

Rotary

The Official Magazine of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland

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rotarygbi.org
June/July 2021



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“The significance of Rotary is that it has become one of the most active and effective lay forces on the side of righteousness, co-operation and goodwill.”

HRH, The Duke of Edinburgh



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— Sagarika, India

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* Norwegian Refugee Council, 2015



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HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh: a friend of Rotary

WITH the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in April, aged 99, Rotary lost a true friend.

Prince Philip was an honorary Rotarian of the London, Edinburgh and King's Lynn Rotary clubs – the latter for when the Duke was staying at Sandringham in Norfolk.

He was elected as an honorary member of the Edinburgh club in 1952, to coincide with its Jubilee year – the Scottish club was founded in 1912.

Prince Philip was laid to rest at St George's Chapel, Windsor, in April. He had close connections with both of the Berkshire town's Rotary clubs, where he would turn up to meetings unannounced.

The Duke became an honorary member of Windsor St George Rotary when it chartered in 1983, and supported a number of their events.

President Chris Davies recalled meeting Prince Philip at a fund-raising dinner at Windsor Guildhall.

He said: "I was a little apprehensive of Prince Philip's perceived public image of being a bit brusque and intolerant. Nothing of it, he was brilliant.

"Despite it being a formal dinner, he put everyone at ease.

"Prince Philip chatted in German to representatives from our German twin club, much to their surprise and pleasure, helped pass the mints round and then, when I asked club members to stand and toast our guests, he stood up and toasted the guests.

"I was really touched by that, because he saw himself as a member of our club.

"At the end, he thanked me for a

pleasant evening and quietly walked off back up to the castle.

"It was as though he had just popped out to have dinner with some friends."

Prince Philip joined Windsor & Eton Rotary as an honorary member in 1957.

President, Adrian Bengel, who works at Windsor Castle, recalled: "I went along to a meeting in 2010 before I became a member and the Duke just walked in to join the meeting, with no one expecting him.

"I had seen him in the castle about an hour earlier and he stopped, looked at me and asked 'what are you doing here?'

"I replied that I was coming to the meeting with a view to joining. He shouted to Derek Bishop, who was President, for everyone to hear 'quick sign him up'.

"But the Duke then said to me 'do you not have a club nearer to home?' as he knew I lived in Farnborough.

"I said: 'but I know everyone here, sir'. He replied: 'Well, we can walk over together from the castle then in future'."

The Duke of Edinburgh twice provided forewords for books about Rotary.

In 1975, he contributed a piece to a book about the history of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, written by Roger Levy, who was part of the Secretariat staff in the 1960s and 1970s.

This was written at a time when Rotary was a male-only organisation.

Then, the Duke wrote: "Most people hear about Rotary at some time in their lives and, of course, a great many public-spirited men join the clubs and help to make a valuable contribution to society.

"But how many people, members included, know anything about the origins and development of the clubs since they



were founded by Paul Harris in Chicago in 1905?

"How many appreciate the unique contribution made to Rotary International by the movement in Britain since it reached this country in 1911?

"I am sure that the basic purpose of Rotary – vocational service – is understood by most people, but it is certainly time that the strength and depth and width of this service over the last 70 years should be recorded for present and future members.

"The very existence of Rotary clubs illustrates a much-neglected fact of life.

"A community can only call itself civilised if all its members actively and equally share in the responsibilities of citizenship.

"The domination of one section of the



"I WAS A LITTLE APPREHENSIVE OF PRINCE PHILIP'S PERCEIVED PUBLIC IMAGE OF BEING A BIT BRUSQUE AND INTOLERANT. NOTHING OF IT, HE WAS BRILLIANT."

community by another for whatever reason, be it political, doctrinal, economic or social, can never be equated with true responsible self-government by all members of the community.

"Rotary has been setting a splendid, practical example of unselfish, responsible service for many years, and I hope this book will help to maintain this tradition long into the future."

Later, in 1984, the Duke of Edinburgh wrote a foreword to David Shelley Nicholl's book *The Golden Wheel*.

He wrote: "The sheer size of Rotary International in 1984 is impressive.

"Almost one million members in 158 countries are awesome statistics, but they really mean nothing at all unless the members are inspired by Rotary's

challenging philosophy, expressed by its splendidly simple motto 'Service Above Self'.

"The motto would be irrelevant if there was no selfishness in the world, but the temptation to cheat, to exploit and to dominate for the sake of personal wealth and power has always been a feature of human existence, and the chances are that it always will be.

"The significance of Rotary is that it has become one of the most active and effective forces on the lay side of righteousness, co-operation and goodwill.

"It provides, therefore, a most powerful encouragement of the potential for good that is in all men and, by doing so, it also acts as a severe restraint on what is evil and corrupt.

"It is no coincidence that Rotary flourishes in the free and open societies of this world, while it is ruthlessly suppressed under ideological dictatorships.

"This book may not be the only history of Rotary to be written, but it is probably the first to trace the course of events and to follow the development of an idea at the same time.

"What comes through is that while fashions and attitudes may vary between countries, and over periods of time, the central principal and philosophy of Rotary runs through the whole story as if it were the track of the Golden Wheel." ●



NEIL ARMSTRONG

ROTARY CLUB OF WAPAKONETA, USA.
(ASTRONAUT AND FIRST MAN ON THE MOON)

Celebrity Rotarians

*From royalty, to the inventor of fried chicken,
here are just some of Rotary's most famous members.*

THE Royals have a well-established connection with Rotary.

Prince Charles has often been seen wearing a Rotary pin on the lapel of his jacket at public engagements.

The Prince of Wales is an honorary member of Banchory-Ternan Rotary near Aberdeen, Scotland – about 30 miles from the Balmoral Estate.

The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, is also an honorary Rotarian, with Elgin Rotary, some 60 miles north of the royal estate in Scotland.

Three years ago, she spoke at the Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland conference in Torquay, and a few months later at the Rotary International convention in Toronto, Canada.

In Canada, Her Royal Highness noted that, because of the logistical difficulty of getting 1.2 million Rotarians together in one place, she thought it best to take advantage of the organisation's annual convention to say, "Thank you for all the good work you do."

But what other celebrities have been Rotarians – or honorary Rotarians?

In recent times, we have celebrated the life of Captain Sir Tom Moore, who died in February after his record-breaking walks in aid of the NHS which, with the help of grant aid, raised £38 million.

Captain Tom was once a member of March Rotary in Cambridgeshire.

He was also an honorary member of his local club, at Flitwick Vale in Bedfordshire, as well as being recognised with a Paul Harris Fellowship.

Here's an impressive, though not a comprehensive list of other celebrity Rotarians through history:

Royalty

Prince Axel: Rotary Club of Copenhagen. (Prince of Denmark).

Prince Bernhard: Rotary Club of Amsterdam. (Prince of the Netherlands).

Prince Rainier III: Rotary Club of Monaco. (Prince of Monaco).

Tsuneyoshi Takeda: Rotary Club of Tokyo-North. (Japanese Royal Prince).

Business

Max Cointreau: Rotary Club of Paris, France. (Owner, Cointreau liqueur enterprise).

Raymond F. Firestone: Rotary Club of Akron, USA. (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Firestone Tire and Rubber Co.).

Joyce C. Hall: Rotary Club of Kansas City, USA. (Founder of Hallmark Cards).

J.C. Penney: Rotary Club of New York, USA. (Founder of J.C. Penney stores).

Leopoldo Pirelli: Rotary Club of Milano, Italy. (President, Pirelli Tire Co).

'Colonel' Harland Sanders: Rotary Club of Jeffersonville, USA. (Founder, Kentucky Fried Chicken).

Claude Vuitton: Rotary Club of Paris-Nord, France. (Owner, Vuitton luggage enterprise).

Sam Walton: Rotary Club of Bentonville, USA. (Founder of Wal-Mart). ▶



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Explorers

Roald Amundsen: Rotary Club of Oslo, Norway. (First person to reach the South Pole in 1911).

Neil Armstrong: Rotary Club of Wapakoneta, USA. (Astronaut and first man to walk on the moon).

Sir Edmund Hillary: Rotary Club of Auckland, New Zealand. (Mountaineer, explorer and philanthropist and the first person to reach the top of Mount Everest).

Charles Lindberg: Rotary Club of Edinburgh, Scotland. (American aviator).

Inventors

Thomas A. Edison: Rotary Club of Orange, USA. (Inventor of many electric power devices).

Guglielmo Marconi: Rotary Club of Bologna, Italy. (Inventor of the wireless).

Orville Wright: Rotary Club of Dayton, USA. (Co-inventor of the first successful airplane).

Leaders

Ásgeir Ásgeirsson: Rotary Club of Reykjavík. (President, Iceland).

Edvard Beneš: Rotary Club of Prague. (President, Czechoslovakia).

Sir Winston Churchill: Rotary Club of London. (Prime Minister, Great Britain).

Gerald R. Ford: Rotary Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan. (American President).

Dr Lorenzo Guerrero Gutierrez: Rotary Club of Granada. (President, Nicaragua).

Warren G. Harding: Rotary Club of Washington. (President, USA).

Steingrímur Hermannsson: Rotary Club of Reykjavík. (Prime Minister, Iceland).

Sydney G. Holland: Rotary Club of Christchurch. (Prime Minister, New Zealand).

John F. Kennedy: Rotary Club of Hyannis, Massachusetts. (President, USA).

Abdulla Khalil: Rotary Club of Khartoum. (Prime Minister, Sudan).

Chung Yul Kim: Rotary Club of Hanyang. (Prime Minister, Korea).

Karl Kobelt: Rotary Club of St. Gallen. (President, Swiss Confederation).

Chucrí Kouatly: Rotary Club of Damascus. (President, Syria).

Leonard Mulama: Rotary Club of Kisangani. (Prime Minister, Democratic Republic of the Congo).

Duck-Woo Nam: Rotary Club of Hanyang. (Prime Minister, Korea).

Choong Hoon Park: Rotary Club of Hanyang. (Prime Minister, Korea).

Raul Sapena Pastor: Rotary Club of Asunción. (Prime Minister, Paraguay).

Konstantin Päts: Rotary Club of Tallinn. (President, Estonia).

Antoine Pinet: Rotary Club of Saint-Etienne. (Prime Minister, France).

General Augusto Pinochet: Rotary Club of Santiago. (General & Leader, Chile).

Nereu Ramos: Rotary Club of Florianópolis. (President, Brazil).

Franklin D. Roosevelt: Rotary Club of Albany. (President, USA).

General Carlos Romulo: Rotary Club of Manila. (President, Philippines).

Walter Scheel: Rotary Club of Bonn am Rhein. (President, Germany).

Woodrow Wilson: Rotary Club of Birmingham. (President, USA).

Chia-kan Yen: Rotary Club of Taipei. (President, Taiwan).

Chang Soon Yoo: Rotary Club of Hanyang. (Prime Minister, South Korea).

Other

Cecil B. De Mille: Rotary Club of Hollywood, USA. (Film director).

Walt Disney: Rotary Club of Palm Springs, USA. (Animation filmmaker).

Jean Sibelius: Rotary Club of Helsinki-Helsingfors, Finland. (Composer).

Pope Francis: Rotary Club of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Duke Kahanamoku: Rotary Club of Honolulu, USA. (Olympic gold medalist, 'father of surfing').

Tapio Korjus: Rotary Club of Lapua Kiviristi, Finland. (Olympic gold medal winner, javelin).

Emmanuel "Manny" Dapidran Pacquiao: Rotary Club of Manila, Philippines. (World champion boxer & politician).

Luciano Pavarotti: Rotary Club of Modena, Italy. (Opera singer). ●

'COLONEL' HARLAND SANDERS

ROTARY CLUB OF JEFFERSONVILLE, USA.
(FOUNDER, KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN)



DID YOU THINK LEPROSY WAS A THING OF THE PAST?



Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have all been learning to live with the fear and anxiety caused by a virus that we cannot see - one which has had devastating consequences

for people in almost every country of the world.

Just as Covid-19 has become the 'plague' of our times, leprosy has been the scourge of poverty-stricken communities across the globe

for thousands of years. No one knew how it was transmitted and there was no known cure. Even a few decades ago, more than five million people every year were still suffering severe disability and their lives were being destroyed physically, emotionally and socially because they were too late to receive an accurate diagnosis and effective treatment.

But leprosy is curable

Since multi-drug therapy has been available, around 16 million people have been cured of the disease. Yet more than 200,000 new cases of leprosy are still being reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) every year – and this doesn't include all those that are going undetected in isolated communities where people have little or no access to healthcare.

