

Rotary

The Official Magazine of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland

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August/September 2020

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CAPTAIN TOM:
A nation salutes
an inspiration



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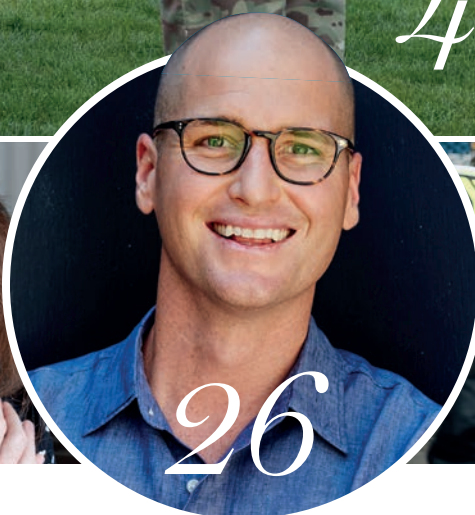
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ROTARY MAGAZINE ONLINE





DAVE KING

Captain Tom: a beacon of light

Meet Captain Sir Tom Moore, the centenarian Rotarian who lifted the spirits of the country during the COVID-19 pandemic.

HE is the inspiration to a nation. A man who, in the darkest hours of the COVID-19 pandemic, provided a sense of much-needed hope and determination.

On the eve of his 100th birthday, Captain Tom Moore captured the spirit of the world with the simplest of gestures.

Tom's 100th birthday walk for the NHS was targeted with completing one hundred 25-metre laps of the garden at his Bedfordshire home to raise £1,000 for NHS Charities Together.

With just a walking frame to assist, following treatment for cancer and a broken hip, he aimed to complete 10 laps a day.

What began as a quiet, selfless gesture on April 6th, rapidly snowballed into an inconceivable fund-raiser which captured the hearts of the nation, attracted world media attention and 1.5 million donations.

Suddenly, everyone knew who charming and modest Captain Tom was.

Speaking to BBC News, when the fund-raising had topped the £5 million mark, he explained: "When we started off with this exercise we didn't anticipate we'd get anything near that sort of money.

"It's really amazing. All of them, from top to bottom, in the National Health Service, they deserve everything that we can possibly put in their place.

"They're all so brave. Because every morning or every night they're putting

themselves into harm's way, and I think you've got to give them full marks for that effort.

"We're a little bit like having a war at the moment. But the doctors and the nurses, they're all on the front line, and all of us behind, we've got to supply them and keep them going with everything that they need, so that they can do their jobs even better than they're doing now."

Captain Tom's life story was being told across the globe. He even featured on a cover version of the song 'You'll Never Walk Alone' with the singer Michael Ball and the NHS Voices of Care Choir.

The recording went straight to number one, selling almost 36,000 copies in the first 48 hours. Captain Tom became the oldest person to have a number one entry in the UK Singles Chart, beating Tom Jones!

By the time the campaign closed on his 100th birthday on April 30th, he had raised £32.79 million. The day itself was marked by a flypast from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight as he received more than 150,000 birthday cards from well-wishers.

One of those was from Her Majesty, the Queen, who wrote: "I am so pleased to know that you are celebrating your one hundredth birthday on 30th April, 2020.

"I was also most interested to hear of your recent fund-raising efforts for NHS Charities Together at this difficult time.

"I send my congratulations and best wishes to you on such a special occasion.

Elizabeth R."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, described Sir Tom as "an example and an inspiration to us all".

And Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, added: "Colonel Tom's fantastic fund-raising broke records, inspired the whole country, and provided us all with a beacon of light through the fog of coronavirus."

The former soldier, who served in India, Burma and Sumatra during the Second World War, was also appointed as an honorary colonel by the Army Foundation College.

Then on July 17th at Windsor Castle, special arrangements were made for the Queen to knight the nation's hero.

Arise, Captain Sir Thomas Moore!

Commenting on the honour, he said: "I am absolutely overwhelmed. Never for one moment could I have imagined to be awarded with such a great honour.

"I'd like to thank Her Majesty the Queen, the Prime Minister and the great British public. I will remain at your service.

"This started as something small and I've been overwhelmed by the gratitude and love from the British public and beyond.

"We must take this opportunity to recognise our frontline heroes of the National Health Service who put their lives at risk every day to keep us safe."

Captain Tom's Rotary record is less well known. It was only during a presentation in June via Zoom, of a triple ruby Paul ►





Main image: Captain Tom Moore approaching the finishing line of his one hundred 25-metre laps of the garden which raised more than £32 million
Below: Captain Tom with his Scott motorbike and on his wedding day



Harris Fellowship, that this very proud Yorkshireman revealed his Rotary roots.

The Paul Harris Fellowship is one of Rotary's most prestigious honours.

Named after the organisation's founder, it recognises those who have made substantial contributions to society, humanitarian efforts and charitable works.

On receiving the award from the then President of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland, Donna Wallbank, Captain Tom said: "I am absolutely overwhelmed by this honour that you have given me."

"I am thrilled that I have had so many honours and the one which I have got from Rotary is certainly a star amongst them all."

He added: "Rotary certainly has touched my life. Let us go back to the late 1940s when I was a member of the Round Table in Keighley. We were very active and for a time I was chairman of Keighley

Round Table.

"We established, and I believe we have still got, a unit for disabled people. We arranged monthly meetings and provided transport for those who attended."

"I was also personally involved in building a rose garden behind the home for blind people in Keighley. We were a very active club at that time."

It was later, when Captain Tom moved to Cambridgeshire in the 1980s to manage a concrete company, that he joined March Rotary Club.

That news prompted plenty of activity in the Fenland town to look back at the Rotary club's archives.

Secretary Alan Crossley confirmed that Captain Tom was a member of the club. "He was certainly a member when Bruce Wood was President in 1976," said Alan. "Bruce can remember the house that he

lived in in Welney."

During the Paul Harris Fellowship presentation, David Straughan, President of Flitwick Vale Rotary Club, conferred an honorary club membership to Captain Tom.

He said: "Rotary's values are all about going above and beyond to support those who need it most. Our motto is 'Service Above Self', and no one has personified that quite like Captain Sir Tom."

"As his local club, we were extremely keen to recognise his achievements."

Captain Tom responded: "I have been well established with Rotary for a long period of time for which I have been absolutely thrilled and honoured to be a member."

"Now to become a member again is something which is absolutely special, as far as I am concerned."

Rotary GB&I President, Donna ►

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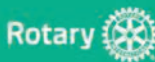
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OWN A SHARE IN A RACEHORSE



11-times champion Paul Nicholls has kept Bob Pebble and Darling Maltaix in full training throughout lockdown. Both ran into places on their first runs of the season and we will look to build on that great start as the season progresses.



Darling Maltaix

Syndicate term ends:
30th June 2021

Total number of shares:
1500

Darling Maltaix is a 7-year-old novice chaser who convincingly won a handicap hurdle at Ascot and made an impressive seasonal debut on July 7th coming 3rd in a handicap chase at Newton Abbot.

Speaking about 'Darling', Paul Nicholls said: "He wants good ground and we'll try and win some novice and handicap chases throughout the summer, into autumn and see where we end up. There's no particular target – simply to win races with him. He's a good fun horse and we'll win plenty of races with him at the right level.



Bob Pebble

Syndicate term ends:
30th April 2021

Total number of shares:
1750

Bob Pebble is a 5-year-old beginner who made nearly all the running to come a creditable third on his UK and seasonal debut; a National Hunt flat race at Newton Abbot in early July.

Since moving to Paul Nicholls' yard, he has come on leaps and bounds whilst also showing a natural and impressive jumping ability. The plan now for 'Bob' is to run and develop him into a lovely novice hurdler targeting hurdle races from the beginning of August onwards.

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Wallbank, praised Captain Tom for the tenacity, courage and passion he'd shown throughout his life.

She added: "But particularly now, when the nation needed a positive focus, because your focus became one which the world followed. And one which we, in Rotary, wish to recognise, as you truly are a person of action and one of inspiration."

Captain Tom's daughter, Hannah Ingram-Moore, who sat beside her father during the Paul Harris Fellowship

presentation, said that the family had loved seeing the success and achievements of other fund-raisers, young and old, who had been inspired by her father's walk.

"The support and togetherness that communities are showing across the country, including by Rotary clubs and volunteers, in such challenging circumstances is really heart-warming," she said.

Hannah explained that the family has now set up the Captain Tom Foundation.

"This is about inspiring hope where it is needed most, supporting those people in hospices, those who are bereaved and those who are combating loneliness," she added.

"So life has not stopped for Captain Tom. He continues to reach out to all of those people who need some hope in their lives."

Asked whether he plans to repeat his fund-raising walk next year, Captain Tom replied: "When you say next year, let's see whether next year ever comes."

"Yes, if I am still here and I can still walk, I shall continue to do my walks up and down outside the house."

"So long as people go on contributing, I'll go on walking."

This September, Penguin Books will be publishing his autobiography entitled *'Tomorrow Will Be A Good Day'*.

Asked what one life lesson he would pass onto today's generation, Captain Tom replied: "I think you must always consider that the future is going to be better."

"That if today is not a good day, then tomorrow is going to be a better day."

"I have always believed that tomorrow is going to be a good day. That's what people should do. Things will get better."

"Never ever worry yourself to the state about how terrible things are because soon, and it will happen, things will get better."

"It always will." ●



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Captain Sir Tom Moore, with daughter Hannah Ingram-Moore, waving at the flypast from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

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What is the 'new normal' for Rotary?

After five months of lockdown, now that restrictions are easing Dave King has been asking Rotarians how they see the future.

SO what is the 'new normal' for Rotary now that the five-month lockdown is easing?

Since March, clubs have been forced to abandon their weekly face-to-face meetings in favour of meeting online. Some, sadly, have not met at all, and one fears for their future.

This is what one Rotarian from the Midlands wrote: "We are holding our weekly meetings via Zoom and, while this has been quite effective for those who feel comfortable with technology, we have several members who are completely IT illiterate and reluctant to try out any technological solution.

"I am concerned these members are going to become more disconnected from our Rotary fellowship the longer we continue to meet virtually."

Kevin McLeod from Alloa Rotary in Clackmannanshire, said they had addressed this problem by setting up a WhatsApp group and a weekly members' newsletter to ensure everyone was kept up-to-date with information.

The club has been meeting on Zoom during lockdown, and they will continue to do so until it is safe to meet socially.

