mutual dependence upon nation and, in so doing, making war will be an absolutely impossible atrocity with its unspeakable horrors and its needless waste of both material and natural resources and its cruel bloodlust which, at this moment, is holding human life of so little value.

Let this be Rotary's grand aim through the coming years - then posterity will rise to praise and honour the names of Paul Harris and the faithful few who helped him raise the movement his great heart planned in the humble, but now historic birth, of the Chicago Club.

As time here is awkward for letter writing, please make this letter my heartiest New Year greeting to Rotary, its Association and the many friends from whom my late father and I have received so many evidences of the true meaning of Rotary membership.

Ernest W. Tickle



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