Early detection can stop leprosy in its tracks

For the past 125 years, St Francis Leprosy Guild has been working to end leprosy and we truly believe a leprosy-free world is now

within sight. In order to stamp out leprosy for good, we need your support to train local healthcare workers who can screen people in poor and remote communities for leprosy and give them treatment.

By giving £30 today to support regular monitoring, early detection and immediate treatment – before the disease takes hold – you can help to prevent avoidable suffering.



A leprosy-free world is now within sight

St Francis Leprosy Guild supports around 30 leprosy centres across Asia, Africa and South America. Your gift of £30 today can help this essential work continue. Together, let's seize the opportunity to end leprosy once and for all.

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For the love of books

Beverley Ricketts, co-chair of Rotary Alumni 1210, describes how the Rotary Books4Home project has now supplied 70,000 books to children, many of whom had previously no books to read at home.

BACK in 2013, I was lying in hospital in Stoke-on-Trent recovering from spinal surgery when a visiting Rotarian friend left a copy of *Rotary Today* for me to read.

I read about the Dines Green Literacy Project which Worcester South Rotary had developed from the Literacy Reading Project that many Rotary clubs are involved with. This is where Rotarians go into schools to listen to children read.

Worcester South Rotary had discovered that children in the schools where they were working had very little access to books at home.

One of the teachers in the school asked her year 5 class “how many of you have bookshelves at home?”

There were a lot of blank looks. Two out of 30 children put their hands up.

So the Rotarians got some secondhand books, put them on a stand in the corner of the classroom and, within a few days, all the books had gone as the children had taken them home.

So yes, there was a definite need to supply books – and the need is huge.

Further research showed that this rather depressing fact was not uncommon.

International Literacy Day 2020 focused on this issue and highlighted

the fact that one in eight disadvantaged children don't own a single book.

The article was in the June 2013 edition of *Rotary Today*. I thought it was inspiring and something which I hoped we could develop locally in the Midlands.

As a former Group Study Exchange scholar to the Philippines in 2007, I am part of Rotary Alumni 1210, which draws together people who have previously experienced Rotary, perhaps through an exchange or scholarship programme.

Alumni 1210 is a great way of staying connected with Rotary – there are more than 100 Rotary Alumni associations around the world – and this was the driver for the Rotary Books4Home project.

Most of the 52 clubs in our district are involved. Worcester South Rotary gave me some good advice. After recovering from surgery and joined by a team from Alumni 1210, we set up Rotary Books4Home.

Over the past few years we have sourced a large supply of sustainable donated pre-read children's books.

Rotarians throughout District 1210 have donated storage space for the books, transport assistance and book sorting time.

We have contacted schools and liaised to get Rotary Books4Home projects working in many different areas of our large district.

Rotary Books4Home aims to give the gift of a book for youngsters to read, take home and keep.

Most people I talk to tell me about their favourite book they had as a child.

They read it over and over again and, in many cases, still have that old, faded falling apart copy. Do you?

Rotary Books4Home aims to empower children to develop their love of reading and experience the chance to own books of their own. It also allows them to share that love of reading with their family.

It is a very easy project. It doesn't cost a penny, it only takes time. And everybody involved loves books, so it is a joy to do.

For the project to happen books are donated by Rotary. We also have a lot of books donated by our local soroptimists branch, which would otherwise be pulped – thereby reducing waste, at the same time as enabling children to own books and improve their levels of literacy.

With guidance from the school and overseeing of the Rotary club, the books are made available for the children.

We are very flexible with arrangements; each school has different needs. The books given are chosen by the teachers and children to fit the school's profile.

To date, 32 Rotary clubs and 102 schools have been involved in the project.



Children receiving their Books4Home books

Some Rotary clubs have engaged one, two or even three schools in the project which works with pre-school children, primary and secondary schools.

We have given 70,000 books to some of the poorest and most disadvantaged children throughout Staffordshire, Shropshire and parts of the West Midlands.

All of the books are checked and quality-assured. The most popular books are Harry Potter and Roald Dahl.

This year, more than ever, because of COVID-19, literacy needs to be a priority.

The project has continued through the pandemic, although we have conducted a strict risk assessment for those delivering the books.

During the first lockdown, we distributed 5.000 books.

Teachers used this as a catalyst to get children to come into school.

The youngsters chose a book in the playground at a pre-arranged time and teachers were able to catch up with the children who they had not seen during the pandemic.

For World Book Day this year, teachers asked us for small sized books which they posted through the letterboxes of children's homes, ensuring everyone had a book to read.

The teachers' feedback has been amazing, and you only have to see the children's faces too.

To give them a book is like giving them a million pounds.

The statistics speak for themselves.

Children who own books are six times more likely to read above the level expected for their age and nearly three times more likely to enjoy reading.

Many children, for the first time, now have a book of their own to read and to keep forever. And if you're a book person, you love this project! ●

Information

RotaryAlumni1210.co.uk

| Fact file |

READING

- 16% of adults are considered to be 'functionally illiterate' in the United Kingdom.
- 1.7 million adults in England, have literacy levels below those expected of an 11-year-old.
- The most frequent causes of illiteracy in adults are: dropping out of school and difficult living conditions, including poverty.
- Only 51% of pre-school children are read to daily.
- One in eight disadvantaged children don't own a single book.
- One in five children in England cannot read well by the age of 11. Similar percentages of 15-year-olds across the UK do not have a minimum level of literacy proficiency.

Source | *National Literacy Trust*

Tales of a reading volunteer

Playwright Joan Greening, from Elthorne-Hillingdon Rotary, has written a number of plays which have appeared on television and on stage, including the Edinburgh Festival. She has been at the heart of a reading scheme for children at Northwood School in Middlesex.

TEN years ago, I was looking for other ways my Rotary club could assist the community, and it occurred to me that helping children to read would be in line with one of the Rotary areas of focus – literacy.

I put the idea to my Rotary club, Elthorne-Hillingdon, and several of our members volunteered. We were given basic training and then once a week we would go into Northwood School to sit with a

child for 40 minutes and assist with their reading.

The child would be assessed at the beginning of the year and again at the end. The difference which paired reading made to the majority of the children was remarkable. Their grades shot up and their aspirations were widened.

Before the paired reading, one child, when asked what she wanted to do, said “I don’t want to do anything”.

That child is now a Police Officer.

We read a variety of books including ‘*Wuthering Heights*’, ‘*The Thirty-Nine Steps*’, ‘*David Copperfield*’ and Oscar Wilde’s ‘*The Canterville Ghost*’, which is a huge favourite. In fact, any ghost story seems to be very popular!

We also read books by modern authors and sometimes children’s writers come in to talk to the students.

Volunteers have also helped in many other ways. They have filled gaps where grandparents have been missing by teaching core morals and standards of expectations.

They have been able to help children for whom English is

a foreign language, by explaining our culture.

It can be very difficult for a child when they are speaking another language at home. They have been able to relieve staff to do other work and the children have appreciated ‘an outsider’ coming into the school and taking an interest in them.

The volunteers often speak about their own travels and enthralling tales.

It is useful, when reading about another country, to get an atlas out and show the child.

One boy recently was amazed that I had been to the United States.

It was his ambition to go one day. I was able to tell him some stories of my travels. Touchingly, students often come and thank the volunteers years later.

They realise the value that comes from being able to read well.

Covid has stalled our work and most children have been working at home.

Key workers’ children have been in school and as soon as I was vaccinated, I offered to go in and help.

There were three children who were identified as having low literacy skills. I went in once a week and had a socially-distanced reading session with them. They really enjoyed the change and were keen for this arrangement to continue.

Anne Underwood, the Chief Librarian, who arranges this scheme, said: “I have a feeling in other schools, students with low literacy scores could be left to just muddle through.

“A fondness and respect develops between the reader and the volunteer, and the patience shown by the volunteers is remarkable.

“We would be lost without them all.” ●





A CENTURY OF SUPPORT

RBL provided respite time for the Older family.



RBL helped Leon secure somewhere to live.

The Royal British Legion has been here for 100 years ensuring the sacrifices made by serving and ex-serving people and their families are acknowledged, and their futures assured.

This year the Royal British Legion – the charity dedicated to supporting the Armed Forces community – commemorates the 100-year anniversary of its founding in the aftermath of the First World War.

Over 6 million men served in the war. Of those who came back, 1.75 million had suffered some kind of disability - half of these were permanently disabled. It was to help these men, and the families of those who had served their country, that the RBL was created in May 1921.

For 100 years they have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Armed Forces community, growing and evolving to meet their changing needs.

Today, the need for the RBL's support is vital for many, with over 90,000 people turning to them for help each year. Some need help to recover from injury or illness and benefit from one of RBL's adaptive sport or recovery through the arts courses. Others need support with independent living and dementia care, or they may come to live at one of RBL's 6 care homes.

To ensure the Armed Forces community has access to the support and help they deserve today and tomorrow – people are kindly choosing to support the cause by including a gift to the RBL in their Will. For growing numbers of RBL supporters, this is a perfect way to pass on lifelong support to the next generation of veterans and Service families.

The process of writing a Will can be daunting, however RBL with its trusted partners is able to offer Will-Writing services free of charge to you, helping to make it as simple as possible for people to organise their affairs and remember those they care about. RBL's free Will-Writing services provide an ideal opportunity to write or update your Will and if you choose to, leave a gift to help veterans and Service people in the years ahead.

● The RBL has partnered with Farewill, an online Will-Writing service. You can write a simple, legally binding Will from the comfort of your home in as little as 30 minutes. This service normally costs £90 but will be free to you if you live in England and Wales and use the code **rbl-onlinewill** at checkout, every Will is checked by a Will-Writing specialist. This convenient, time-saving offer can be found at www.farewill.com/rbl-onlinewill

● The Free Wills Network – an association of trusted law firms who provide face-to-face Will-Writing services at no cost to the individual. Anyone interested in learning more can request an information pack containing the details of participating local solicitors at www.rbl.org.uk/freewills or by calling the RBL Supporter Care team on 0333 011 4500.

Gifts in Wills directly fund RBL's vital support services. One in five people who receive life-changing support, was helped thanks to a legacy. And if you do choose to leave a gift, RBL will send you a special Poppy Collection lapel pin or cufflinks to say thank you.

Eccles Rotary simply buzzes with books

ROSEMARY BOARDMAN, ECCLES ROTARY

ECCLES Rotary has been a part of the Greater Manchester community since 1932.

Over those years, it has sought to serve the local people with projects as diverse as working with the unemployed, promoting youth activities through music, away days and competitions and supporting the Mencap-backed Eccles Gateway Club.

We have also run the Rotary Community Bookshop in our local shopping centre.

This project started when we attended the 2009 Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland Conference where the National Literacy Trust spoke about a campaign to create a literacy culture in England, promoting reading, particularly in people who thought it was not for them.

Since then, we have operated a twice monthly 'book swap' from our shop as well as supplying book boxes to a number of retirement complexes in the area.

A major part of the scheme is giving away nearly-new books to children each time the shop is open.

And apart from this year because of COVID-19, for the last five Christmases we have distributed new, wrapped books to young people from our Santa's Grotto.

Four years ago, a newspaper article highlighted how 40,000 children in Greater Manchester did not own a single book. So the club organised a Buzzing Book Bonanza in the shopping centre where over 200 books were freely given to children. There were opportunities to listen to stories, meet local authors, plus Hollyoaks' star Kieron Richardson, and find out about the library.

This was the local community working together.

Since then, other clubs in North-West England have taken up the challenge.

Free books have been given out to children at book events linked to summer



fairs and community projects. A couple of clubs have linked with schools in deprived areas distributing books to children who would not have access to them at home.

All of the books are good quality, but pre-owned, and cover a wide range of topics and age groups.

Two years ago, Eccles Rotary organised another Buzzing Book Bonanza linked to World Book Day, including children's craft activities and storytelling linked to the "Dolly Parton's Imagination Library".

Last year, we had planned to run our third bonanza, but the pandemic put paid to those efforts.

Since March 2020, the shop has remained closed, but we have been using the window to promote Rotary activities.

Last summer, we provided some new books for a primary school in a deprived area of Eccles and we are now investigating a scheme distributing second-hand books around a local estate to promote reading.

At present, with the current

lockdown, we have no way in which we can run another bonanza, although literacy is still in the forefront of our project plans.

We hope very soon to be able to accept good quality books for adult readers in our bookshop, recycle items which we can no longer use and collect children's literature for distribution.

This is a very low-cost project, which has been successfully running for over 10 years.

It provides excellent public relations in our community and gives opportunities to promote other local Rotary activities, as well as to work with other community groups.