"I believe that some members will take longer to return to meetings as they're considered high risk, but we hope to include them by Zoom as long as it is felt necessary," he said.

"As membership director, I have approached several potential members who have stood out locally for supporting the community, and I think that social media has helped identify potential members who may have previously not been visible in the past.

"I believe that Rotary life after COVID-19 will require significant adjustment, but this has provided the opportunity to adapt and use technology.

"This will ensure that Rotary has become a more modern and potentially inclusive organisation, in that we can demonstrate the traditional face-to-face meeting is not the only way to run a club."

Can Rotary capture the thousands of people who volunteered during the pandemic or will the 'new normal' be – just normal?

Cath Chorley is a founder member of the newly-formed Forth Bridges Rotary in Rosyth, which formed a COVID-19 response team helping with shopping and

collecting medication for the vulnerable.

She said: "I doubt we will capitalise on the volunteering which has come to the fore during the pandemic.

"Volunteers who offered to look after shielded people were clear in what they were being asked to do, which was essentially to collect shopping and befriend people.

"They didn't have to pay a fee to do it. Nor did they have to attend meetings to discuss doing it and listen to a speaker who was totally irrelevant to what they were doing.

"I think that many clubs will revert to meal meetings with a speaker and hold fund-raisers to give money away to other people's charities.

"I don't mind that because, for many people, it is what Rotary is about.

"But we know that there are people out there who want to volunteer, so we should be encouraging new clubs to set up."

So on the Rotary Membership Ideas' forum on Facebook, I asked members for their thoughts on Rotary life after COVID-19 and what they believed the future held for their clubs. ►

Here are a few thoughts:

Greg Wilkinson: There is an opportunity to open up our Zoom meetings to a wider audience. However, many of us feel concerned at the potential loss of control by doing so. What would current members think? Are we missing a once in a lifetime opportunity to grow membership?

Gordon Downing-Stewart: It is important to get new members into our Rotary, but clubs should be looking at retaining their members at this challenging time.

Martin Brocklebank: Retention is as important as acquiring new members.

Les Goodchild: One of my concerns with the suggestion that there has never been a better opportunity for Rotary to tap into the army of volunteers currently supporting their communities, is that whilst we might recruit new members, retaining them could be an issue. If we bring these volunteers into our clubs and don't provide the right experience, we could do more harm than good.

Chris Slocock: Whether we like it or not our Rotary clubs had to become more relevant. Growing Rotary will be about that relevance to the next generation. COVID-19 will be the catalyst to change. The meal at most Rotary meetings is the least important thing in the new Rotary. Communication is now everything and we have the world open to us.

Nick Gidney: For many years the younger members of our traditional clubs have been the driving force for change in their clubs. They have been slowly converting the membership to the concepts of modernisation. Dropping grace in favour of "a thought of the day", relaxed dress code etc. The revolution to virtual meetings during lockdown has been a breath of fresh air to these forward thinkers and a clear example of how Rotary could be in the future.

Gary Gardner: My personal view is that all Rotary clubs should seriously consider becoming hybrid clubs, with individual clubs deciding on the balance of face-to-face and online meetings. If there is one positive we can take from COVID, it's



Most Rotary clubs have comfortably adapted to online meetings during lockdown

that it is possible for Rotary clubs to meet online.

Jill Pietrusinski: This has caused Rotarians to rapidly embrace innovative ways to stay connected. I envision the future being a hybrid of in-person and online options for clubs and definitely for districts as they co-ordinate training and assemblies. This opens up opportunities as well to reach a broader audience for membership where they need more flexibility.

Lesley Hutchings: The Rotary Club of Swindon has been having some very well attended zoom meetings. We seem to have more members having a verbal input then we do at the usual lunch meeting.

Neville Wright: Like everyone else we are concerned over member retention and new members. Not sure what my one big wish from Rotary is but for the not too distant future it should be 'charity begins at home'. I say this because Rotary needs to be seen doing good in the local area if we are to gain their support for our international projects.

Selma Ferreira: I believe that the satellites and e-clubs will be more respected, as our actual tech is what the 'normal' clubs do not often have. We have to prepare ourselves to visit those clubs and do live speeches about our experiences and how to adapt. ►



"For many years, the younger members of our traditional clubs have been the driving force for change in their clubs. The revolution to virtual meetings during lockdown has been a breath of fresh air to these forward thinkers and a clear example of how Rotary could be in the future."



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Richard Spalding: Perhaps our most innovative and different idea is to create more honorary members who are key pillars of the community and then more proactively engage with them and other key members of Winchester - each of these has already been assigned a 'buddy'.

Ian Millar: We are worried, but also determined to deal with life post Covid (whenever that is!) We have a very old membership which worries us more than the fund-raising. We intend to meet both online and at our usual location. After lockdown we still want to serve others who are in need. Volunteering to help with education may be one aspect worth exploring.

Terry Dean: As for Rotary after lockdown, we won't be going back to where we were. Since then, Rotary has advanced technically beyond anything we would have imagined. Clubs not using Zoom, or similar, are now in the minority. I see that as a good thing. When I was a new Rotarian, we were constantly shown graphs depicting the inexorable downwards trends in membership over the following five or ten years. And how if we don't do something about it we'll be going to hell in a handcart!

David Skertchly: I would like to see Rotary harness the power of Internet fund raising such as 'Just Giving' and crowd-funding". Let's face it, standing in the rain and rattling a collecting tin has far less effect nowadays than a well-placed centenarian walking around his block of flats accompanied by a media frenzy.

Brenda Parsons: I just hope the new normal will include a little spare time! I have been working on Rotary full-time for 12 weeks. I am shattered!

Ric Canham: We have a golden opportunity to decide what we want the future to look like. The 'new normal' is whatever we choose it to be. So, start planning now and, as the situation eases, we can hit the ground running!

Glyn James: We've had better attendance of Zoom meetings than we did face-to-face. Meetings are shorter and very rarely go beyond an hour. Speakers on Zoom



Since March, clubs have been forced to abandon their weekly face-to-face meetings in favour of meeting online.

can be from anywhere in the world. Going forward, we will only meet three times a month.

Gordon Garment: Rotary should avoid any changes. Fellowship and peace must continue as our central theme. Let us avoid phrases like 'the new normal' - whatever that means!

Jerry Noble: I think the new normal for Rotary should be to meet in person only once or twice a month, have a quality meeting to enjoy a meal and fellowship. And to conduct our business via video links. This will achieve a huge reduction in costs as well as in time.

Paul Bayley: If we are going to attract younger and more active members, we do need to change our outlook. We should look at ways in which we can engage with these people and what means we need to do this; Zoom, later meetings, changes of venues etc.

George Chapman: I can't predict how our club will move forward after Covid, but we are meeting twice monthly on Zoom. I am exploring the wider realms of global virtual Rotary and, where possible, passing on my experiences to the club.

Phil Lewis: We are in unprecedented times and, with Rotary's record of service in local communities, it seems certain that there will be many opportunities to provide support, service and action in areas; old and new. However, many of

our activities involve children, vulnerable adults and children, social events and, of course, Rotary meetings. In the foreseeable future, all these areas are the subject of requirements as set out by government and other advisory bodies. Rotary clubs will need to be very aware of all these new recommendations as we move forward.

Bill Palmer: Every time some major event comes along, it is followed closely by some soothsayer declaring it either the end of days or the new normal. Isn't it time that we stopped acting surprised every time a civilisation re-orientating event occurs? Change is a constant. Like it or not. It's happening all the time, but like trying to spot a tree growing, if you watch it, you won't see it. If you let your attention wander for a few months you will see a difference. So, if change is an immutable constant how do we ride the tiger? There is a straightforward solution, and again it is underscored by an old adage. If you do not write your own story you are part of someone else's. In other words, if you do not choose to transform, change will happen to you whether you like it or not.

Jim Rawson: The 'new normal' for Wigan Rotary is to try hard to continue growing the membership (now 59) and maintain the levels of fellowship, fund-raising, support given to needy folks across local, district and international communities, and supporting The Rotary Foundation. Be safe, and may the Rotary year 2020-21 be a good one for all members and clubs in Rotary Great Britain & Ireland. ●

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THE ROTARY SOCIAL

What is being watched, posted, liked, shared and tweeted around Rotary, COVID-19 and more in the world of social media.



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READY TO RESPOND

The grip of COVID-19 only adds to the challenges in responding to natural disasters, which are still occurring around the globe. Despite being 'shut down' during the pandemic, Aquabox, a Rotary supported charity supplying water filtration kits to disaster zones, has delivered essential aid to Kolkata following Cyclone Amphan. Head to [Aquabox's Facebook page](#) for the latest updates on its activity.



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MAKING CARING VISIBLE

As part of [#CarersWeek](#), Rotary GB&I announced a yearlong partnership with [@CarersUK](#). This year's Carers Week focused on [#MakeCaringVisible](#) with thousands pledging their support to raise awareness for the challenges being faced by the estimated 6.5 million unpaid carers in the UK.



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THANK YOU FOR BEING PEOPLE OF ACTION



THANK YOU ROTARY!

To mark the start of a new Rotary year, members of the [ShelterBox](#) team from around the world said a huge 'thank you' to Rotary clubs and volunteers for their support. Rotary's contribution is vital in raising funds and providing support on the ground during their response to a disaster. Head to [ShelterBox's Facebook page](#) to watch the video.



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YOUNG MUSICIAN GOES VIRTUAL

COVID-19 has put paid to many events, including Rotary's youth competition finals. But Rotary member Douglas Gilmour has created a [Rotary Young Musician Virtual Concert](#) with regional finalists from this year, in support of two charities. Head to [bit.ly/RYMconcert](#) to watch the concert on [YouTube](#).



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CONVENTION CATCH UP

The Rotary International Convention went virtual this year, and you can catch up now on the opening sessions from the weekend on [Rotary International's YouTube channel](#). Join thousands who tuned in worldwide to discover how clubs are supporting their communities with special guests, and much more!



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HANDOVER WITH A DIFFERENCE

For Launceston Rotary in Cornwall, the change in Rotary year saw a handover with a difference as chains of office were exchanged in socially distanced fashion, by drone! Head to [Launceston Rotary's Facebook page](#) to view the full clip.

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CHANGE THE WORLD

Two Rotary Young Citizens were among the 184 winners of this year's Diana Award, recognising changemakers around the world. Head to [The Diana Award YouTube channel](#) to watch their virtual ceremony, meet some inspirational winners and celebrity guests.