It is also very much a hands-on service project with all members of our small club taking part and, we would commend it to other Rotarians. ●

Rosemary sadly died on May 12th not long after writing this article. Her funeral was held on May 28th.

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Reading made easy

| DAVE KING |

GINNY Williams-Ellis was once a literacy tutor at Dorchester Prison in Dorset. The cramped Victorian buildings used to house around 300 male prisoners, before shutting in 2014.

Ginny was responsible for running the Shannon Trust's prisoner-to-prisoner reading programme where she saw how a confidential, one-to-one approach encouraged prisoners to seek support and successfully learn to read.

Many were deeply ashamed that they couldn't read. Some carried bad memories of school. They feared returning to a classroom setting, reawakening old feelings of failure.

But, by working instead with a dedicated coach, this supportive and trusting bond developed the prisoner's confidence and a motivation to complete the course.

Recognising there was no similar provision for adults in the community, Ginny set up the first Read Easy group in Dorset, using volunteers to work one-to-one with new readers.

Read Easy UK was established the following year as an umbrella body to support other volunteers wanting to set up groups in their communities.

There are now 36 affiliated Read Easy groups across England, with another 13 in development, involving over a thousand volunteers. A number of these groups are supported by Rotary clubs.

With more than 2.4 million adults in England who can barely read or can't read at all, Ginny acknowledged there is so much more to do to address the need.

She said: "Cuts in government funding since 2010 means that in many areas there are now no adult education classes for those with the lowest literacy levels.

“We feel that our one-to-one approach is much more effective than such classes, because most adults are too embarrassed to join a group.

“We’re excited to have created a model that gives people just the support they need, but we now need more volunteers to help roll it out. Without our amazing volunteers who set up and run our local groups, we couldn’t operate.”

Steve Peckham is the Team Leader for Read Easy Wyre Forest in Worcestershire, which has been supported financially by Rotary clubs in Bewdley and Kidderminster.

They were established in 2018 with Rotary support, recruiting ten reading coaches from a variety of backgrounds.

“Adults who struggle with reading do not read articles, leaflets, posters or social media items posted about help with reading,” explained Steve.

“Mainly, they hear by word of mouth from loved ones, from advice centres, libraries and colleges; from agencies like Job Centres, housing association job coaches and representatives from other voluntary and statutory agencies.

“It takes courage, after perhaps hiding your inability to read for decades, to make that call to get help.”

The Read Easy Wyre Forest team uses a room at a local Sainsbury’s store, also a church, a theatre office, and office space at two libraries.

Reader and coach meet up for two half hour sessions per week. “It’s the one-to-one format that is so attractive for new adult readers,” explained Steve.

“Many of them would avoid any group setting, either through lack of confidence or too many memories of failure and possibly ridicule at school.”

A phonics-based approach to learning to read is used by working through a series of five manuals. The ‘Turning Pages’ manuals have been produced for adults by the Shannon Trust and are backed up by suitable reading books.

The service is free, with readers moving at their own pace. There is no limit on the time it takes to ‘graduate’, but most readers take around 12 to 15 months; some longer, some shorter.

For adults who struggle to read, the Coronavirus pandemic has left them feeling more isolated, and in need of Read Easy’s service, than ever before.

Home-schooling children has been a big enough challenge for many parents with good literacy skills, but for those who cannot read their seven-year-old child’s story book, or understand communications from teachers, it has proven impossible.

Steve admitted that COVID-19 arrived just as they were getting into their stride in a second full year of operation.

That brought a halt to face-to-face reading sessions.

However, different Read Easy groups around the country have travelled through the restrictions in different ways. Some coaches and readers have progressed using Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp or even good old-fashioned telephone calls.

David, one reader from Plymouth, revealed that had he not continued with his sessions during the lockdown, not only would he have forgotten everything he had learned, but he probably would have given up all together.

Instead, he has completed two

training manuals in the last six months, with all sessions taking place through WhatsApp.

Read Easy Wyre Forest’s working model is very lean. Its annual running costs are around £3,000 a year, depending on numbers of reading manuals bought and coach training sessions held.

With use of donated premises and coaching being carried out by volunteers, they have no major overheads.

Steve added: “Our group has been lucky to have the vital support of both Kidderminster and Bewdley Rotary Clubs, and we hope that continues.

“Once we can operate safely again, our team is ready to bounce back, helping to change the lives of adults who struggle with their reading.” •

Information

readeasy.org.uk

“IT TAKES COURAGE, AFTER PERHAPS HIDING YOUR INABILITY TO READ FOR DECADES, TO MAKE THAT CALL TO GET HELP.”



Literacy: how Rotarians can help!

Author Shelagh Moore, a member of Havant Rotary in Hampshire, reflects how we can all re-kindle the love of literacy to our children.

WE often hear educators, politicians and others talk about literacy. Literacy became important when, after the revised National Curriculum was introduced in 2000, it became apparent that many children were progressing to secondary school without the basic skills they needed to learn successfully.

Even more disturbing was the fact that there were around seven million adults unable to read, write and communicate successfully. The cost to the country was thought to be around £2.5 billion.

Adults were being cut off from opportunities to work, helping their families learn and were disadvantaged in many ways.

Literacy programmes were introduced into schools and colleges to help improve the situation. However, the literacy hour or

lesson did not always encourage children to enjoy English and the skills were not always transferred to learning in other subjects.

Much has improved over the years thanks to good teaching in our schools and colleges.

There is still room for progress, especially in schools which are experiencing difficulties because of their local situation, problems attracting staff and lack of parental support.

This is where Rotarians can help to ensure that such schools are well supported and given the resources that they need to help their pupils' literacy skills develop.

A wise man once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

He was Nelson Mandela.

It is thought that one in 11 children from disadvantaged backgrounds are unlikely to own a book or be read to.

Currently adults in their mid-fifties perform better than many 16 to 24-year-olds.

This is a concern as we need a skilled workforce to progress our society.

Children who enjoy reading aged 10-years-old can have a higher reading age than their peers, a longer life expectancy and better mental health.

The current pandemic and time spent out of school will have made the gap between those who can read well and have access to IT to do their lessons, much wider when they return to school.

Those who suffered through lockdowns mentally, socially and who are grieving, will need much more support to ensure their life chances are not blighted. This is a great responsibility for us as a society and as Rotarians who support our communities.

How can we as Rotarians support children, young people and adults to develop their literacy skills? What projects can we instigate or support whilst slowly getting back to our meetings and assessing the needs of schools and individuals?



"A FRIEND WHO READ SAT ON THE STAIRS WITH A TODDLER ON A HOME-START VISIT, ARRIVED THE NEXT WEEK TO FIND THE LITTLE ONE SITTING ON THE STAIRS WAITING FOR HER STORY."

One way is to support libraries. Schools have been starved of funds to develop their libraries over the years. They have lost their librarians and their stock of books has probably not grown greatly either.

The types of books needed will include those that help pupils improve their well-being as well as non-fiction and fiction.

There are the straight forward things to do such as offering funds for the purchasing of books, going into schools and running book clubs, hearing children read, talking to them about their hopes and dreams.

For adults, helping with writing skills for CVs and other work-related objectives are important. In other words, befriending institutions in your area and supporting their literacy projects where you can.

I expect some will remember the excitement of going to the library or the mobile library. Libraries are losing funding and mobile libraries are few and far between.

What about Rotarians in their districts

looking into developing mobile libraries that can visit local schools and loan books to pupils?

A project that could involve the community refurbishing a coach or single decker bus no longer needed by a company. It might just be the vehicle to carry hope to young readers.

Stories, non-fiction books that children read or have read to them can make a real difference to their futures. Grants would surely be available to such a project; it could attract new members who would see Rotary in action and most importantly support in a positive way the literacy needs of our children and young people.

Starting early helps. Babies watch and learn from an early age. You can never show them a picture book too soon. They will pat the picture, enjoy sitting on your knee listening to you talking about the pictures.

They will point out objects, turn pages, and as they get older begin to understand what they are looking at.

I remember a walk in the country with

our son riding on his daddy's shoulders suddenly beginning to make baa-ing sounds. We had read him the Ladybird farm animals book. He had seen some sheep in a field and made a connection!

A friend who read sat on the stairs with a toddler on a Home-Start visit, arrived the next week to find the little one sitting on the stairs waiting for her story. Encouraging parents to read with their children is a wonderful thing to do for any family.

As a writer of education resources and children's stories, I often put a 'Did you Know?' section in my children's stories as in 'The Plastic Warrior', a story that shows an individual can make a difference!

Maybe this story might inspire a child to help litter pick on a beach, or in a park. Who knows? ●

| *Information* |

readeasy.org.uk





Volunteer Expo lands with a bang

The virtual stage was set. After almost three years of planning, the virtual doors flung open for Volunteer Expo Online last month. James Bolton and Louise Smith, two members of the event team, look back at a successful event and innovation for Rotary.

A knockout Main Stage

Volunteering is an adventure. And the event kicked off with a speaker who knows a thing or two about that. Broadcaster Ben Fogle shared how volunteering to protect sea turtles with the US Peace Corps inspired “his most profound voluntary experience” as one of 36 people creating an isolated society in the Outer Hebrides for the TV show ‘Castaway’ in 2000.

Ben also championed why volunteering is important for young people, calling for it to be integrated into the national curriculum.

“Without a doubt it would be on there for me. I cannot reiterate enough how much my early voluntary work changed me as a person.”

“Volunteering was so integral to building my own confidence. Where I came short when it came to academics and sports, volunteering was something which I felt ownership over.

“It was something I could do, I felt very

proud doing it.”

Engaging and supporting young people was a theme across both days of Main Stage speakers. Boxing legend Frank Bruno, highlighted how his Foundation offers a bespoke programme for teenagers who are perhaps struggling.

By engaging in a mix of exercise and healthy discussion, Frank hopes those who enrol will enjoy a similar path to him, and a positive route away from mental health problems.

BBC Radio 1 Presenter Katie Thistleton, herself a passionate mental health campaigner for young people, gave a powerful and brave account of her own battles with anxiety.

Actor Brooke Kinsella no doubt had viewers at home welling up as she told the emotional account of her younger brother Ben, who was murdered in a knife attack.

“Making the decision to volunteer, you’ll not only be changing lives, but you’ll be saving them too”, she said.

And you couldn’t fail to be inspired by 17-year-old Amy Meek, one half of the charity Kids Against Plastic, who gave an informative and passionate plea on the need for environmental sustainability.

The volunteering landscape

Almost all aspects of our lives changed during the pandemic, and it’s the same for the volunteer sector. 12.4 million people volunteered during the pandemic, with 4.6 million of those doing so for the first time.

Sarah Vibert, Catherine Johnstone and Matt Hyde, Chief Executives of NCVO, Royal Voluntary Service and the Scouts respectively, all painted a positive picture of the volunteering landscape, with a real opportunity ahead of us.

“We need to find lots of different avenues for volunteers to come through”, said Catherine during her presentation.

“Traditional volunteering is still absolutely at the forefront of what we want people to be doing. Equally, there is



Event host Dave King interviews boxing legend and mental health campaigner Frank Bruno on the virtual set



**5,500 TICKETS BOOKED,
OF THOSE 60% WERE
NON-ROTARY MEMBERS**



**18,000 VISITS TO VIRTUAL
EXHIBITION STANDS**



**90% SURVEYED VISITORS'
SAID EVENT EXPERIENCE
WAS GOOD OR VERY GOOD**

a whole cohort out there who want less commitment.

"It is incumbent on us to direct people to where their time can be best used and have the highest impact for them and their community."

Bringing the event to life

The concept of Volunteer Expo was first conceived in 2018, transforming Rotary GB&I's annual conference into a public-facing volunteering show. It was clearly something the sector was crying out for. The gap and the appetite were there.

But as with bringing any idea to fruition, the road is never an easy one, and you can't imagine a bump being much

**"I THINK ROTARY HAVE DONE THE MOST
INCREDIBLE JOB AND PUT ON A FIRST CLASS
TWO DAYS OF FANTASTIC CONTENT."**

MATT HYDE, CEO, SCOUTS

bigger than a global pandemic.

After a postponement in 2020 and hopes of reconvening for a live event in 2021 dashed, the team, all working remotely until just two weeks before the event, were swapping fixtures and fittings for pixels and popups as the event pivoted to become a solely virtual experience.

But for us, the buzz - and sometimes the stress! - of a live event was very much there. With a studio built at our Support Centre in Alcester, we welcomed most speakers on site to not only ensure we delivered as authentic a connection as possible between the speakers, our host Dave King, and our audience, but also, to match the standard of interactivity and engagement on offer in the Exhibit Hall and Workshop Hub.

And of course, there were the logistics of making the environment Covid secure

for everyone involved to contend with!

As an organisation and a team, our vision was a show celebrating all things volunteering. We wanted to create a positive environment where people could find volunteering opportunities to suit them. We provided a platform, not just for Rotary, but for 63 amazing volunteer organisations to shout about what they do best. We feel like we achieved that vision.

Now our attentions turn to 2022, where we absolutely hope to be welcoming you in person to Volunteer Expo Live on 6th - 8th May at the NEC, Birmingham. ●



Catch up with sessions on demand on our YouTube channel from 8th June

Give someone a limb – you give them a life

The gift of mobility is the gift of life. Rotary Jaipur Limb has been able to make that difference in India and across the world for more than 35 years.

| DAVE KING |

MARGARET WEBB remembers the girl well, receiving treatment at Bangalore Peenya Rotary Club's Annual Limb Camp in the Indian city of Bangalore.

It was Margaret's first visit to India when she caught sight of this attractive young woman, in her late teens, with dark locks tied back in a bun.

She was lying on a bed, unable to walk, with two helpers measuring and fitting her for callipers to give strength to her legs, made useless by polio. This young woman, with a whole life in front of her, had never walked before.

Later that day, Margaret saw the same two helpers, the young woman between them, her arms around their shoulders, walking towards her, with the aid of her callipers, for the first time in her life.

"I remember seeing her smile and the joy on her face," recalled Margaret.

"I will never forget that moment. It was the joy that, at last, she was going to be like other people."

This was happening in Bangalore, through the selfless service of local Rotarians. But the technology was from the remarkable limb-making workshops of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) at the Sawai Man Singh Hospital in Jaipur, in the Indian state of Rajasthan.

For it is here that the gift of life has been given to thousands of limbless men and women through BMVSS – and, through the efforts of Rotary Jaipur Limb,

at other locations throughout India and Africa.

Margaret, who is a member of Bishop's Stortford Rotary Club in Hertfordshire, has been the charity's secretary since 2005, following the death of her husband John, who had previously held the role.

It was Peter Betteridge, from Godalming Rotary in Surrey, who visited the Jaipur workshops in 1984 with wife Jessamine and was astonished to see so many limbless people being treated.

Many had travelled vast distances by all means of transport to be given artificial limbs. No-one was ever turned away, and there was already huge support for the centre from Jaipur Rotarians and the Inner Wheel.

Back in the UK Peter, who died in 1993, set up the Rotary Jaipur Limb Project. Not only would it support the work in Jaipur – more so in the early days – but that has expanded by the establishment of permanent limb centres, and temporary limb camps throughout India, and in many countries in Africa and, following the earthquake in 2010, in Haiti.

"It is very moving when you see the work which goes on," explained Margaret.

"It sounds primitive, but this solves their problems. Give someone a limb, you give them a life.

"In the UK, disability is highly valued.

"Most people in a wheelchair or who can't walk very well still manage to live a pretty full life – and, generally, we have good accessibility too.

"In some of these countries, and

certainly in India, if you can't look after your family or play your part in the community, it is regarded as dishonourable.

"By giving someone a limb, they are able to play a full part in life, they can lead their family and their dignity is restored.

"I saw this man who had never had treatment for his twisted limbs after polio.

"He had to join the queue and was crawling on his hands and knees. People were sitting at desks and he was on the ground and there is no dignity in that.


"To give someone that ability to stand is amazing."

Lack of an arm or a leg can be tough anywhere, but in poorer parts of the world, it is especially tough. Some are born with congenital conditions, others may be casualties of accidents, disease or infection.

The World Health Organisation estimates there are 30 million people who require prosthetic limbs, braces or other mobility devices, yet less than 20% have them.

The Jaipur Limb was developed at the Mahaveer Hospital, a clever combination of wood and various densities of rubber, vulcanised into a realistic-looking brown foot. The below-knee prosthesis is built from durable, polyethylene pipes.

These limbs are hard-wearing lasting for up to four years if worn with a shoe.

In the western world, the cost for replacing a limb would reach thousands of pounds. The Jaipur technology means that limbs can be made and fitted for as little as £50, yet able to cope with rugged environments and cultural needs. 





“In India, the recipients have got to fit in with their culture, be able to sit cross-legged, or walk through water or a paddy field,” added Margaret.

Rotary Jaipur Limb has facilitated temporary limb camps all over India to reach out to those who cannot reach a permanent centre. The biggest is in Bangalore every January for 10 days, supported by Bangalore Peenya Rotary.

There are also permanent centres using the Jaipur technology which have been established in Delhi, Mysore, and parts of Kerala, for example.

One of the latest developments is the use of 3D printed technology to produce limbs. Measurements can be taken remotely, inputted into a computer, and, using a 3D printer, limbs can be produced and dispatched back to the point of origin.

This is a much more cost-effective way of ensuring more people are helped.

It's not only in India where the project is reaping results.

West Africa has been the focus of a number of permanent centres, and a new project is being established in Ethiopia.

And it is in Ethiopia where Jaipur Limb is using the latest technology to help it cope with COVID-19.

Whenever the charity opens a new workshop or limb centre, the technicians who will make the limbs are trained.

In the early days in India, technicians from the Jaipur Limb Centre would travel to each new location, to pass on

their knowledge to a new set of trainees. However, the pandemic has made travel difficult, if not impossible.

At the Gondar Hospital in Ethiopia, manager Roger White, came up with a brilliant solution to the problem.

Iristick produce industrial smart glasses, which are not just spectacles, but they are connected to an Android phone.

By using these special glasses, trainers can now demonstrate what the trainees need to learn, without having to travel to their location, while they watch on a TV or laptop.

With their use, there is a 60% cost-saving over face-to-face training.

Initially, the smart glasses are being used to train new technicians at the Gondar Centre, but life will have changed forever after COVID.

Margaret explained: “We are now holding meetings using Zoom or similar software which would have meant considerable travel costs.

“The money we are saving can be put to better use in giving new limbs and lives to amputees, by distance training.

“The possibilities are endless.

“We are beginning to run limb camps and centres in remote areas where measurements are taken and sent by email to the city where 3D printers print out limbs that will be a perfect fit. They are then posted back to the point of origin.

“Iristick will add another effective cost-saving and efficiency enhancing area

to our capabilities, all through technology that a generation ago could not have been dreamt of.”

By the time of their 25th anniversary in 2009, Rotary Jaipur Limb reckoned they had produced a quarter of a million limbs.

Factor in a further decade, and the impact is immense.

As charities fight for support, the challenge for Rotary Jaipur Limb is to continue the work they are doing and, to achieve this, more funds are needed.

They are looking for more ambassadors, speakers and marketing experts plus more clubs to take financial ownership of a project for the charity or to ‘adopt a workshop’ to ensure its sustainability. There are a number of projects that cannot proceed because of lack of funds.

Asked why she continues the work first started by her husband, Margaret admits that the visits to India focuses her attention.

“I did it in the first place because I was asked to,” she said. “But, having been there, it is so rewarding to see how you give them back their dignity.

“You give them their independence, their mobility, their normality, and you give them a new life again.

“It is just very rewarding, and you can do this for just £50.” ●

Information

rotaryjaipurlimb.org.uk

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HOLGER KNAACK

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



IN JANUARY 2020, when I announced my presidential theme, Rotary Opens Opportunities, and spoke of the changes that Rotary needed to embrace, none of us had any idea how quickly change would arrive.

But I am a long-time believer in seeing challenges as opportunities. This year, we seized new opportunities to reimagine what Rotary could be.

For years, we had discussed ways to make Rotary flexible and adaptable, and we had tried a few experiments.

This year, we all experimented — and succeeded!

Online meetings are a regular fixture now as clubs invite guests from across the globe.

Susanne and I love to meet members of the family of Rotary around the world, and we've missed seeing you in person over the past year.

But for me, it was a new way of experiencing Rotary.

We traveled the world virtually. I definitely met thousands more of you than I would have otherwise. I never set foot in my office in Evanston as president, yet we found new ways to get the job done while cutting travel costs.

This is the Rotary we experienced in 2020-21: nimble, adaptable, and creative. The next step is not to go back to the way things were before the pandemic.

We must move forward. Let's apply what we have learned in order to offer new experiences and opportunities for our members, such as online attendance as a regular option.

We need a younger, more diverse Rotary at every level to keep our clubs strong. What diversity means is different from region to region, but I encourage you to welcome people from all backgrounds. Another step we can all take is to increase the number of women and amplify their role everywhere.

I am glad that many now see Rotary and Rotaract clubs as equals. Let's keep going in this direction by inviting Rotaract clubs to be a part of everything we do. Let's not squander any opportunity to reach young leaders, but partner with Rotaract and invest in our many new approaches.

I am very proud of the work Rotary is doing to fight COVID-19 by supporting vaccination campaigns

through advocating for fair distribution and combating misinformation. But we must also continue to do everything we can to end polio. And we now have opportunities to work in a new area of focus: the environment.

The world is a different place today from when I first announced that Rotary Opens Opportunities. We can all be proud of how we updated what Rotary can be this year.

Let's continue on this path, always taking care of our clubs and of our friends in those clubs. They are precious, and they keep Rotary alive and thriving.

Susanne and I are thankful for all the opportunities to serve the organisation during this special year, a year of finding new meaning in Service Above Self.

We see Rotary as a community of people who live their values by putting them into action. In these extraordinary times, there is no doubt that we must place increased emphasis on service. This is our opportunity to show the world what Service Above Self means for Rotarians.

There are so many opportunities waiting for us that will help us change the world. Let's seize them together and get ready to open doors to achieving greater things.

And as we open these doors to new ideas, our minds and our hearts also open. Remember that everything we do in Rotary opens another opportunity for someone else... ●

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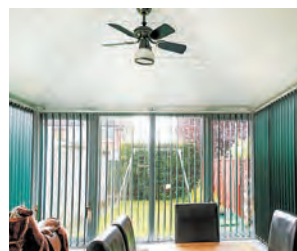
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K.R. Ravindran
Trustee Chair 2020/21

HAVING “I have no fear of the future,” Winston Churchill once said. “Let us go forward into its mysteries, let us tear aside the veils which hide it from our eyes, and let us move onward with confidence and courage.”

Churchill used the phrase “let us go forward together” in some of his most famous speeches.

He had no other choice but to look forward as he led his war-battered nation with courage.

Each generation inherits its own share of challenges; we are living through ours, never once stopping in the face of this challenge. In a year when people were unable to meet, families stayed secluded, and businesses struggled to flourish, we still managed to go forward together in many areas.

Through Rotary Foundation grants, clubs and districts brought creative solutions to their pandemic-hit communities. Since March 2020, the Foundation has awarded over \$34 million in grants to initiatives related to COVID-19.

The demand for our global grants was high. They were so popular that we had to make adjustments to grant funding policy that will begin July 1st in a prudent effort to balance demand with resources, so that more districts can participate.

This year, The Rotary Foundation took bold steps forward, breaking new ground: the Foundation expanded its reach with recognition of the environment as an area of focus and awarded our first Programmes of Scale grant to a Rotarian-led programme that aims to greatly reduce malaria for severely affected communities in Zambia.

Even though our polio immunisation activities paused for a few months in 2020 because of the pandemic, they began to resume in midyear. We also were finally able to celebrate a huge step forward in our journey together to a polio-free world: the World Health Organization declaration that the African region is now free of wild poliovirus.

And the Otto and Fran Walter Foundation signed an agreement with us to fully fund the establishment of a Rotary Peace Centre in the Middle East and North African region.

This welcome development gives Rotary the opportunity to make a tangible contribution to an area where lasting peace has been so elusive.

Our accomplishments are a reminder that Rotary is a great force for good everywhere and that you are the reason we did not stop. At this writing, we’ve raised more than \$282 million, putting us on track to reach our \$410 million fundraising goal. The great work we have done this year, and the work we will do next year and in the years ahead, is all thanks to your support.

On behalf of The Rotary Foundation Trustees, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for keeping the Foundation — one of our greatest gifts to the world — thriving. ●



Tony Black
RI Director 2019/21

On June 30th, it will be two years since I became your Rotary International Director and what a two years, with everything starting well and as I expected.

My wife Elspeth and I attended the 2020 International Assembly in January in San Diego where we were part of the partner training programme. It was great to see all the smiling faces filled with hope and anticipation for the future.

I then went on to a very chilly and windy Chicago for a Board meeting. Then went on to Kolkata for their Centennial Rotary Conference and, while I was there, I took the chance to visit St Andrew’s Church where my parents were married in September 1945.