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CATCH UP ON TOGETHER TALKS

Covering a wide range of topics from business to volunteering, the environment and personal development, Rotary GB&I's [togetherTalks](#) series gives you access to world class speakers. A reminder that you can catch up on demand on all of the events so far by subscribing to [Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland's YouTube channel](#).



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A SHARED VISION

June 2020 marked 75 years since the signing of the United Nations Charter to support peace after WWII. Head to the video section of [Rotary International's Facebook page](#) to see the part Rotary played in the UN's formation.



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TOP ROTARY AWARD FOR CAPTAIN TOM

Lockdown hero Captain Sir Tom Moore was recently awarded Rotary's top honour - a Paul Harris Fellowship. You can watch the full virtual handover with Captain Sir Tom on the [Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland YouTube channel](#).



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SIX MILLION STEPS CHALLENGE

Congratulations to members of Worcester Vigornia Rotary who smashed their charity challenge to walk 6 million steps - around 3,000 miles - in 30 days! They're [@VigorniaRotary](#) on Twitter, give them a follow.



Holger Knaack
Rotary President 2020/21

THE year 2020 has brought monumental changes that have already included a global pandemic and a renewed call for social justice. We are reminded that we live in a constantly changing world, and Rotary is a reflection of that world.

We must be ready to listen and adapt, always drawing upon our core values of service, fellowship, diversity, integrity, and leadership. If we live these values and apply The Four-Way Test to all aspects of our lives, we will be prepared to lead at all times.

I am proud of how we have proven our ability to adapt. Faced with a pandemic, Rotary has not stopped. We moved meetings online and found new ways to serve. We turned the canceled 2020 Rotary International Convention in Honolulu into our first virtual convention.

Each week, we are proving that Rotary is a flexible gathering that happens anywhere — in traditional meetings, on cellphones, and on computers. Rotary offers a way to connect for everyone who wants to, at any time, and will continue to do so.

Some have even told me that they enjoy Rotary's mix of online and in-person meetings more now than before! How can we build on this momentum and seize the opportunity to embrace change so that Rotary keeps thriving?

We all agree that we need to grow Rotary, but sometimes we can get caught up in the numbers game and lose sight of the bigger picture. After all, an increase in membership is meaningless if next year, those new members leave our clubs.

Let's grow Rotary sustainably. Rotary's flexible options for participation will engage members and show the community how we're different from any other club. Let's celebrate that Rotary is now less about rules and more about joining together in a variety of ways besides traditional meetings.

As Rotary's founder, Paul Harris, said, we have to be revolutionary from time to time. Now is such a time. Rotary Opens Opportunities — countless ones — for us to embrace change that will strengthen us even as we remain true to our core values. ●



K.R. Ravindran
Trustee Chair 2020/21

THERE is a world of difference between a problem and a challenge.

If a honeybee faces a giant hornet alone, the bee has a problem. But if the honeybee faces the hornet with a swarm of other bees, then it is the hornet that has a problem.

This is true in nature, but it is also the human predicament. So when the situation I confront is greater than the resources I have, then it can be termed as a problem.

However, if the resources I have are greater than the situation I am faced with, then it is just a challenge. Sometimes we overestimate our problems and underestimate our ability to overcome them.

The COVID-19 pandemic seemed like a situation that might overwhelm The Rotary Foundation. But as things have progressed, we have not allowed it to do so.

As of June 4th, we have funded 208 disaster response grants for \$5.2 million and 169 new global grants at \$13.8 million — all in three months.

We have leveraged individual Rotarians' generosity with Foundation funds and in many cases other corporate funds to make projects larger and more impactful.

We never allowed the pandemic to overpower us. Indeed, history shows that Rotarians are a curious breed.

We are visionaries, an idealistic lot that dreams big dreams of a better world.

At the same time, we are resilient and able to withstand challenges that others might succumb to.

We were not idle during the pandemic lockdowns. We raised funds and did projects just as we would have if there had been no lockdown. We remembered that it's the same business that we always do — reaching out to people in distress — except the methodology by which we did it changed.

Our process of preparing and delivering the projects changed. The way we communicated what we did changed.

Our Foundation will emerge from this pandemic much stronger and more resilient as long as you continue to have trust and faith in it. ●



Tony Black
RI Director 2019/21

AS we are all slowly coming out of lockdown and everything seems to be coming back to normal, we should always be aware that at some stage we might have to go backwards before moving forward again.

Just like in Rotary, it is not always plain sailing. We will make mistakes in some of the things that we do, but learn from these mistakes, so that everything will hopefully work better the next time.

Many of our fellow Rotarians are doing fantastic work in our communities, whether working in the NHS or care homes, pulling together, collecting or delivering food parcels, producing PPE and much much more — remember some of our members are doing their bit by still staying in lockdown for whatever reason.

Many of us have been on Zoom meetings (other options are available) and many have had visitors from all over the world. Whether Past Rotary International President Mark Maloney meant his theme to be something else, we have proved that Rotary really does Connect the World.

As we come more and more out of lockdown, we Rotarians will find more and more that Rotary Opens Opportunities to help our communities, and hopefully find new members who found that volunteering is really fantastic and want to do more.

We may have to change how we do things but that is no bad thing.

We have found new ways to have meetings and communicate with our members.

Whatever suits you and your club may well — well not suit another.

Find out how you and your club want to do it and do not be hidebound by what we used to do.

All of us are doing our bit for the good of our communities, and hopefully in the not too distant future we will be able to speak to each other face to face, whether at our club meetings, coffee mornings, or whatever, and never forgetting those meeting on line.

Until then keep up the good work and stay safe. ●

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JAMES BOLTON



Making Caring Visible

It is now estimated that as many as 13.6 million people in the UK are unpaid carers, looking after loved ones who are older, disabled or seriously ill. Now a 12-month partnership between Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland and Carers UK will help make caring visible across the UK.

The last Census (2011) found that there were 6.5 million unpaid carers in the UK, however polling earlier this year by Carers UK suggested this figure to be closer to 9.1 million.

Shockingly, but unsurprisingly, this has grown by an additional 4.5 million due to the impact of coronavirus, meaning it is now estimated that as many as 13.6 million people in the UK are unpaid carers, looking after loved ones who are older, disabled or seriously ill.

Staggeringly, almost two thirds (62%) of those who have become an unpaid carer since the pandemic are juggling caring alongside their own paid employment.

Now impacting the lives of an estimated 1 in 4 people in the UK, the awareness of the challenges faced by unpaid carers is growing, but more is still required.

Carers Week, a collaboration between six charities, led by Carers UK, aims to shine a light on those challenges. This year's theme was 'Making Caring Visible', with thousands doing their bit to celebrate and reach out to unpaid carers, all virtually this year.

As part of Carers Week, Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland announced a 12-month partnership with Carers UK, which will continue to help make life better for unpaid carers by raising awareness of caring across the UK.

"We are really excited to be developing and delivering a year of activity with Rotary, an organisation dedicated to tackling some of society's biggest issues at a local and national level," says Carers UK Chief Executive, Helen Walker.

As part of the partnership volunteering opportunities for Rotary members will



be developed. Rotary GB&I Carers UK Ambassadors will raise awareness within their communities and connect carers with Carers UK's advice and support.

Amanda Watkin, General Secretary of Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland added: "At Rotary we are focused on two principles: making a difference and making connections. It is so important to recognise the contribution millions of unpaid carers make in society, and raise awareness of the sacrifices they make."

Practical support for carers is something which Rotary clubs up and down the country have long been providing in their communities.

When the town's dementia support café closed its doors due to lack of funding, Kettering Rotary Club was determined not to let this vital service disappear for good.

Led by Yvonne Robinson and Dennis Bowden, the club agreed to set up and sponsor a new Memory Café in the town, which launched in 2018, with funding provided solely from money raised locally from club activities.

The café helps people living with dementia and their carers, who accompany them to regular social and supportive get togethers. Caring for a loved one with dementia can be challenging and isolating, so ensuring carers receive the support they need is a huge focus for the café team.

If you, or someone you know, are an unpaid carer in need of support, visit the Carers UK website at www.carersuk.org.

If you are a Rotary member keen to get involved, contact Rotarian Cheryle Berry on cheryle.berry@btinternet.com ●



TOGETHER, WE CONNECT

With the challenges we are all facing with COVID-19, face-to-face meetings are temporarily not an option. Rotary clubs are continuing to get together, share ideas and make a difference through online platforms and are looking to welcome new members, volunteers and participants to their local, virtual communities.

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Food for thought

During COVID-19, Rotarians have been actively supporting foodbanks, through food donations, funding and volunteering. In South Yorkshire and the East Midlands, Rotary clubs have banded together to support the vulnerable during the pandemic.

ARNOLD foodbank in Nottingham is typical of many across the country during the pandemic which is now in its fifth month. According to manager Helen Lloyd,

they are receiving 100 requests every week for food parcels and she predicts that number will increase further once the economic downturn bites.

But a £100,000 scheme by Rotary clubs in the East Midlands and South

Yorkshire is providing a vital lifeline.

The Rotary4foodbanks scheme, run entirely by volunteers, is an East Midlands and South Yorkshire initiative which pools funds and bulk buys staple food supplies at wholesale prices. It then distributes the goods to foodbanks across the region.

By the end of July, it will have distributed food with a wholesale value of around £100,000 and has plans to extend the scheme as demands on foodbanks continue to rise.

Helen Lloyd heads a team of volunteers running the Arnold operation, which is part of the Trussell Trust, from Daybrook Baptist Church on Mansfield Road.

The foodbank is seeing more new users needing food than ever before.

She explained: "As the furlough system ends and more people face redundancy, we are expecting to see demand increase still further. We are bracing ourselves for the second wave.

"We enjoy marvellous support from local supermarkets and the general public but the additional help we are now getting from Rotary is proving a real lifeline, providing us with bulk supplies of key staples like tea, coffee, cereal and tinned





“We see a marked increase in demand in school holidays when children often go hungry with the loss of school meals. The same has been the case while schools have been closed during lockdown.”

fruit at a time of real need for so many vulnerable people locally.”

Foodbanks are anticipating a minimum 40% increase in demand for emergency food as thousands of people lose their jobs or face reduced incomes. Several are already reporting a doubling in demand.

This comes at a time when foodbanks were already stretched to the limit. In 2019, they supplied 1,808,949 emergency food supplies, a 20% increase on a year ago.

Rotary4foodbanks is a Rotary response to the growing demands on foodbanks in the UK. Initially operating in the East Midlands and South Yorkshire, the scheme is attracting interest from Rotary clubs and districts across the UK.