Elspeth and I were then aides to RI President Mark Maloney and his wife Gay while they attended the Commonwealth Conference in London.

Our trip was very well organised by Rotarian Judith Diment. For me, the highlight was the Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey, and having an audience with the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, at the Archbishop’s House.

Literacy is a big wide topic and I’ll leave it to others to write on this subject. I cringe every time I get an email from the editor asking for 350 words for the magazine and being dyslexic – I only found out about 25 years ago – I struggle to put on paper two sentences when I think one will do.

Without books of any sort over the last year, life would have been unbearable. I used to find it hard at school and university – I might have been able to verbally communicate and even do well on the practical side, but writing something was just so difficult.

I can’t imagine how our young people have been coping over the last year with their schoolwork. Contact and learning, to me, go hand in hand.

I have been asked many times where Rotary is going, and I honestly don’t know.

I believe there is a great future for Rotary and much work for us to do, but what, when and how really does depend on this pandemic and when we can safely get out.

We will be called on by many to help in whatever way we can and as Rotarians we will rise to that challenge.

Since this pandemic started, we have connected the world in ways none of us would have thought possible and we have opened up many opportunities that we are still trying to comprehend, or work with. We are a service organisation and as the world opens up it is now our time to Serve and Change Lives, not only for others but also for ourselves. ●

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Starvation
Orphans**



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RM 06-21

Dreams are those things that do not let you sleep

With a theme of 'Serve To Change Lives', Shekhar Mehta from the Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahangar, will soon become President of Rotary International. But how does he view the coming 12 months as the world looks to get to grips with life after Covid?

SHEKHAR Mehta takes over as President of Rotary International in July.

He joined Rotary aged just 25 and soon adopted the motto that if somebody asked – he would say yes.

Now living in Kolkata and a member of the Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahanagar, Shekhar said: “Dreams have to be big enough for people to be motivated to achieve them.

“Gandhi once said that if you find the goal, the means will come. That’s how it’s been my whole Rotary life.”

This is an extract of an interview first published in *Rotary* magazine from North America.

When did you realise that you could accomplish something significant in Rotary as a member?

I had a baptism by fire. I was 25 when I got admitted to my club, after a friend asked me if I’d like to join.

The first month I was asked to create a souvenir publication to raise funds through the sales of advertisements.

I had no clue how to do this. But I was asked, and I said okay. Many people offered to help me, and suddenly it became very successful. We raised a lot of money and everybody said, “Wow, Shekhar, well done!”

Three months later, I was asked to become the editor of the club bulletin.

I loved that job! If ever I were asked to do another thing at the club level, that’s the job I’d love to do. You become the nerve centre; every piece of information

passes through you. You know what’s happening around the club, which was one of the reasons I got so involved.

Shortly after, we organised an artificial limb camp, where we would fit limbs for people who did not have legs and give them hand-crank tricycles.

Everybody was given a job. I was responsible to determine whether the recipient had enough hand or arm strength to pedal one. So I would have the person grab my hands and I would pull.

I saw the first person coming, but he wasn’t walking, he was crawling. And as he stretched out his hand, and I stretched mine to pull his, I shuddered. I didn’t want to touch his hands; they were very soiled.

The fourth person was a leper, but I had no option: I had to hold every hand.

But by the seventh or eighth hand, I had forgotten about my reservations and I was thinking about their plight.

I think that’s when I became a Rotarian: I started feeling how others felt.

Did you seek higher levels of responsibility in Rotary or did higher levels of responsibility seek you?

I never sought anything in Rotary and I never said no to anything. This is what I keep telling everyone: a Rotarian is a volunteer, and being a volunteer means yes, I want to do something. What kind of volunteer are you if you say no?

What was your reaction when you found out you were going to become President of Rotary?

The immediate reaction? It felt nice. I didn’t jump with excitement or anything

like that. Whenever responsibilities come to me, I think of them as a greater opportunity for service.

I’ll give you an example. When I was nominated to be a Rotary director, I was invited to a huge felicitation programme.

These are very common in India. People come and say nice things about you, and I felt such embarrassment.

I thought I needed to do extraordinary things to justify the adulation. So, that night, I wrote down what I hoped to achieve in the next two years. I was coming from a world where there are too many needs and there is a lot of opportunity to do the work.

And so I sat down until four in the morning thinking of, say, opening 50 eye hospitals in India, of doing 5,000 heart surgeries for children. One of the former presidents of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, used to say that dreams are not what you see when you sleep, but dreams are those things that do not let you sleep.

That day his thoughts resonated with me so vividly. People laughed when they heard what I was planning to achieve.

But when you’re trying to do something extraordinary, they may laugh at you, but you’ll have the last laugh.

I am happy to tell you, many of these dreams got fulfilled.

Are we going to see an exponential series of dreams during your time as Rotary President?

Absolutely. If that doesn’t happen, in my heart, I’m not a worthy President. But I also understand that when I was a



Rotary director, my focus was on India.

When I am the President of Rotary, my focus has to be on the world, and Rotary is not the same around the world.

We're an organisation that is 116 -years-old, which is present in more than 200 countries and geographical areas, and has 1.2 million leaders — not just Rotarians, leaders — and the legacy of nearly eradicating a disease.

We have to do projects that have an impact on the national level. I come from one of the largest countries in the world, and Rotary's work today is absolutely having an impact on the national level.

It can have a national impact in Nepal, I'm aware of it. It can happen in Bangladesh, in Pakistan. And polio eradication is something we have done on

the world level, with polio now endemic in only two countries.

Rotary in India had the idea to present grade school education on TV, one channel for each grade — so grade 3, channel 3; grade 9, channel 9.

The telecast is the same curriculum that the child would get in school, and at the end of each lesson there's a message that this was made possible by Rotary.

This is presented to 100 million children every day; 100 million children get to hear the name of Rotary and get to know Rotary as an organisation that does good in the world.

Our plan was to do this in five-and-a-half years. But COVID-19 provided an opportunity, the government was interested in supporting this, and what

was supposed to take five-and-a-half years, we did in five-and-a-half weeks.

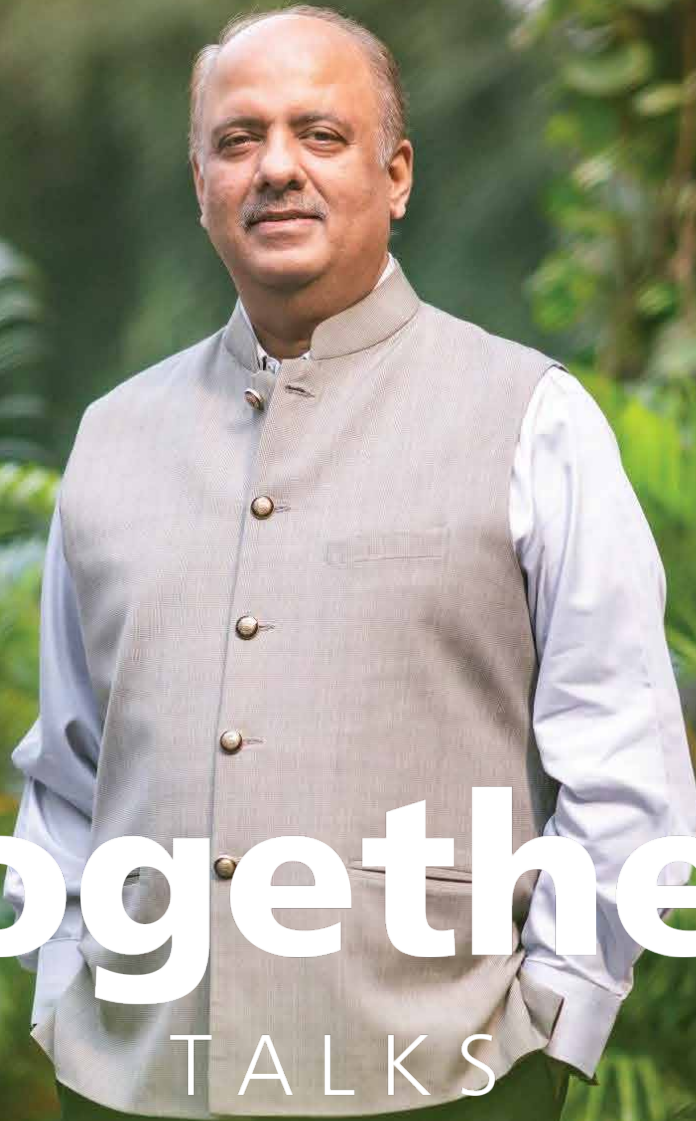
So when I say we can have an impact on the national level, I know we can. Rotary has the power to do it. ●

together TALKS

Catch up with Shekhar Mehta speaking on Rotary GB&I's togetherTalks about empowering girls. You can see the interview on the togetherTalks' YouTube channel.



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TALKS

"EMPOWERING GIRLS"

SHEKHAR MEHTA

Rotary International President 2021-22

#bettertogether





TOM GRIFFIN

Rotary President of Great Britain & Ireland

That was the year, that was...

AND what a year! By the end of February last year, my diary was full of interesting engagements and opportunities to see what Rotary was achieving. All, of course, became victims of Covid, and in the last 13 months I have hardly left the house.

But for all the challenges posed by the pandemic, Rotary has responded well.

Despite only being able to meet online, many clubs and districts have found attendance better than before; they've been able to attract interesting speakers whom they'd never have been able to get to a physical meeting. Moreover, despite it all, many clubs have been able to continue to deliver meaningful service to their communities.

But what happens now that the end of lockdown is in sight? Do we just go back to the way we were?

I hope not. Like many of you, I am tired of endless Zooming. We need the human interaction only face-to-face

meetings can offer; the informal chats; all the intangible benefits of physically meeting.

But do we need to meet face-to-face all the time? Online meetings have their benefits too: savings in cost and time; reduced carbon footprint; access to a wider range of speakers. Clubs need to be thinking about what is best for them; what suits their members; and learn the lessons of "Rotary in Lockdown" to plan how they will conduct their business in future.

And what about Rotary as a whole? Sadly, in Great Britain & Ireland we are losing members – over 1,900 in 2019/20 – and our average age continues to rise. How do we turn that around?

I think that a major reason why we struggle to attract new, younger members is that we inadvertently put obstacles in their path – obstacles in terms of the time and cost commitment we call for; obstacles in terms of the style and ambiance of our traditional clubs.

And so I firmly believe that not only do we need to support and cherish our traditional clubs, and help them to grow, we need urgently to be starting new, innovative clubs which are attractive to the next generation of Rotarians.

Clubs which reflect their members' lifestyle; which are less demanding on members' time and pocket; which are more family-friendly; which are strongly focused on the kind of service that attracts those interested in giving something back to society. We need clubs like that in every significant community.

How do we get there? We all have a role to play: existing clubs which want to future-proof Rotary in their communities; districts; Rotary GB&I itself.

Rotary grew quickly in these islands in the early part of the twentieth century when it first crossed the Atlantic; it grew again in the years immediately following World War Two. It's time now for a third great effort. It's time for action. ●





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Letters to the editor

Where do the plastics go?

MUCH as I applaud various projects to limit the use of plastics and reclamation, it seems to me that virtually nothing is being done to tackle what I see as the main problem, their accumulation.

Estimates of world production vary widely according to which website you view but, suffice to say, the figures are mind-blowing.

Unfortunately, the fact file figure given in February's Rotary magazine that every year we produce 1,275 kilos of plastic per person, relates more closely to the total world production over the last 70 years, not per year.

Nonetheless, my main point is that no matter how much plastic is being recycled, virtually none is actually being destroyed.

If you convert 20 kg of plastic bottles



into a pallet, you still have 20 kg of plastic. Then what?

Since 1950, it is estimated that 10 billion to 12 billion tonnes of plastics have been produced. Where is it?

Even if production is cut by half, over the next 50 years, unless something is done to actually destroy it, an extra 10 trillion tonnes will accumulate.

The calorific value of plastics, particularly polyolefins, is high. Therefore, the obvious answer is to burn it, probably as a

partial replacement for coal or oil.

Yes, this will produce greenhouse gasses, but no more than the fuel it is replacing. Any toxic gasses can be scrubbed out.

Hard decisions have to be made and I agree with End Plastic Soup co-founder, Gert-Jan van Dommelen, that we need to lobby governments.

Terry Andrew

Guernsey Rotary, Channel Islands

It's an easy read

IN response to Mr Holden of Wiltshire (*Rotary*, April 2020), please do continue with a printed issue.

Two reasons, for me:

1. My copy sits around for a while and I enjoy dipping into the articles over a week or so.
2. Once finished with, I take my copy to our local library to share with others. Who knows who might spot something to engage their interest in what Rotary does?

Both are much easier to do with a printed issue.

Hilary Bentley

Alderney Rotary, Channel Islands

Chipping in with a thought

ROTARY has given so much to the underprivileged and to black people who, without doubt have received a great deal.

Everything a Rotarian gives is given freely, with respect, kindness and compassion. In return, there appears to be a movement aiming to shame and disgrace our forefathers without whom we would be back in the dark ages or under the jackboot.

Members of this great organisation did not join to become involved in politics and racism. I fear if this current trend of political involvement continues, then a lot of members will leave and become involved privately in fund-raising and helping underprivileged causes.

I am disappointed the Editor has chosen this unpleasant direction for

our magazine. It is, after all, shared by everyone in Rotary. The chip on the shoulder is harder to get rid of than chains that bond.

Stanley Chappell

Dursley Rotary, Gloucestershire



Reduce fees for the family

ROTARY is looking for an increased and a more diverse membership. Excellent webinars have generated many ideas and lead me to expand a recent suggestion to a potentially far-reaching proposal.

My proposal is to entitle the spouse or partner of an existing member to join Rotary as a full member with no membership fee or due required. The meeting costs would be paid.

In addition, the offspring of an existing member who is between the ages of 18 and 40 and who lives at the same address as the existing member has a similar entitlement.

Further, any offspring who does not live at the same address is entitled to join Rotary as a full member paying just 50% of the regular fee for that person's chosen club - which may be in a different location.

Many of these people already contribute to or participate in Rotary activities but are not fully recognised.

They will often not receive many communications about Rotary.

This proposal will require all Rotary International / Foundation / Rotary Great Britain & Ireland and District fees to either be waived or applied at just 50% as appropriate.

I believe that the positive impacts are likely to include a step change increase to membership, more female members, more younger members, more ethnic diversity, sustainability and expansion of more clubs and, ultimately, greater income to Rotary International, Foundation, Rotary Great Britain & Ireland and District as Rotary flourishes.

I hope this idea is worthy of further debate, focused ideally on creativity and not barriers.

Preston Ayres

Milton Keynes Grand Union Rotary,
Buckinghamshire

How can we save the planet?

CLIMATE change is a hot topic, but what can we, as individuals, do about it?

With this theme in mind, the Rotary Club of Manchester had a Zoom brainstorming and came up with 50 actions which people can take.

We were not looking to tell the government what to do or how large companies can reduce their carbon footprint, but we concentrated on personal activities.

The important point is that we looked at all the small things each of us can do according to our own inclinations.

We do not have to adopt a Spartan life-style of cold showers and self-denial. Just a few modifications to how we live and go about our daily lives can, cumulatively, make an impact.

How effective all this is, depends on many people doing their own little bit. Simply being aware of some of the things we can do often pushes us in the right direction.

The full list we produced is on our website. Click on the link: 'Save the Planet'. More ideas are welcome which you can send to me at:

rtry1242@btinternet.com

You may find some of our suggestions both amusing and enjoyable. At the same time, you may well save some money because there is a big emphasis on saving power and water.

The action you can take is to start doing some of the things you are not doing now. Tell as many of your friends and family as possible about our ideas and spread the word as far as you can. You will then have the satisfaction of knowing you are doing your bit to help save the planet.

Ernest Metcalfe

Manchester Rotary

Politics is power

WELL said Jane Horn (*Rotary*, February). Of course "most things we do internationally and nationally could be interpreted as political".

The decisions we make personally, and as an organisation, say a great deal about our values, how we use our position in society and exercise power "to create lasting change," as the preamble to Rotary International's webpage states.

Paul Harris, I am sure, would be delighted with the five causes of Rotary.

He would accept that making necessary choices to further that work, can be judged political, though not necessarily party political.

I trust Jane you will remain in Rotary. The organisation needs you.

Patrick Conway

Durham City Rotary, County Durham

How can we attract younger members?

AS A Rotarian in Devon, where our demographics reflect an older population, our club is anxious to attract younger members.

I am sure there will be clubs who have been successful in doing this and I would like to ask if they could share their successes through the medium of your magazine.

It would also be really interesting to hear from the younger Rotarians as to what attracted them to join Rotary and any benefits they personally feel they get from being a Rotarian.

Additionally, it would be great to hear of any particular ways they are able to help their clubs, perhaps using social media channels which they are more conversant with than some older members.

Sandie Perraton

Ashburton/Buckfastleigh Rotary, Devon



More Zoom, less travel

GOOD thought-provoking article by Laura Willcox entitled 'Combatting climate change starts with you' (*Rotary*, February). This is obviously the topic of the moment and likely to remain high on our priority list for a long time.

Some good suggestions under the 'Take Action' headings but I think that the action suggested by Laura with reference to travel seemed a bit limited.

As a large organisation we have a chance to make a serious difference. Here are a few suggestions:

- When we return to more normal times, we could halve our travel by continuing with Zoom communication for half of our meetings. Cutting our meetings mileage by 50% across the whole of Rotary would bring a considerable carbon-saving.
- Take holidays involving flights only once every two years, unless visiting family or close friends.
- Take a cruise holiday only once every four years to reduce marine pollution.

Climate change is a huge threat and a task demanding all our attention. We should consider carefully before taking travel for granted, times have changed.

Kevin Lawry

Grantham Sunrise Rotary, Lincolnshire

Which charities are value for money?

DECIDING which charities to support is a complex decision, particularly in these troubled times.

There is no shortage of worthy recipients. Covering gaps in NHS provision such as hospices, satisfying local social need with food banks, or supporting an international initiative which will make a permanent difference, such as polio eradication.

Responding to a natural disaster where immediate help can be given by the likes of Aquabox or ShelterBox. There is no 'one fits all' decision process.

Without doubt what is critical is that the money given reaches the defined need. That caused me to look at the 2019 accounts of four charities who have provided speakers recently for my club. I found a staggering divergence.

Charity 1 spent less than 5% of its income on fund-raising costs – 95% went to support its stated aims. Charity 2 spent 33% of its income on fund-raising costs. Charity 3 spent 60% of its income on fund-raising.

Charity 1 is clearly exceptional and all credit to it. Charity 2 is a substantial charity with a wide range of money-raising activities, some of which will require extensive publicity and promotion. On that basis, 33% could be considered reasonable.

Charity 3 with its 60% is at the other end of the spectrum. If I were making a personal donation, I would not expect only 40p of the £1 I gave to support the aims of a charity.

Once a charity speaker has been

invited to talk to a club there is an implied commitment to make some donation to that charity.

Due diligence should be carried out prior to that by the speaker's sponsor.

We owe it to those who have supported our fund-raising activities.

The Charity Commission's website – www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission is an easily accessible comprehensive source of information on all charities.

A quick study should allay fears that an inappropriate charity is being introduced to the club.

Finally, I looked at the accounts of Charity 4, a sizeable charity. It spent a highly commendable 97% of its income on a wide-range of charitable activities some international.

An outstanding performance and that alone merits support of it. Yes, it was The Rotary Foundation. As Rotarians we should be proud of that.

Name and address supplied



A matter of gender

SIMON Kalson (*Rotary*, December) refers to concern with the word chairman.

The problem arises because many people do not distinguish between when man is gender specific and when it is an abbreviation of human or woman. The man in chairman is not gender specific.

It is universal practice in written text

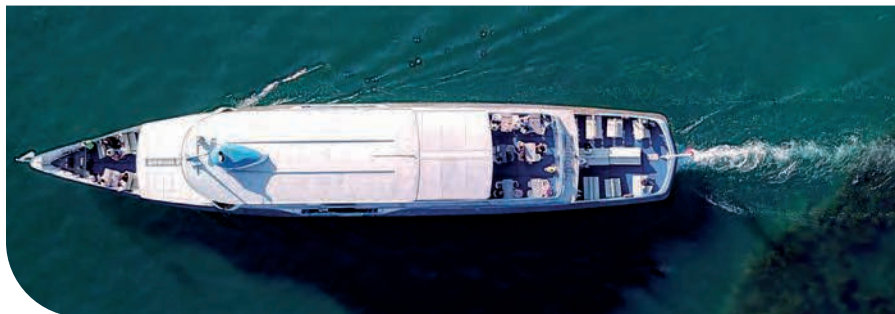
to use an apostrophe to indicate where in the spoken word something is omitted.

Perhaps the chairman could benefit from one. She's the chair'man.

Basil Dewing

Malvern Rotary, Worcestershire.

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:** 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.



Sustainable folly

THE February issue of *Rotary* magazine is, rightly, very strong on solving the plastic problem, along with pollution control in general and the sustainability of continuing with the print edition of the glossy magazine.

But, hey presto; on the glossy back cover is an advert for luxury cruises, (aka mobile pollution generators), and inside is an advert for clothes made from plastic! Inside; more consumerist advertising.

Who are they kidding? Come on Rotary; we have to do better than this. What became of the first clause of Rotary Object Number 2?

Check out the journal of the Centre for Alternative Technology, which is a model to emulate in this respect; decent presentation, all recycled paper and mission-relevant advertising.

Roger Ducat

Lytham Rotary, Lancashire

Editor's note: *Rotary magazine relies on its advertisers to support the publication financially. Advertising is consumerist by its very nature. Take Roger's naïve Utopian philosophy to its full extent i.e. close down cruise companies, car manufacturers, air travel etc., and you would have economic collapse. Climate change is critical, but also, let's get real.*

Is Rotary up to the challenge?

HOW many members watched the documentary, "Greta Thunberg: A Year to Change the World"? It was a fascinating insight into Greta, the person, and how she prepares herself to deliver her message.

Climate change is not something that we, as citizens and as Rotarians, can ignore or wait for someone else to resolve. It affects us all and everyone we know, and those we don't know.

As Rotarians we spend our time, and money, supporting communities locally and internationally.

Climate change, as it is worsening, could easily and readily undo much of the good work that we are doing.

The worst case scenario is that some communities may be forced to move away from their natural habitat. Some may have nowhere else to go. Many will simply die.

Rising sea levels, more frequent droughts and floods, wild fires, crop failures, displaced communities, greater numbers of refugees. We think of these as developing countries' problems, but this is

also the outlook for the so-called developed world. Diseases that we have managed to help control and almost eradicate could rise again.

Is it time for Rotary to properly refocus its priorities?

We have recognised the environment as our seventh area of focus. But does this go far enough? Does it need to be promoted to be our new main cause, over and above all else? Yes, even higher than ending polio and clean water, causes that I have championed for many years as a Rotarian?

We have 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide. That is a powerful voice that can be used to educate and inform leaders, influencers and enablers, etc. We did it with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Can we do the same for climate change?

Greta has said that we have 'A Year to Change the World'. Is Rotary up to the challenge?

Stephen Kirkman

Croydon Rotary, Surrey

Do saplings need plastic protection?

IT was extremely interesting to read about Rotary in the Netherlands and their desire to try and eradicate plastics: an almost unimaginable problem in the world (*Rotary*, February).

Within our own local area of North Yorkshire we also have a plastic problem but trying to stop it seems almost impossible.

Tree planting is our issue and Rotary has tried to be a strong advocate and supporter over the years without any noticeable effect.

The Woodland Trust has been the only supplier of the saplings and they still want us to use plastic sleeves and guards for protection.

We are told that, once established, the plastic can be removed but that never happens. Instead the plastic stunts the proper growth of many of the trees and generally makes the whole of the planting area look a real mess.

Losing a few trees but creating a plastic free area would be far better. We are told that biodegradable sleeves are available but can never be found!

The Forestry Commission also seems reluctant to get away from plastic. The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust doesn't want rid of them as they are embarking on planting more than 7,000 trees. How would the plastic look then?

What we would like is a strong Rotary voice with worldwide power - including the Dutch supporters. This is not an easy thing, but when you start doing things miracles can happen.

We would also welcome all Rotarians who can come along to see what we are up against and enjoy our countryside.

John Dawson

Knaresborough Rotary, North Yorkshire


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Mr. Eames

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2020

Rotary Young Citizen Awards go virtual!

Outstanding young people have been recognised with Rotary Young Citizen Awards which went virtual this year with an awards ceremony hosted by BBC TV Presenter Ellie Crisell on May 22nd. The awards include the Young Citizen Peacemaker Award and Sporting Hero Award. Here's more about the inspirational winners:

| EVE CONWAY |

Founder and Co-ordinator of the Rotary Young Citizen Awards

TWO seven-year-old friends Ayaan Moosa and Mikael Ishaaq from East London set up a 'Lemonade for Yemen-Aid' stand, when they were six, outside their home to raise money for Yemen after they heard about the plight of children there who are starving.