Although it was launched in response

to the COVID-19 crisis, it is a long-term initiative to deliver a sustainable, cost-effective food sourcing programme for foodbanks.

The scheme is run entirely by unpaid volunteers from Rotary clubs in the region. It is supported by companies and individuals who also give their time and expertise free of charge. All funds donated go directly towards providing for some of the most-needy in the community.

Rotary International’s only charity, The Rotary Foundation, as well as individual Rotary clubs, are providing an initial £100,000 to get the scheme under way.

More corporate and individual sponsors are required. The team is preparing a crowd funding initiative

and actively seeking national and local government funding support.

Foodbanks are already using Rotary4foodbanks’ buying power to maximise the value of their own resources – making their own limited funds stretch further.

Just over the Nottinghamshire border into South Yorkshire, Rotary has teamed up with the Trussell Trust team at Sheffield S6 to combat hunger in the city.

With roughly a quadrupling of demand for foodbank supplies, Sam Evans at Sheffield S6 Foodbank Hub said that, more than ever, the whole community is pulling together to help. But, he fears, the issues of hunger and deprivation are not going to go away any time soon.

Sheffield S6, which is part of the Trussell Trust, now provides a distribution hub for seven foodbanks in the city.

Sam said: “We are currently distributing £10,000 of food and essentials each week to some of the neediest in the community.

“Last week alone we delivered to 314 households, providing for almost 800 people. That’s around four times the volume for the same week last year. And that number is rising.” ➤



Natasha Aishford, a volunteer co-ordinator, holds some of the large quantity of food donated to YMCA in Burton by Rotary4foodbanks

Abbeydale Rotary is part of the Rotary4foodbanks initiative supporting the Sheffield project.

The scheme is supported by regional transport and logistics companies who provide staff and transport free of charge.

Goods are then sent from a central depot in Nottinghamshire to the Sheffield S6 hub and elsewhere.

Volunteers then distribute the supplies onwards to the individual foodbanks across Sheffield and Rotherham.

Graham Stevens from Abbeydale Rotary said: "It is a real team effort.

"Smaller foodbanks can order supplies through Rotary4foodbanks and see their limited funds work harder.

"In a real spirit of co-operation, Sheffield S6 warehouses the bulk supplies until they can be collected by or delivered to individual foodbanks.

"Just this week, Rotary4foodbanks delivered 3,300 units of product – around 350 cases of porridge, tea, coffee and other essentials, on pallets to the Sheffield S6 hub."

In Staffordshire and Derbyshire, Rotary clubs have teamed up with YMCA foodbanks in Burton and Derby to meet growing demand in what Paul Laffey, of the

YMCA, describes as the busiest year ever in his 34 years in the charity sector.

As part of an East Midlands-wide initiative, Derby Mercia Rotary has donated £2,000 worth of supplies to the two YMCA foodbanks, topping up a regular donation made to Burton YMCA foodbank by Bretby and Burton Rotary Clubs.

Paul Laffey heads up a large team of volunteers, ten of whom operate the YMCA Burton foodbank from James Street in Burton.

He said: "When a pallet stacked high with porridge, coffee, tea, tinned tuna and other vital supplies arrived, we were overjoyed.

"Demand is up by 51% compared with the same period last year, and we expect that to increase still further as the economic impact of the pandemic unfolds.

"We rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations like Rotary to ensure that those in crisis in our community don't go hungry."

In 2019, YMCA Burton alone supported 3030 people with vital food supplies and toiletries.

Paul added: "Shockingly, 741 of those were under the age of 18.

"We see a marked increase in demand

in school holidays when children often go hungry with the loss of school meals.

"The same has been the case while schools have been closed during lockdown. The Rotary club support couldn't have come at a better time."

The YMCA foodbank requires no referral before people can access supplies.

Many of the people it now serves are in work but reduced hours or furloughed, which mean they simply can't make ends meet.

While the Rotary4foodbanks scheme is currently operating only in the East Midlands and South Yorkshire, the plan is to roll it out more broadly.

"Our members tell us there is a crying need for a similar service to support foodbanks elsewhere in the country," said the scheme's co-ordinator, John Cavey.

"In the north-east especially, Rotarians are looking to utilise the scheme to help meet that demand." ●



For more information, contact John Cavey at:
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Great organisations are revealed in a crisis

The Rotary-organised togetherTalks' webinar has been lighting up Tuesday evenings with a range of top flight guests. Here, author and trend forecaster, Michael McQueen, linked up from Sydney to take questions from a global audience. His theme was: 'How to maintain momentum in tough times.'

What do you mean about maintaining momentum in tough times?

Congratulations on the togetherTalks, because this is symbolic about what maintaining momentum is all about.

We have heard the term uncharted territory, and we are all in it. I was talking to my 95-year-old grandmother yesterday.

She has seen a lot, but nothing like this. So we are entering a period which is incredibly uncertain and, let's be frank, which is incredibly scary for a lot of us.

I love initiatives like the togetherTalks because this is what maintaining momentum is – where you quickly adapt. You re-invent yourself as crisis hits, staying true to what you are all about, and not losing sight of that.

We all know that necessity is the mother of invention, and that's what I have been encouraged to see over the last few weeks.

In the world of Rotary, there is this willingness to pivot, to adapt in the face of adversity.

Great organisations aren't created by crisis, they are revealed in a crisis. What we are seeing now are organisations which know what they stand for, have really good values and a clear sense of purpose, and these are the ones rebounding most quickly.

I am encouraged to see this in the Rotary world. So many clubs can't meet in person, so they are saying 'how can we meet in communities that impact our community online?'

I know you are inspired by Winston Churchill. Is there a particular quote which inspires you?

The day the world fell apart, I was watching the news on my phone, when I saw how quickly COVID-19 was spreading, I remembered this quote from Winston Churchill: 'A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.'

Every organisation at some point faces a crisis, it's just that we have faced this one at exactly the same time. This is unprecedented.

But we can learn a lot from other organisations who faced many crises before, but didn't let them go to waste, and emerged from those times stronger as a result.

You have helped develop a formula to help people overcome fear, and focus on momentum. Tell us about it.

When I sat down to write a book about momentum four years ago, I had looked at so many organisations looking at the rise and fall of brands and businesses. The thing which kept coming up was momentum.

Businesses which last the distance and stay relevant over the long haul often by mistake, rather than a conscious act of genius, figure out how to maintain the momentum and inner dynamism.

So the formula which resonated when I looked at those businesses and organisations which had maintained momentum was three things: Momentum = A + F x C.

And those three elements were Activity + Focus x Consistency.

All of those three elements are critical and relevant to what we are facing right now. The point is how do you not get paralysed by fear in this moment?

And if you look at the focus part of the equation, a big part of it is choosing what do you focus on right now?

The danger right now is that we are trying to focus to get back to where we were, trying to reclaim the world where it existed before this crisis and that is pretty futile.

We have to be mindful what are we focusing on? What are we filling our hearts and our heads with? What you magnify, dominates you.

So for a lot of us right now, this is a chance to get back to some of the fundamental questions such as: what are the values which we hold to be true, what is the real purpose we are working towards now and focus on that stuff which gives energy and life, focusing on what is good rather than what is lacking, focusing on who you can ►





Michael McQueen taking part in togetherTalks from his home in Australia

help rather than how much life sucks right now.

And this is what Rotary does so well: shifting your focus on how I can serve, how I can give. It starts to deal with a lot of those fears which erode our mental sense of balance and well-being.

And what do you mean by the third element: consistency?

We all know about consistency from the youngest age from those old fables: slow and steady wins the race. We all know that but we struggle to live that out.

The simple reality is that there is no short-cut towards achieving long-term success in anything. There is no substitute for doing the right activities in a focused way for long enough to see results.

That's why consistency is so critical. We know this, but it is hard to live it out. So in my research around consistency, I look at how do we build in daily rhythms and habits so that we do the things required to not only achieve success, but maintain it consistently over time?

Habits are difficult, but so powerful. There is a great book I read last year, by James Clear called 'Atomic Habits', whose premise is you can either break or build your life by the habits you form every single day.

APJ Abdul Kalam, a former President of India, put it well. He said you don't get to decide or control your future, your habits decide your future.

For all of us right now, it is consistency of routines and habits.

Particularly when, and let's be mindful, no-one is forcing you to do a lot of stuff on a daily basis. You are working from home.

You can let any number of those daily routines that would normally keep you on track slip right now.

So when we come out of this time period, it is those who have maintained some daily routine of discipline and rigour, just consistently doing the right things, even when no-one is watching or applauding, they are the ones who will emerge from this time well.

You have come out with an interesting concept, the productivity blueprint. Can you explain how that works?

This is about how do you leverage every block of time you have got.

I studied high capacity individuals and organisations, and the thing they have in common is they are ruthlessly intentional about how they use their time.

Everything they do has a sense of purpose or intentionality behind it. Even when they rest, they are resting with intentionality – they are not floating from one thing to the next.

So, intentionally how you use your time is so important. The productivity blueprint is how do you approach every block of time intentional about the things you engage in.

The core of it is the good, old-fashioned 'to do' list, starting the day with some sense of what you want to achieve.

The productivity blueprint is how you move through your 'to do' list. The sequence with which you do things.

Think of your 'to do' list as one of three categories – the simple,



“The day the world fell apart, I was watching the news on my phone, when I saw how quickly COVID-19 was spreading, I remembered this quote from Winston Churchill: ‘A crisis is a terrible thing to waste’.”

the complex and the routine. The key challenge with any block of time is to use the first 20% to do the simple stuff, the things which get you off ‘go’. Because that is where momentum is built.

That is where you get into a flow state. Newton’s first law of motion is the law of inertia. The hardest thing is to get off ‘go’. Once you are moving it is easier to speed up and direct your energies.

Start with the simple things, turn your attention to the complex tasks on your list, and then spend the last 40% block of time doing the routine, admin stuff.

And this is why having intentionality is so important. If you don’t have that, how do most of us spend our time? You open your laptop and you start doing the routine things responding to emails. It is the tail wagging the dog.

It is one of those things, when you get to the end of the day, and you have been so flat out and busy, but you don’t actually know what you got done.

What you are seeing is a lack of intentionality about how you use your time. One of the things we need to apply is: control the controllables. Although there is not a lot we can control right now, you can control what you can do and what you can think.

How do we control the things which are in our grasp, and for a lot of us, these are the simple things but the stuff a lot of us are not doing right now.

What are your three takeaways?

1. Don’t let this crisis go to waste:

Some questions I would be encouraging everyone to be asking, either personally, in business or a Rotary context, is: what do I want to stop doing as a result of this?

There were some things you were doing before this crisis which no longer make sense. They hadn’t made sense and weren’t relevant for years, it’s just that you weren’t forced to change them until now. And what are you going to start doing more of?

Because it is moments like these when you pause long enough, to look at your life, you wonder what have you stopped doing along the way which was actually part of the secret sauce?

That was what made things really work.

Nine times out of ten, when a business has lost momentum, it is because they stopped doing the basics. They stopped doing the things which built momentum in the first place.

2. Be really mindful what you are focusing on:

Focus on what you are thinking about, but also focus on what you are allowing to distract you.

For a lot of us, particularly those working from home, there are no shortage of distractions. So as much as you can, control your environment. Things like switching off new message notifications on your email, switching off your phone for an hour or two each day, making yourself as unavailable as possible.

There is a great Google Chrome plug-in called Nope. If you see someone walking towards you and you know you don’t have time for this interruption, you click the Nope button and it rings your phone with a fake phone call! It’s fighting distraction with distraction.

It is about how do we get focus and avoid the distractions which erodes being in a flow state in terms of gaining momentum?

3. Be consistent:

What are some of the habits and routines which you need to do daily, even when no-one is forcing you, which will be critical to how well you will emerge from this?

That could be as simple as physical exercise, meditating, journaling. Stuff which makes you sing and hum as a person.

We can’t let those elements go by the wayside because those are the things which will not only keep you sane, but it keeps you on track. It will mean that when this crisis does pass, and it will pass, you will be able to emerge from this from a position of strength. ●



To find out more visit: michaelmqueen.net

Catch up on demand for togetherTalks by visiting:

www.youtube.com/RotaryInternationalinGreatBritainIreland

where you can **Like, Subscribe** and **Share**.

The desire to volunteer remains strong

Tom Griffin has taken over as the newest - and last - Rotary President for Great Britain & Ireland. Dave King caught up with Tom to discuss the challenging year ahead and how he believes this is a time of opportunity



THESE are challenging times to be starting a new job. Moreso, when you're at the helm of a huge organisation, with 43,000 members, and you've got just 12 months to prove your worth.

But that's precisely the challenge facing Tom Griffin, who in July became the latest, and last, President of Rotary in these isles.

The very first President of the British Association of Rotary Clubs, a title which did not please the Irish clubs, was R.W Pentland from the Rotary Club of Edinburgh, who took over in 1914, on the eve of the First World War.

Tom, another Scotsman, faces an equally epic task to resurrect Rotary in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic. And he admits he has mixed feelings.

"The difficulty is, we don't know what is going to happen," reflected Tom.

"Apart from the obvious potential consequences from COVID-19 on an organisation whose average age is about the same as mine, clubs and districts are having to meet in a different way, some clubs are not meeting at all.

"Therefore, we may lose a significant number of members."

However, Suffolk-based Tom, who is a member of Woodbridge Deben Rotary, just outside of Ipswich, acknowledges that now is a time of opportunity. He pointed to the three-quarters of a million people who have volunteered for the NHS during COVID-19.

And he highlighted the wealth of community groups which have sprung up to support the vulnerable – such as collecting shopping and prescriptions, as well as simple befriending.

"Suddenly we have realised the desire to volunteer remains strong," added Tom.

"Rotary has been very poor at recruiting younger people. We have made excuses that people are not interested in service organisations any more.

"Yet the number of people who are coming forward



volunteering in the current crisis rubbishes that idea.

“So why are we not tapping into them? Because our model is the 1905 model, when Rotary was first founded.

“We expect Rotarians to network, to socialise the way people networked and socialised in 1905. Times have changed, yet we still expect that

“Every Monday evening you go along, have a meal and listen to a speaker, who may be good or maybe not so good. And all that involves a significant time and cost commitment.

“But, to be a Rotarian, you don’t need that. We’ve seen clubs adapt by meeting online during this crisis.

“So why don’t we do more of that?”

Tapping into the tens of thousands of volunteers who have discovered the value of community service is going to be a tough ask for Rotary.

So what’s in it for them?

Tom believes that Rotary stands apart as an organisation because it can take away the hassle of the bureaucratic side of volunteering – disclosure and barring; insurance, and so on.

He added: “I saw some research recently about millennials asking what are they looking for in their life? And one of those is being part of something bigger which makes a difference.

“The big thing about joining Rotary is that you can be part of a local community organisation doing good in your own locality, but at the same time be part of a



“Rotary has been very poor at recruiting younger people. We have made excuses that people are not interested in service organisations any more. Yet the number of people who are coming forward volunteering in the current crisis rubbishes that idea.”

worldwide organisation which does good overseas and makes a difference in the second and third world.

“Rotary has two selling points. Firstly, we take the hassle out of volunteering.

“Secondly, you can be part of a local community and also part of something very much bigger, with the opportunity to network throughout the world.”

Tom insisted that if Rotary wants to get new members, it needs to be more flexible in its approach, meeting informally, meeting in cafés, meeting without a meal for an hour or so, even at weekends, or adopting a mix of traditional and innovative meetings.

“Right now, amid the uncertainty, there is an opportunity if we can grasp it. There is an opportunity for clubs to change,” he said.

“Not every club needs to change, not every club wants to change, but loads of clubs will be happy with new ways of working.

“I think there is a big, big challenge arising out of the coronavirus and there is a

big opportunity.

“Honestly? I don’t know which way we will end up – but how we come out of the current situation will be up to us.”

Tom paid tribute to his Presidential predecessors, Denis Spiller, Debbie Hodge and Donna Wallbank, by insisting that the 3-Ds’ forward-thinking philosophy would continue during his year in the hot seat.

In particular, he was a firm advocate of the Rotary2 concept introduced by Denis in 2017, mirroring his thoughts on a flexible way of doing Rotary.

As far as a focus for the coming 12 months, Tom stressed that continuity was the key, building on the good work of his predecessors, and continuing that momentum.

However, drawing back on his time in local government, as Chief Executive of both Maldon District Council in Essex, and Suffolk Coastal District Council, Tom is hoping he can help Rotary in these isles to become more business-like.

Not only in the way Rotary organises ►

itself, but also in its planning and how it measures what the organisation is achieving.

Tom explained: "Remember that local government is a multi-functional, service organisation, operating in the public eye. And it is a business.

"People join Rotary to do good. Quite often they want to leave their business background and do something different.

"I'm not sure they necessarily see an organisation like Rotary GB&I as a business.

"Clearly, General Secretary Amanda Watkin and her team are there to run it as a business. But the volunteers, in my view, need to understand that too.

"They need to understand this by having a clear idea of what we as an organisation are trying to achieve, how we are going to achieve that and making sure that we are achieving it.

"If we are not there to help clubs and districts to develop their membership, or helping clubs and districts improve and develop their service, then why are we there?"

Unsurprisingly, Tom will be tapping into the perennial challenge of membership growth, particularly diversity.

He describes as "appalling" the fact that only 17% of Rotary membership in Great Britain & Ireland is female.

And Tom laments the fact that the ethnic diversity of our membership is a long way off from the community we represent.

"It's not only the gender diversity, because 30 years on it is still appalling that we only have 17% of our members are female," he added.

"For the want of a better term, I want to improve our membership's ethnic diversity, featuring all of the ethnic communities in our communities.

"We also need to look at our diversity in terms of age too.

"So we have to develop our membership by providing an offer which is likely to be not unattractive to a different group of people.

"And I deliberately use the expression 'not unattractive' because I think our traditional method of meeting now is what turns people off.

"So this year we need to grow and diversify our membership.

"Secondly, we have got to stick with polio. When we emerge from COVID-19,



A young volunteer driver helping out over lockdown - a potential Rotarian?

polio is going to be worse, but we have to stick with it.

"Third is the environment. Rotary has ignored the environment for a long time, and so I am delighted with the recent announcement that environment will become the seventh area of focus next year.

"We have got to build the environment into our service in the way I think we should.

"And fourthly, clubs need to be more business-like.

"The way the new citation is structured should help clubs operate in a better manner. It should help all clubs and districts in Rotary GB&I to contribute to the Rotary International strategic plan.

"We're not good at the citation, we're not good at Rotary Central, and that's got to change."

From next year, it will be all change with how Rotary's governance is structured in Great Britain and Ireland.

In truth, there has always been some private disquiet from Rotary International (RI) in Evanston that there is a global RI President and, uniquely, the head of one of its global associations also has a President.

Two years ago, at the annual Rotary GB&I conference in Torquay, it was agreed to replace the President's role with a Chairman of the association.

Chiming with Tom's desire for a more business-like approach to Rotary, the official reason for the change was: "The need to refocus the role of President

away from visiting districts and touring the country, and towards leading the Association's volunteer activities in a more businesslike manner."

David Ellis, from Salford & Swinton Rotary in Greater Manchester, will take over as chairman of Rotary GB&I in 12 months' time, with Nicki Scott from North Cotswolds Rotary in Gloucestershire, becoming the new Rotary Director for these isles, succeeding Tony Black.

As part of a new Rotary structure in Great Britain & Ireland, Nicki will chair the governing council, and David will head the executive.

Interesting times. And who knows what shape Rotary will be in by July 2022? ●



FACT FILE **TOM GRIFFIN**

- **Position:** President of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland 2020/21
- **Club:** Woodbridge Deben Rotary, Suffolk
- **Membership:** Joined Rotary in 1984
- **Retired:** Local Government Officer
- **Lives:** Kesgrave, Suffolk
- **Married:** Wife is Deirdre Griffin
- **Hobbies:** Reading, history, classical music and walking



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- Emma

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Costa del Rotary!

Costa del Rotary

EACH year, a number of Rotarians move to or spend long or short-term periods in Nerja on the Costa del Sol in Spain.

Up to now there has been no Rotary club in the area for them to join or visit.

This is changing as we are in the process of forming an international Rotary club which will be English-speaking.

Currently we have members from seven different countries, including former Rotarians from Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland.

The Rotary Club of Nerja extends a warm welcome to current or former Rotarians and can be contacted on:

nerjarotary@gmail.com

Billy Hamilton
Nerja Rotary

People of action

I ALWAYS enjoy reading *Rotary* magazine but, at the age of 82, not the internet version, as you might imagine.