They thought they might raise £100, but instead they have raised about £100,000 for the Yemen Crisis after their story went viral.

The friends have even received the support and a generous donation from Angelina Jolie who contacted them personally. Ayaan and Mikael have won Gold Blue Peter badges.

The UN World Food Programme has made a video about them with messages of thanks from children in Yemen. They were nominated by Redbridge Rotary.

Eleven-year-old **Max Woosey** has raised more than £532,000 for North Devon Hospice by sleeping in a tent in his garden for over a year from the start of the first lockdown in March 2020.

He decided to camp out after his neighbour Rick Abbott gave him a tent before he died of cancer and told him to "have an adventure" in it.

Max took on the challenge to fundraise for the hospice which helped Max's family care for Rick before he died of cancer in February 2020. He was nominated by Braunton Caen Rotary.



| Seanna & Ciara Hamill

Sisters Seanna and Ciara Hamill, aged 18 and 20, are two Rotaractors from Kenilworth in Warwickshire, whose mother is a senior healthcare professional with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background. When the pandemic hit, she faced huge difficulties accessing personal protective equipment, despite having a frontline role.

Faced with this, Seanna and Ciara decided to do something about it.

They set up SanHanzUK, a social enterprise community interest company to manufacture hand sanitiser with a mission to get sanitiser to people who most needed it.

Sales have allowed them to give away over 10,000 pieces of PPE to frontline workers across the UK and Ireland.

SanHanzUK also donates 20% of proceeds to foodbanks.

With profits the girls invested in mask manufacturing capabilities and now supply full "Covid protection packs". They were nominated by the Rotary Club of Rotary Social Innovation.

Nineteen-year-old **Lanai Collis-Phillips** has been volunteering for over five years at Volunteering Matters. She is involved with the group Women Against Sexual Exploitation and Violence Speak Up to raise awareness of domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual violence.

Lanai is the first young person in Suffolk to become a representative on the local safeguarding board. In 2019, Lanai became an #iwill UK Ambassador for Youth Social Action. She has chaired a number of high level #iwill campaign meetings in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. Nominated by Ipswich Wolsey Rotary.



| Lanai Collis-Phillips (right)



Max Woosey, sleeping under the stars

Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award Winner

Shanea Kerry Oldham, 20, was spurred into action after a teenager was stabbed in her neighbourhood. She went to help him lying in the street and what she witnessed left a huge mark on her.

Shanea vowed to put an end to the increasing amount of violence in the London Borough of Newham.

She worked with police to act as a liaison between them and young people to improve stop and search perceptions.

She is determined to bring about change and reduce the fear amongst teenagers on the streets.

Shanea is founder of Your Life More Life CIC and Lead Youth Activism Co-ordinator for The 4Front Project. Shanea was nominated by Stratford Rotary.



Jemima Browning

Rotary Young Citizen Sporting Hero Award Winner

Jemima Browning, 20, started Tadcaster Stingrays, a swimming squad for young people with disabilities at Tadcaster Swimming Pool.

Driven by her younger brother Will, who has Down's Syndrome, it was Jemima's belief that everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy sport.

The Tadcaster Stingrays are coached by Jemima and some are now competing in the Special Olympics and the Great Britain Down's Syndrome Swimming Group.

Jemima and Will were both selected to represent Great Britain on the Special Olympics Inclusive Youth Activation Committee. Jemima was nominated by Leeds Rotary. ●



Alfie Dean

Fourteen-year-old **Alfie Dean** set up the Babbacombe Pantry outside his home in Devon, using a shelf taken from his bedroom to offer older people the chance to collect essential items during lockdown.

He set up a GoFundMe page to help keep the pantry well-stocked.

The teenager also launched a Christmas appeal collecting gifts and raising funds to provide 400 Christmas stockings to families in need. Alfie was nominated by Torquay Rotary.



Poppy McGhee



Watch the inspiring virtual awards ceremony on demand on our YouTube channel

Rotary Marketplace

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Good food & conversation

Rotarians in North London have overcome the challenges of coronavirus to work with a charity using surplus food to provide meals for the needy.



OVER the past 12 months of the coronavirus pandemic, foodbanks have come under the most extreme of pressures. Rotary clubs nationwide have responded with cash, volunteering, and even the pioneering Rotary4foodbank scheme in the Midlands and South Yorkshire.

FoodCycle is not a foodbank. Instead, the charity aims to tackle food waste, food poverty and loneliness by using donated surplus food to provide communal hot, nutritious meals to those who want them.

In London, Rotarians have been active over the past year working with FoodCycle, which provides a cooked meal at least once a week.

“Edgware and Stanmore Rotary has been involved since I started volunteering about four years ago,” explained Peter Bradley. “Being a foodie, it was an ideal organisation for me which ticked so many Rotary boxes.”

“It works well with our service ethos, and introduces younger volunteers to Rotary through the project – people who have previously never heard of us.”

The model is a simple one. Volunteers collect surplus food which would otherwise be thrown away or go to waste, from local supermarkets and small shops. The food is always within the sell-by date and is

checked for freshness.

“The amount of surplus food available is often mind-boggling,” added Peter, who works with a project based at Finsbury Park in North London.

“In just a few short hours from collection, volunteers have transformed the ingredients into a delicious three-course vegetarian meal ready for that day’s guests.

“The meals are cooked from scratch and often include up to five portions of fruit and vegetables. Any left-over portions of food are offered to the guests for them to take home.”

“Guests and volunteers sit together to eat and talk. The personal stories that often emerge can be humbling but also exhilarating.”

Guests come from all sorts of backgrounds; refugees, the homeless, asylum seekers or simply elderly and lonely. Some may not have spoken to anyone for a whole week or more.

COVID-19 has changed the landscape entirely. At first, when the initial lockdown was introduced a year ago, everything came to a standstill. However, the need for food supplies doesn’t go away.

In North London, FoodCycle got up and running pretty quickly. Instead of hosting meals, food parcels were distributed weekly.

"THIS YEAR, FOODCYCLE HAS RESCUED OVER 200 TONS OF SURPLUS FOOD WHICH EQUATES TO MORE THAN 440,000 MEALS FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE."

Fresh fruit and vegetables, along with donated cooked meals from top restaurants were delivered to the community centre in Finsbury Park to be bagged up and a team of volunteers, including members of Arsenal Football Club, distributed them.

One of the aims of FoodCycle, apart from tackling food waste and food poverty, is tackling loneliness, so a new service was started.

Volunteers phoned food parcel recipients for a chat once a week, which was a great boost to those who were isolating and to those volunteering.

"As restrictions began to ease, there was a great desire to get back cooking," explained Peter. "As the premises were huge and we had a large kitchen, a team of six volunteers cooked takeaway meals, which were collected each week from the Community Centre."

Despite these uncertain times, the FoodCycle projects are still operating nationwide. They are still cooking, handing out meals and volunteers continue to make weekly calls, providing much-needed food and conversation to people within our communities.

This year, FoodCycle has rescued over 200 tons of surplus food which equates to more than 440,000 meals for vulnerable people.

According to FoodCycle, 66% of guests worry about their food running out, 65% are forced to skip meals and 26% cannot work due to health problems.

After coming to FoodCycle, 79% say they feel more part of the community, 76% eat more fruit and vegetables and 77% say they have made new friends.

"From a Rotary perspective volunteering or helping in other ways with FoodCycle exemplifies Rotary's core values," added Peter.

"Rotarians who have been introduced to FoodCycle have become enthusiastic supporters in particular Rotaractors.

"Clearly, not everyone is as enthusiastic about cooking as I am but there are plenty of other volunteer activities.

"FoodCycle needs people to lay tables, sit and chat, welcome guests, serve meals, and of course help clear up.

"Also, Rotarians with transport are needed to collect food from shops and supermarkets." ●



Meet the FoodCycle team

©Picture Sofia Sanna

It's time to say Thank You



Sandra McCabe

AS the nation slowly eases out of the 16-month pandemic and a semblance of normality returns to our lives, Rotary is standing alongside a host of other organisations to support the national Thank You Day on July 4th.

Sandra McCabe, a member of Rotary Lisburn in Northern Ireland, is one of the proposers of the original idea to mark the occasion.

Despite the past year being a difficult one for many of us, it has also brought out the best in many people, making Sandra recognise how we can all have a positive influence on each other's lives.

And she is encouraging other Rotary members, clubs and their communities to follow suit where we all get together, say thank you to everyone who helped us over the past year, and look forward to better times ahead.

Sandra said: "My 'Thank You Day' is going to take the form of a barbeque for Rotarians and their partners, which I am hoping to host in the grounds of my business or at my house.

"We haven't been able to get together in person for over a year now, so this will be our first meeting together.

"We thought this would be a fantastic opportunity to have the President's hand-over on that day, as a celebration for the President who has had a very challenging year in managing and conducting activities virtually.

"I look forward to a really great day of togetherness and thanks, in which the true spirit of our Rotary club will shine through."

Alongside Rotary, the day is being supported by the likes of NHS, Royal Voluntary Service and the Scouts, as well as celebrity backers such as Michael Sheen, Tim Peake and Bear Grylls.



As part of the day, there are a host of activities to choose from to host or participate in locally, from parkruns to the UK's largest Cookout with Levi Roots!

Get involved in Power Hour at 11am!

Rotary is taking the lead on 'Power Hour' at 11am where volunteers can join forces with other members of the community of all ages for one hour of fun, impactful volunteering, with the aim of brightening up the local area.

Organise a Thank You Day Litter-Pick!

Join with friends, family, your neighbours and organise a street or park clear-up together, or do something else for your local environment.

This could be tree or flower planting, a litter pick, painting a community mural, building wildlife boxes and much more!

The ideas are really up to you, and is all about coming together on the day for an activity that suits you.

All the resources to get involved can be found on rotarygbi.org/thankyouday

According to The Mental Health Foundation, 45% of us say that being in green spaces has been vital for our mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Together as Rotary members, let's say thank you to the blue and green spaces that have served our mental health so well during the pandemic.

Sandra joined Lisburn Rotary in 2003, following in the footsteps of her father, Leslie. She became the Rotary club's first female President in 2008.



In 1984, she opened up her own business, Oasis Travel, which has three Rotarians – sister-in-law Wendy Corkin became a Rotarian following the death of her brother Gary, who was also a Rotary member and past president.

Also in the business are Mark Davidson and Brian Gillespie, both Past Presidents of Belfast and North Down Rotary Clubs.

Sandra is Chairperson of the Board of Governors at Wallace High School where she has encouraged the start of an Interact club, in association with Lisburn Rotary, hopefully inspiring the next generation of Rotarians.

She added: "I have been overwhelmed by the support I've received both on a personal level and as a business owner from Rotarians, family, friends, colleagues, and customers.

"With so many people to thank, after such a hard year for many, a 'Thank You Day' is the perfect opportunity to bring communities, family and friends together." ●



Information

Help Rotary say thank you and get involved at rotarygbi.org/thankyouday

LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

AMBITIOUS HOMELESS PROJECT LAUNCHED IN EASTBOURNE

EASTBOURNE Rotary has just launched its most ambitious charity fundraising project of recent times and is calling out for support and donations in kind or in cash.

Next year is Eastbourne Rotary's centenary. To mark the occasion, all its efforts will focus on delivering 'Homes for Homeless' in the East Sussex coastal town.

The initiative aims to provide four one-bedroom homes to reduce the number of people living on the streets of Eastbourne.

The fundraising target is £400,000. This will enable the local Rotary club to fund, refurbish and furnish a suitable property dedicated to providing a dignified abode for homeless people in the town.

Brian O'Neil, President of Eastbourne Rotary, said: "The service that will be provided by our Homes for Homeless project is desperately needed in the town - a need that is growing and has been further exacerbated by the pandemic.

"There is no doubt that this is an ambitious project but, we are confident, from our many decades of fundraising experience, that we will be able to get the town behind us to achieve the goal."

It is estimated that it will take at least 18 months to raise enough money to secure a property, and a further six months before it is ready to welcome the first tenants.

Southdown Housing Association, a not-for-profit specialist provider of support and housing services to vulnerable people in Eastbourne, will work with the Rotary club as its delivery partner. It has also agreed to



match fund Rotary's funds up to £400,000.

Neil Blanchard, CEO, Southdown Housing Association, said: "I'm delighted and proud that the Rotary Club of Eastbourne has selected Southdown to work with them on the Homes for Homeless project.

"This partnership provides a great opportunity for our two local organisations to pool resources and work with the local community to make a real and lasting difference."