I was particularly inspired by the 'People of Action' photo and caption in June's issue and thought that's great for Rotary's image.

On second thoughts, I am aware that we in Epsom are still trying to attract members of all ages and gender.

So this made me think, it would be even better if you could produce say two or three other photos each depicting the middle age groups and elderly active in a

similar dramatic way working together.

Maybe with a caption saying 'whatever your age or background, there's a place for you in Rotary'. Having said that I am reminded to say 'include ethnic and female elements as well as white males'.

Congratulations and appreciation again on this issue of the magazine, and I hope this comment is useful food for thought.

Colin Peel
Epsom Rotary

Editor's note: There are plenty of 'People of Action' images depicting all demographics, which clubs and districts can use to repurpose with different frames for their own promotional needs. These can be found on the Rotary Brand Center - brandcenter.rotary.org/en

Precious planet

WHILST I agree with Rotarian Terry Durrance (*Rotary*, June) that the planet has been undergoing climate changes since it first coalesced, and we are still, very slowly, coming out of the latest ice age about 11,000 years ago, it is only since the Industrial Revolution that the speed of change has become so dangerous.

It took the planet 4.5 billion years to create the vast, but finite, reserves of carbon containing coal, oil and gasses, which we have been releasing into the atmosphere in a mere couple of hundred years. Simple logic tells us that this must have an effect and an accumulating effect.

Even the minerals we use so freely, aluminium, iron, lead, tin, copper, gold etc., were formed by the explosion of earlier stars and accumulated in ever small quantities as our sun and planets formed, and are being used up remarkably quickly.

So yes, Terry is right. We cannot control nature, but we are responsible for and must control our own actions. The results of failure to do so are beginning to be felt and we are probably past the point of no return already.

Don Ellis
Abbeylea Rotary

ROAR with radio

ROTARIANS of Amateur Radio (ROAR) was founded in 1966 by their first President, Byron C Sharpe (W9BE) and is one of the oldest Rotary fellowship organisations.

Today, more than 50 years later, ROAR members keep in contact via the airwaves on a Sunday and a Tuesday. We have a DMR, 80m, 40m and 20-meter nets (get-togethers) when conditions allow.

ROAR is open to any Rotarian who is licenced or has an interest in short wave communications. One of the goals of the group is to promote international understanding and fellowship.

Included in the Rotary mission is that we serve. In times of disaster, ROAR members can assist by giving up their time to provide communications which, in some instances, is in areas where mobile phones and normal communications do not function.

For more information, please look at our web site www.ifroar.org or email admin@rotaryclubofgraysthurrock.co.uk

Nicholas Wilkinson
Grays Thurrock Rotary

A ridge and a rose

IT was good to read Patrick Farrelly's letter about Rotary's memorial known as Rotary Ridge at the National Arboretum (*Rotary*, June).

It was six years ago that my partner

and I visited the facility, and found our memorial in a very poor state, apparently unmaintained since its dedication in 2004.

I contacted Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland and solicited the help of our incoming District 1080 District Governor, who knew his counterparts where the Rotary clubs instigated the memorial.

It seems there were a number of problems, not least an infestation of rabbits. However, it is good to know the problems were eventually resolved.

Thanks to Lichfield St. Chad Rotary, all is now well and there's a nice clean flagpole with a nice new Rotary flag atop.

Re-dedication was achieved, fortunately before the pandemic took hold, with a ceremony in January this year.

May I turn now to another Rotary initiative of 2004 – the advent of the rose 'Rotary Sunrise'?

This rose was especially bred by Gareth Fryer. It was launched to commemorate the centenary of Rotary International, and in honour of his father's 50 years of Rotary service – Frank Fryer.

The rose went on sale through Fryers Garden Centre in Knutsford and Knutsford Rotary received £1 for charity for each rose sold. This ran to an annual sum in three figures for a number of years until it slowly faded away.

Some years ago, I first discovered the rose in Butchart Gardens near Victoria on Vancouver Island and wondered why I had never heard about it in UK.

As our out-going President was running a competition to find a good idea to mark the rebirth of Rotary following the pandemic, I did some more research and suggested re-launching rose 'Rotary Sunrise' to celebrate the new dawn (or new normal) in the years of recovery.

I won, and I have been commissioned to develop the idea. Although the rose is still listed by some garden centres, it seems to be out of stock everywhere, so it will probably need to be re-cultivated.

At this stage, it would be useful to know of anyone who is a rose grower and has a rose 'Rotary Sunrise'. Has anyone see

one, and if so where? I wonder if clubs or individuals might like to buy or sell them at some time in the future.

Please contact me at:

rotaryrosesunrise@gmail.com with any information, or to register your own, or your club's interest.

Martin Anscombe
Watton Rotary

Appliance of science

FOR the last ten years, Rochdale Rotary has been involved in growing fruit and vegetables, particularly for landless people living in extreme poverty in developing countries, for which we won the Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland Environmental Award in 2009/10.

Our UrbanFarm system is extremely low cost, organic, requires minimal water and provides food and / or income for families.

Information and the full technical manual are available on **www.accessible-edibles.org**

Although the system has been used world-wide it is ideally suited for Sub-Saharan Africa and we are just adding the technical manual in Swahili to our website.

While the system uses only small amounts of water, we know that this may still be difficult for some families to access.

We have now developed a new version of UrbanFarm that can use seawater or salt contaminated freshwater by means of a low cost, passive desalination technique.

While the prototype has proved that the system works, we now need to optimise the volume of water that it generates.

Our freshwater target is 1 litre per unit per day and at the moment we are achieving 250mls hence we need a scientist/physicist to help us increase the efficiency and finalise the development.

If you or a family member are able to suggest a way forward our club would be very grateful.

Being a Rotary project, it goes without saying the only reward would be a mug of

tea and possibly a chocolate digestive!

If you can help, email:

acton.sheila@btinternet.com

David Acton
Rochdale Rotary

Spitfire research

I AM a part of the Spitfiremakers' voluntary research team. We are seeking anecdotes, photographs or any other material that we can use as part of our research project about the Spitfire in Southampton during World War 2.

We are looking for stories by or about the people employed by Supermarine, Southampton and the locations where they went on to become Spitfiremakers following the bombing of the Woolston factory.

This is a charity and the original research that we undertook formed the basis of the play 'Out of the Shadows' which played two years running at the Nuffield Theatre.

We can be contacted at
spitfiremakersresearch@btinternet.com

Sue Phillips
Southampton Rotary

Inspiring message

OVER the last three or four months I've read a good many reports, articles, even poems, but nothing has moved me as much as the editor's 'And Finally' letter in June's Rotary magazine.

The piece jumped straight out at me and I've asked our secretary to email members to ensure they don't miss it.

It, quite simply, says everything needed to inspire all Rotarians, and I hope that all of us can and will take heed of your message.

Mollie Young
Portishead Rotary

We welcome your letters on any subject to do with Rotary. Submissions should not be more than 250 words long. Please include your name and address. Email: **editor@rotarygbi.org** or post to: Rotary magazine, Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland, Kinwarton Road, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6PB. The comments made on this page do not necessarily represent the views of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland and Rotarians.

Rotary Young Citizen Awards





EVE CONWAY

Role models for the youth of today

THE Rotary Young Citizen Award Winners 2020 have been put under the spotlight appearing on BBC Television.

The eight remarkable winners, nominated by Rotary clubs, were interviewed on BBC News Channel's 'Afternoon Live with Simon McCoy' programme.

The Rotary Young Citizen Awards celebrate the amazing achievements of

inspirational young people, under the age of 25, across Great Britain and Ireland, many of whom have assumed important responsibilities at a very young age.

This year's winners include those who have been volunteering, helping the vulnerable and homeless during the coronavirus pandemic and one who is working on the frontline as a support worker in a care home.

And, for the first time, this year's

awards include the Rotary Young Citizen Sporting Hero Award, won by 14-year-old Will Sears from Bournemouth.

For the second year running, the Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award was presented, reflecting Rotary's area of focus on peace and the award went to 16-year-old Iqra Khan from Bradford.

Both winners were featured in June's edition of *Rotary* magazine. So let's find out more about the other winners:



Theodor Sergiou

Nominated by Enfield Chase Rotary, London

AGED just two-and-a-half months, 19-year-old Theo was diagnosed with bilateral Retinoblastoma (cancer in both of his eyes) and after treatment, doctors regained some of his sight.

However, aged four, he was diagnosed with cancer again, this time the tumour had grown so big, his parents had been told he had only a few days to live, the cancer was terminal.

With treatment though, the tumours stopped growing.

Theo says: "I still am partially blind and in fear knowing that the cancer could come out of remission one day and kill me, but I survived."

His ongoing medical condition and regular hospital admissions haven't stopped him from doing so much for others.

He is the London representative on the UK's Youth Parliament and is



passionate about reducing knife crime. He was recruited to the Youth Advisory Forum, the first ever youth civil service body and Theo is the youngest person in British history to contribute to a No. 10 Cabinet meeting.

During the pandemic, Theo has been involved in discussions with Government Ministers about issues affecting young people.

As an inpatient at Barts hospital in 2014, he realised how little say young people have

in their own care and became the co-founder of Barts YES Forum – Youth Empowerment Squad which now stretches across the Barts Trust, set up to help improve the experience of young patients.

During the coronavirus pandemic, he has been giving peer support across the five Barts hospital sites in London to those aged from 11 to 19, who are concerned about being in hospital or don't want to go to hospital appointments and are

worried about their survival.

He has also supported kids in education writing an open letter to the Prime Minister about the lack of provision during lockdown for youngsters with special educational needs who, he says, are suffering mental health problems and not getting an education and also those who are being marginalised because they are digitally disadvantaged due to lack of access to modern technology.

Theo is a lay member of NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) on their Complex Needs and Disability Committee producing guidelines for key-workers and is the first young person on this committee.

He is on the NHS England Youth Forum, representing the views of local young people on a national platform and Youth Representative for Health Education England on their Patient Advisory Forum. ►



Hannah Chowdhry

Nominated by Redbridge Rotary, London

DURING the coronavirus pandemic, 16-year-old Hannah Chowdhry has been on the frontline helping at a daily project to feed the homeless and vulnerable in Ilford as the youngest volunteer for the British Asian Christian Association.

Hannah started volunteering at a foodbank and 'Meals for the homeless' project in January 2020, which included cooking meals for the rough sleepers and she has also built up a strong bond with many of them.

At secondary school,

Hannah became aware that some pupils were using legal highs, so she started a campaign which led to the creation of a borough-wide reporting portal to help map drug-related crime.

She is also a long-term campaigner against knife crime and sits on a youth reference panel for the Mayor of London's Office for Policing and Crime.

Although Hannah suffers from Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (a disorder that causes lasting pain, usually in an arm or leg) and Juvenile Arthritis, she is determined that her physical condition does not deter her from helping her community wherever she can. ●



Bethan Harvey

Nominated by Witham Rotary, Essex

BETHAN Harvey has been on the frontline during the COVID-19 pandemic working full time as a support worker at Mandalay House, a care home in Witham in Essex, supporting young women with learning disabilities.

She was born with the rare genetic condition, Goldenhar syndrome, Hemifacial Microsomia and with Microtia (under development of one half of her face and no hearing in her partially formed ear).

At junior school, she was severely bullied by her peers. As a result, she opted to have major reconstruction to her ear

and further surgery to her face. The bullying continued both physically and mentally and things got so bad at school, she tried to end her own life.

When Bethan left school, she began fighting back, setting up a blog to raise awareness of bullying. She was open about her medical conditions to help others not to feel alone.

Bethan, 24, helps girls with sensitive issues such as bullying, health and body image. She is campaigning to help deaf young people and trying to get sign language onto the school curriculum so all children are included and nobody feels alone or ashamed to be themselves. ●



Jessica Frost

Nominated by Leeds Rotary

FOURTEEN-year-old Jessica Frost, from Farsley in Leeds, was in and out of hospital from the age of two, with a range of development issues from walking and talking to fine motor skills. Her social skills were affected leading to her becoming introverted.

She was found to be suffering from Ketotic Hypoglycaemia where her blood sugar levels dropped to extremely dangerous levels and only hospital intervention could get them back to normal.

Her singing started as a hobby recommended by Leeds Child Development Team after noticing that although she struggled to speak, she could sing whole songs and pick them up very quickly.

Jessica and her family received lots of support from doctors, nurses and specialists which is why she now raises funds and awareness with her singing performances for the foundations, charities and events that help local children, including children's hospices.

During lockdown, Jess performed her planned VE Day mini-concert live on Facebook on May 8th to raise funds for the RAF Benevolent Fund, as her neighbours watched on and held a socially-distanced street party.

Aged 12, Jessica was the 2017 Christmas No.1 in the Fab Charts with 'If Everyday was Christmas' to raise funds for St Gemma's Hospice. ●





Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form Interact Group

Nominated by Darlington Rotary



A GROUP of 47 community-minded students, who are members of the Interact club at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College in Darlington, are playing a key role in supporting their local NHS and the isolated vulnerable and elderly in their community during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Interactors, who came together in September 2019 supported by Darlington Rotary, have provided a hundred scrub bags for the local Intensive Care Unit and sent cards of thanks, chocolate brownies, moisturisers and hand cream to the medical staff dealing with COVID-19 patients at Darlington Memorial Hospital.

The group have also started their 'Snail Mail Sunshine' project sending more than 1,200 letters to vulnerable and elderly people in Darlington and the North-East

area who are isolated due to coronavirus.

In addition, they put together 'VE Day in a Box' for Abbeyfield Care Home for their VE Day celebrations with cakes, bunting they made, including Sir Winston Churchill and Dame Vera Lynn party masks.

The Interactors recently won the best project award

from Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland for their 'I Promise' initiative, whereby each student made a promise to the community – a promise of time, fund-raising or physical items.

Their promises included a beach clean, a sleep out to help the homeless, helping a women's refuge, raising funds for the local hospice, supporting

emergency services, helping people with dementia, reducing social isolation for the elderly.

Funds were also raised to support Rotary's campaign to eradicate polio and to reduce child mortality by supporting a charity which provides additional training for midwives in Uganda. ●



Luke Millington

Nominated by Telford Centre Rotary

TWENTY one-year-old Luke Millington, from Telford, decided to lead a fund-raising appeal for Hope House and Ty Gobaith Children's Hospices. He is celebrating after smashing his own goal by raising an incredible £60,000.

Luke made a video to show how the charity has helped him since he was diagnosed with the incurable muscle-wasting condition Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

It tells how his nurse Rachel has supported him and made him see that anything is possible, such as learning to drive.

Luke is thrilled, because the money raised will fund support for five more children at Hope House or Ty Gobaith in 2020.

He says: "I feel really lucky to have Hope House in my life but sad too that they can only afford to help one in every three children who need them." ●



Watch the BBC interviews with all the winners on Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland's YouTube channel and find out more about the winners and see videos about them on www.rotarygbi.org



Sheenah Nelson

CHAMPION OF CHANGE



Having the heart to save lives

Sheenah Nelson from Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary in the west of Scotland, has won a Rotary Champions Award for her work as the Heartstart co-ordinator. Here, Sheenah describes her work

HEARTSTART defibrillator awareness training is all about giving a person the vital skills and the confidence to save a life. You are that vital link in the chain of survival. The power to save a life is in your hands. Use them!

Coming from an education and health background, I have always been passionate about emergency first aid training.

As a primary school teacher, and

latterly a Health Education Co-ordinator for my school, I felt that such training should be a compulsory part of every child's education.

Every class I have taught left their year with these skills and it has, indeed, paid dividends in the number of lives saved.

I have been privileged to have been part of the Heartstart Scotland Campaign, a joint initiative between Scottish Ambulance Service and British Heart Foundation to place defibrillators on every local emergency

ambulance.

This was followed by being invited to become a non-executive board member of Argyll & Clyde Health Board.

In this capacity I became aware that we now had these life-saving machines on all these vehicles and paramedics with the advanced skills to save a life. So why were lives still being lost to cardiac arrest?

When someone suffers a cardiac arrest, every minute counts.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

increases the chances of survival as it ensures a flow of oxygen rich blood to the brain and the vital organs.

This also increases the chances of the heart remaining in a 'shockable' rhythm rather than deteriorating to a 'non-shockable' (flat-line) rhythm.

It increases the potential success of resuscitating someone with a shock from a defibrillator.

I instigated the Heartstart/Defibrillator Awareness Training in 1996 and the programme was then offered to the community, primarily via schools and local organisations.

That same year I was co-opted as a teacher at Cardross Primary School onto Argyll & Bute Council's Education Department's working party for health education.

I promoted Heartstart Training as part of the health education curriculum within primary and secondary schools, and this is now also included in schools throughout West Dunbartonshire.

One of the members of this working party was a fellow primary teacher, Mary Horswell, who was President of Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary.

Mary informed me that Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary had been affiliated to the BHF Heartstart Scheme which was now an established part of the club's Community Service Programme.

I joined Rotary in 2007 and became the club's Heartstart Co-ordinator in 2008. We deliver Heartstart/Defibrillator training for our local schools, GP and dental practices, police and fire service, local businesses, golf clubs, bowling clubs and many other local organisations.

Each year we train over 5,000 pupils and members of the community in both Argyll & Bute and West Dunbartonshire.

These are our future lifesavers and Rotarians of tomorrow.

Survival rates were dropping and we needed to address this. I campaigned for local first responder schemes and publicly accessible defibrillators (PADs) which could make a significant difference to the outcome of a patient in cardiac arrest.

This wasn't nearly enough!

In 2015 I was instrumental in forming Helensburgh & Local District CPR/Defibrillator Association to raise funds to provide PADs in locations throughout the area. This charity works in partnership



“On average, 3,000 people in Scotland suffer a cardiac arrest in the community each year. That’s 70 people each week. However, only one in 20 survives the event.”

with Heartstart Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary.

The Scottish Government launched its Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Strategy 'Save a Life for Scotland' in March 2015.

On average, 3,000 people in Scotland suffer a cardiac arrest in the community each year. That's 70 people each week.

However, only one in 20 survives the event. We know that it is possible to change this, to be as good as the European average where survival is up to four times higher.

The aim was to train 500,000 members of the public in CPR between March 2015 and March 2020 and save 1,000 lives.

The survival rate has now increased to 1 in 10, thanks not only to the support

we have been given from those in the local community who have received Heartstart Training, but also those individuals and groups who have helped fund PADs.

Many of those who have been trained have also gone on to become Heartstart trainers. Some 207 PADs have been placed in the community, resulting in 23 lives being saved.

This is an excellent example of Rotary working in partnership with the local community and I continue to campaign to raise awareness of Heartstart and in so doing also raise the profile of Rotary. ►



Peter Swan

COMMUNITY CHAMPION



Education is the key to ending poverty

Peter Swan, Community Champion 2020, has transformed one of the poorest districts in Tanzania, simply by providing the resources for children to receive a full education.

PETER Swan has devoted the past 15 years to transforming education in Meserani, Tanzania. His dedication was recognised by Middlesbrough Erimus Rotary who nominated him for a Champions of Change Award.

The journey began in 2004, when Peter took a group of pupils from a school he worked at, on a three week camping

expedition to Tanzania. Little did he know, how much of an impact this trip would make on him.

During the expedition Peter and the group of pupils came across a primary school where the level of education and facilities shocked them. The school was like nothing they had seen before.

The building was in poor condition, and didn't have enough classrooms for all

the pupils there.

Due to the school being based in such a remote area, there was no water supply. The school was reliant on a basic harvesting system which could not meet its needs of the school and those of its many pupils.

This was a culture shock and really made an impact on the group.

Peter said: "What struck me most was how my pupils reacted, they really wanted



to do something to help.

“They donated their own money which they had brought with them on the trip, as they realised the money would help the lives of the children in the Meserani community, who needed it more than themselves.”

Peter could see how much of a difference a bit of help could make in this small Tanzanian community, and this inspired him to begin the Meserani project.

The Meserani project believes education is key to help support the whole community.

Fifteen years later, the project has developed into a UK registered charity which has completely transformed Meserani.

Peter a former teacher, understands the power of education. He said: “Ensuring every child has access to a full education will benefit the community in the long run.

“We can’t change the world – only nature, politicians and God can do this – but what we can do is focus on individual challenges, and make relatively small, but life-changing differences wherever it is possible.”

Giving the children in Meserani access to an education and opportunities will help them escape from a life of poverty.

The funds raised to date exceed £400,000, and all of this has been spent on education and health provision for the young people of Meserani and their families.

“Today there are now four primary schools in the area with enough classrooms for all the children, resources to help their

studies, and building work has begun on the first secondary school in the area, to allow more children to further their education,” Peter added.

Up to 30 students have been sponsored to attend universities, an opportunity which wouldn’t have been possible without the support of the Meserani project.

Now that Peter has retired, he takes groups of people from schools, colleges and commercial organisations in the UK on trips to the Meserani district of Tanzania, where they are able to contribute to the work of his project, as well as benefitting from an amazing personal challenge.

Students from the UK who have travelled to and worked in Meserani have been inspired to support the project and the experience has had a positive effect on their lives and their outlook on life.

Peter said: “They have seen the world in a different light and can better appreciate its inequalities.

“They have been inspired to do what they can to make a difference.”

Peter explains that his more than 40 years of experience as a teacher were amazingly rewarding and enjoyable, and he is now in the fortunate position of being able to give something back.

The work Peter and many volunteers are doing in Meserani is life changing.

Families within the district are benefitting from the increasing number of young people being educated to a higher level, increasing employment, prosperity and knowledge in the area. ●



Just champions!

Every year, Rotary hosts the **Champions of Change Awards**, celebrating the outstanding humanitarian and community service conducted by volunteers from across Great Britain and Ireland.

This year’s winners include:

- **Issy Sanderson**
York Ainsty Rotary – Yorkits
- **James Onions**
Kew Gardens Rotary – Sand Dams
- **Dr Viquar Qurashi**
Sedgley & Wombourne Rotary – Prosthetic limbs in Pakistan
- **Valerie Leivers**
Sherwood Sunrisers Rotary – India Unseen
- **Sheenah Nelson**
Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary – Rotary Heartstart
- **Gloria Nichols**
Halstead Rotary – Mary’s Meals

Six members of the public are also recognised for their outstanding volunteering.

They include:

- **Peter Swan**
The Meserani Project
- **Ash Razzaq**
CATCH, Leeds
- **Ruth Wareing**
The Learning Centre, Southport
- **Rachel Holliday**
Women Out West
- **Eileen Harrington**
DonMentia
- **Graydon Radford**
Shrewsbury Good Neighbours

In *Rotary* magazine, we are featuring two of the winners, but more details can be found online at www.rotarygbi.org/champions_of_change_2020

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JAMES BOLTON

The need is still there

FOR charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations, COVID-19 has almost been the perfect storm. We've seen a significant shortfall in funding and the cancellation of traditional fund-raising opportunities, at a time when the demand for services is increasing.

We spoke to a number of organisations who will be taking part at Volunteer Expo, now rescheduled to take place from May 7th-9th, 2021, about how COVID-19 has impacted them.

At a time when things are very unclear, one thing that is obvious, the generosity and commitment of volunteers is more important than ever.

The Lewis Foundation

THE Lewis Foundation provides free gifts and support to adults who are going through cancer treatment. It can be a sad, frightening, and lonely experience for individuals undergoing cancer treatment, especially during this pandemic when their loved ones can't be with them.

We have been overwhelmed by the support and donations still being made to us.

We can no longer host our weekly gift packing sessions, so a small number of volunteers now pack gift bags in their own homes, which are then collected to be delivered.

We've also created alternative drop off points to minimise social contact and have been working very closely with all our hospitals to adjust the way we deliver the support packs to the wards.

The hospital staff now kindly hand them out for us. We continue to give 2500 gifts a month to the 7 hospitals we support in the Midlands.

Lorraine Lewis
Co-Founder and CEO

Aquabox

SINCE the outbreak of COVID-19, Aquabox's depot in Derbyshire has been in virtual lockdown, but this hasn't meant our charity's work has stopped.

During the past few months we have despatched, with our partner agency, Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire, our third delivery of aid in two years to Yemen, sent both air and sea shipments of aid to the Bay of Bengal in the aftermath of Super



An Aquabox water filtration pump is demonstrated in Yemen

Cyclone Amphan and finally sent aid to Syria, working with Hand in Hand for Aid and Development. We have an aid package prepared in our warehouse for our fourth Yemen shipment and boxes waiting to reach Nepal. We are preparing for the inevitable hurricane season.

All in all quite a busy time for us. Not bad for a volunteer-led Rotary charity!

Roz Adamson
Trustee

Marie Curie

AT Marie Curie, we have seen an increase in calls to our information and support, and bereavement lines during the pandemic, while our hospice and community nursing teams have had to adapt how they care for people, both with and without coronavirus, at the end of life while wearing PPE.

Our volunteers have helped distribute

PPE to nursing teams across the UK and supported our Emergency Appeal by sharing our need to raise £2.5 million per week to continue our services for people living with a terminal illness, and their loved ones.

Our volunteers are vital in helping us continue to provide expert care and support at a time when people need it most. Marie Curie is calling on everyone to #UniteInMemory during a day of reflection on March 23, 2021.

David Grout
Head of Fundraising Volunteering

Mercy Ships

MERCY Ships uses hospital ships to deliver free, life-changing, and life-saving surgeries to the world's poor. We also train local healthcare professionals to leave a legacy of change in the nations we visit.

The full impact of COVID-19 on the

people we serve in sub-Saharan Africa is still unfolding, but we are continuing to support our African partners. We have moved many of our training courses online and added new ones specifically tailored to the pandemic. We have donated essential medical supplies and PPE to eight African nations to help save lives and protect frontline workers during the pandemic.

Currently our flagship, the Africa Mercy, is in drydock and the volunteer crew are utilising the extended shipyard period to carry out maintenance and renovation onboard. We will return to Senegal as soon as possible to perform our women's health programme.

Christine Brown
Community Partnership Manager

Blue Cross

BLUE Cross has always been there for pets and the people who own them, and this hasn't changed even with the outbreak of COVID-19. The other thing that hasn't changed is the amazing dedication from our volunteers!

Whether they continue to help on the front line in our clinical or rehoming settings, paused their role completely, or are helping in a different way, their support has been steadfast.

Our volunteers have really stepped up to help with fostering pets; around 60% of

Blue Cross pets are now in foster care and 555 have new homes, taking the pressure off our centres and allowing teams to work within the social distancing rules.

Whatever the future looks like for Blue Cross; our volunteers will always be part of it.

Libby Duffield
Volunteering Development Partner

Motor Neurone Disease Association

WITH the Motor Neurone Disease Association putting people at very high risk, shielding was paramount to minimise the risk of catching coronavirus.

All visits by MND Association volunteers to those with MND stopped overnight, as did meetings of the 80 volunteer-led branches and support groups. Instead, volunteers were retrained and upskilled to deliver one-to-one and group support online using video platforms, ensuring people with MND could access advice, help and companionship.

Within weeks of lockdown, 240 volunteers joined an effort to call every person with MND that we knew about.

Almost 3,400 people were offered support and ongoing contact, with volunteers and staff.

This online support has proved so

popular, a full programme is now being rolled out and extended to those who have been bereaved. Volunteers are supporting online activities, meetings and peer support with an anticipation that virtual activities will have an increased role to play in the future.

Chris Wade
Director of Engagement

Tools for Self Reliance

TOOLS for Self Reliance delivers life-changing vocational training projects in Africa, including start-up tool kits donated and refurbished in the UK.

COVID-19 has meant most of these projects are on hold, and communities already living in poverty are facing increased food costs, and fewer ways to earn money because of local restrictions.

Our workshop has closed, but many volunteers have found ways to support our work from home – selling tools and items online, or repairing and refurbishing tools from their own workshops.

In Africa, projects have been similarly responsive – finding ways to adapt projects, including making and distributing masks, and setting up handwashing stations in local communities.

Jemma Chambers
Head of Fundraising



Blue Cross has re-homed over 500 pets during COVID-19



The Lewis Foundation have distributed 2,500 gifts to cancer patients

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and finally...

with Managing Editor Dave King
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E=MC Zoom

FOR more than 40 years, my Rotary club in Middlesex has always met on a Wednesday evening for supper and a speaker. With chains of office, a bell to bring everyone to order, the loyal toast, plus a Rotary toast to conclude, this has been pretty traditional Rotary.

And while modernists may decry the bling and tradition, they should remember that Rotary is no longer one size fits all.

It is now a customised model.

However, as club president this past Rotary year and in the wake of COVID-19, it was apparent that change was necessary.

Like many Rotary clubs in March, once we could no longer meet face-to-face, we quickly moved online to Zoom.

We had to maintain momentum, it was important we all stayed in touch.

But as Albert Einstein once said: "In the midst of every crisis, lies a great opportunity", so it was vitally important to use these online meetings as a free showcase to Rotary for our local community.

An opportunity to grow membership.

This meant creating Rotary meetings which were not traditional. Meetings which were 75 minutes' long, that were fun and engaged everyone. Yes, fun!

We now begin each meeting with a Kahoot quiz played on your mobile phone.

We introduced fun elements to the meetings, attracted a number of guests thanks to some entertaining speakers, and made sure we told everyone about our Rotary meetings on social media or through



Albert Einstein

a weekly newsletter, which is also uploaded onto our club website.

Now, we're by no means Rotary paragons of virtue. There's still more we can do. We've got to keep reaching out to those members who don't use technology. A weekly phone call and an emailed copy of the club newsletter is simply not enough.

But we are making strides. On President's handover day, we inducted three new members. Now I'll take that as a result.

However, as restrictions ease, so thoughts turn to life after lockdown.

What will happen once we are able to return to face-to-face meetings which we are anxious to resume? How can we properly fund-raise or get involved in socially-distanced community projects?

My club gets Zoom. Yet, when I proposed in April a post-lockdown change from weekly face-to-face meetings to fortnightly gatherings, with online meetings fitted in between, I held my breath.

The proposal required a two-thirds majority of club members to pass. With fewer than 20 members, had we had stayed normal, I feared for the club's future.

Remarkably, the proposal passed, thanks to some brave and unselfish decisions made by long-serving Rotarians who still enjoy the weekly fellowship and the mouth-watering rotational menu of chilli, fish and chips, roast or lasagne!

"I will be sorry to see the weekly face-to-face meetings go, but for the long-term future of the club I support the move," wrote one member.

Amid a huge wave of uncertainty which is sweeping us all, I am feeling more certain about the future of my Rotary club. By halving the cost of hiring the local cricket club pavilion for our meetings, we've reduced membership fees. By going online, we've also made ourselves more accessible.

Our three new members are dynamic go-getters who have plunged the club's average age to a nose-bleeding 60!

We're working on an exciting dementia project in the borough, continuing to financially support our overstretched foodbank, helping to launch of a new Rotaract club at Brunel University, as well as hosting a Rotary scholar from Nepal - who happens to be a Rotaractor.

Albert Einstein was a shrewd cookie! ●

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