According to a snapshot survey, released last year by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the number of people estimated to be sleeping rough in the East Sussex town on a single night is 16.

The snapshot was taken in the autumn, rather than summer, when numbers tend to be lower as there are more temporary

night shelters set up.

Ian Huke, Chairman of the Homes for Homeless project, said: "We are calling out for financial donations from charities, trusts, funds, grants and bequests, as well as individual donations from residents and businesses in kind or in cash.

"We hope Homes for Homeless will have a permanent positive impact on reducing homelessness in our town and will be a lasting legacy for the club and everyone that supports it."

Eastbourne Rotary will be organising a range of fundraising events and hopes to get the support of the community and businesses far and wide. ●



For more details visit:
homes-for-homeless.org

INTRODUCING THE BECTON BAG!

INSPIRED by the damage which discarded plastic causes to our environment Becton Rotary in Hampshire is working with the New Forest Basics Bank (NFBB) to eliminate the use of plastic carrier bags.

The food bank, which supports vulnerable residents in the area, uses around 1,000 plastic bags a week.

So the plastic carrier bags are being replaced with material bags – called The Becton Bag – made to an agreed specification between Rotarians and the NFBB.

Lynn Peck, Volunteer Head of Operations at the NFBB, said: "It will be a wonderful achievement and a boost to the environment if we can totally eliminate the use of plastic bags for our deliveries.

"The material bags will be reusable and when returned will undergo a process to confirm they are free from infection before being used again.

"We are grateful to the members of the Rotary Club of Becton & District and the volunteers who have agreed to sew the bags for the considerable support they have provided to this project."

Becton Rotary received support from the Milford on Sea Women's Institute and the Brockenhurst & Sway Bag groups.

The Rotary club is now seeking volunteers to help with sewing the bags using donated material. Collection points for completed bags and donated material have been set up at the New Forest Basics Bank in Lymington and around the New Forest. ●



Artist impression

SIMPLY VAN-TASTIC!



LEATHERHEAD Rotary Club has raised more than £3,000 to provide a second refrigerated van for Mid Surrey Community Fridges.

Altogether, over £3,000 was raised, which was presented recently to Clare Davies, the CEO of Mid Surrey Community Fridges.

Mid Surrey Community Fridges was originally formed in September 2017, as the Dorking Community Fridge, to redistribute food from local supermarkets, restaurants and cafés, that would otherwise go

to waste, to people within the local community who need it most.

Three and a half years later, Mid Surrey Community Fridges, now a Community Interest Company, has almost 150 volunteers (with a waiting list!), a permanent warehouse in Dorking, four static fridges across Mole Valley and two refrigerated vans.

These vans make regular deliveries to people who are not able to get to one of the static fridges, by way of a network of rural mobile fridge stops. ●

SHINING LIKE A BEACON

ROTARIANS in Darwen have taken over a building in the Lancashire town which used to be a youth facility to become the focal point of their community work during the pandemic.

Steve Frisby, a new associate member, and partner Christine, own Meeting Places which has become the hub for Darwen Food Larder.

They invited the Darwen Asylum Refugee Enterprise, a network supported by John East a Darwen Rotarian and a member of Central United Reformed Church, to meet while the church building was closed.

The club secured funding from various sources to enable the Darwen Food Larder to increase its stock to meet the flood of requests during lockdown.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council entrusted the Rotary club with funds from its Covid Winter Food Project

because they were so impressed with their commitment to the community.

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church housed the larder and a local charity provided new shelving.

Club President, Julia O'Hara, and other Rotarians enlisted local shops and restaurants to help and became part of the Food Larder infrastructure.

Julia said: "It has been a gloomy few months, but our club has shone like a beacon in the community.

"We have made a real difference in supporting the community when it needed us. I am proud to be part of an organisation that comes up trumps in times of crisis."

Meanwhile, with the help of the Tauheedul Islam Girls High School, the club organised more than 100 hot meals a week to be delivered to socially-isolated residents, including asylum seekers and refugees. ●

PERFUMED PINKS

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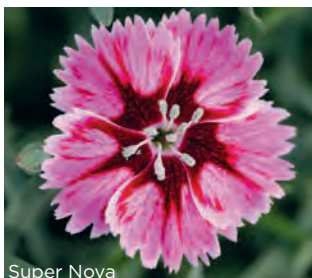
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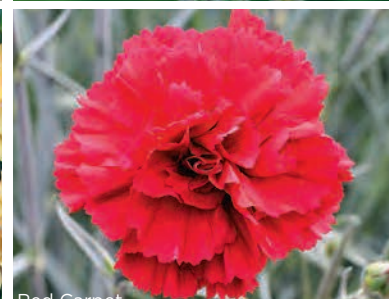
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CHANGING ATTITUDES OVER MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

MENSTRUAL hygiene is a globally-recognised public health challenge and is the focus of a new Rotary Action Group.

Tower Hamlets' Rotarian, Sharmila Nagarajan, is the architect of Menstrual Health and Hygiene group which was launched by Rotary International General Secretary, John Hewko with the call to action – break the silence.

"Around the world, a growing coalition of academics, donors, non-governmental organisations, and United Nations agencies are coming together to address the many issues," explained Sharmila.

"This can be menstrual-related shame and taboo in some countries or period poverty which is a reality, even in developed countries.

"There is also the all-important universal issue of soil pollution, due to the menstrual product waste."

What began through an informal WhatsApp group has now developed into a Rotary Action Group involving 240 members from 20 countries.

Sharmila pointed out that menstrual health is not just a women's issue. Roughly 2.3 billion people live without basic sanitation. In developing countries, only 27% of people have adequate hand washing facilities at home, according to UNICEF.

She added: "It becomes harder for women and young girls to manage their periods safely and with dignity.

"Girls with special needs and disabilities disproportionately do not have access to the facilities and resources they need for proper menstrual hygiene.

"Living in conflict-affected areas, or in the aftermath of natural disasters, also makes it more difficult for women and girls to manage their periods." ●

i For more details visit:
ragmhh.org

ON THE BUSES!



ROTARY is backing the introduction of well-being buses to support NHS staff.

Dubbed the Wellbee, the spacious bus offers plenty of room to move about with its raised upper deck roof, a fully-fitted kitchen for hot refreshments straightforward and space outside to relax and unwind under the awning.

As part of Project Wingman, the buses are supported by a team of aircrew volunteers reaching up to 150 frontline staff each day.

Rotary GB&I is providing copies of Rotary magazine for the lounges. The magazine is among a select number of

publications which have been selected as reading material.

The Project Wingman Foundation comprises of a group of current and former aircrew from all corners of aviation. At the end of 2020, they raised £25,000 to get the wheels turning.

NHS Trusts can book the bus to visit for weekly blocks which are crewed by uniformed airline staff, who are either furloughed or have been made redundant.

Project Wingman has operated lounges in over 80 NHS hospitals. The service has been hugely popular and beneficial to NHS staff. ●

GROWING FOR ROTARY



CLITHEROE Rotary in Lancashire has been busy working on their Rotary Woods project.

Some 220 trees were planted at Wades Hill, within the grounds of Waddow Hall. Oaks, Hawthorns, Hazels, Silver Birch and Dogwood have been added to Waddow's landscape.

Clitheroe Rotary Wood was established in 2020 by a group of green-fingered Rotarians wanting to do something positive for the town and the climate.

The first Clitheroe Rotary Wood was planted successfully in December last year at Highmoor Park. ●

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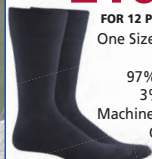
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SARAH IS A SUPERHERO



IN little more than a year of joining Rotary, Sarah Gardner has already made an impact.

The young mother from Uxbridge in West London, will take over as President of Elthorne-Hillingdon Rotary this July while continuing to drive her charity, Serving Our Superheroes.

Formed in April last year at the start of the pandemic, it began with the modest aim of providing laundry bags for front line care staff at hospitals, care homes and hospices in West London.

The charity has provided 2,400 bags, along with 14,000 fabric face masks, toiletry bags for NHS staff filled with essential equipment, along with clothes and toys to those in need at hospices, hospitals and baby banks.

"We have recently started collaborating with two other charities to provide new clothes to the homeless. We are hoping to start providing uniforms to schools for parents who have lost their jobs and can no longer afford them," said Sarah.

Serving Our Superheroes has donated more than 40,000 items to those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sarah has been widely honoured for her work by the business community and earlier this year was among 27 extraordinary people from across the UK to be recognised with a British Citizen Award. ●

OPERATION WHEELBARROW



LIKE many Rotary clubs across Great Britain & Ireland, Crewe Rotary has stepped up to the plate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Their Operation Wheelbarrow has proved to be a huge community success helping the isolated and vulnerable in the Cheshire town.

"I felt strongly that Crewe Rotary needed to do a project that would help relieve this situation for those facing such hardship," explained Club President, Jane Whetnall.

"Our club knew that the local food bank, St Paul's Pantry, was providing food parcels for those in need, but what was the best course of action that we could take to support the food bank with this undertaking?

"That is when I came up with the idea for Operation Wheelbarrow."

Rotarians go from door-to-door with wheelbarrows collecting donations of food,

which they then take to the local food bank.

The response has been immense. Since last summer, they have collected more than 3,000 bags of donated food items, weighing 1.1 tonnes. This has allowed the St Paul's Pantry to help more families in need.

Jane Whetnall said she was moved by the responses they received from the project. "We found out that neighbours were working together to gather food for our collection by messaging one another over Facebook and WhatsApp.

"We realised that not only are we able to support St Paul's Pantry through this project, but we have empowered people in the local community by giving them the opportunity to donate to this cause.

"Even though many people have been stuck isolating in their homes they know that their contribution will be able to make a difference, which has galvanised the spirit of the community." ●

£36,000 AND COUNTING!

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Rotarian Mike Storr has hit the £36,000 mark in his fund-raising for Asthma UK.

Over the past six years, Mike has presented a series of whimsical talks called 'Masters of Mirth' to over 580 clubs including Probud, U3A, Women's Institutes and, of course, Rotary clubs.

Mike has been an active member of Carlton Rotary for 43 years, twice serving as president. Despite the lockdown, Mike has been using the wonders of Zoom and in the six months to May, he has visited 185 Rotary clubs across the UK. ●



i For more details visit:
mike@mikestorr.co.uk



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Creating a dementia-friendly society

CURRENTLY, around 850,000 people in the UK suffer with dementia, including one in every 14 people over the age of 65. There can be few who have not been touched in some way by dementia; as a sufferer, a carer or through a family member or friend.

In 2016, Cowbridge Rotary in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales, decided to do something about it. They began their project to create a dementia-friendly Cowbridge to provide support to those in town and local area who are living with dementia, and their carers.

The project was all about partnering with a number of different agencies and organisations to co-ordinate. And in late 2019, in line with criteria laid down by the Alzheimer's Society, Cowbridge was recognised as a dementia-friendly town.

Cowbridge Rotary has been essential providing leadership, support and funding as part of a small Dementia Friendly Cowbridge Steering Group

One successful initiative has been supplying Rotary dementia-friendly mats

to businesses and other organisations.

Staff attend 40-minute-long dementia awareness sessions and then put this into practice to ensure that their businesses and organisations apply dementia-friendly principles.

This includes ensuring that dementia sufferers visiting their business, school or church are treated in a friendly and understanding way.

As with other towns across the country, members of the local community run weekly 'Memory Jar Cafes' or 'Golden Oldies Cinemas'.

Cowbridge Rotary supports events by arranging transport for those attending as well as setting up and clearing up at each session.

For some Rotarians, however, the most rewarding aspect is taking part by playing games, or simply sitting down to patiently talking with those who attend. Interact members from Cowbridge Comprehensive School also help.

One Rotarian, David Parsons, has even composed a song 'Remember to Remember'. Performed by the local 'Music

in Mind' group and pupils from Cowbridge Comprehensive School, this has been professionally recorded and committed to YouTube.

This was some achievement and the remarkable song can be heard at: The Official Launch of Remember to Remember — With Music In Mind.

Cowbridge Rotary has been at the heart of the dementia-friendly project, providing donations to support Alzheimer's Research, funding for laptops to support the work of 'Music in Mind' and also part-funding two computerised systems to project tabletop interactive images.

These systems have proved a great hit in local care homes and the twice-monthly 'Memory Jar Cafés'.

As with many other Rotary projects, the COVID 19 pandemic has inevitably curtailed much of the activity surrounding Dementia Friendly Cowbridge.

Nonetheless, Cowbridge Rotary is ready to take forward their support for local dementia projects once the situation allows. ●



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and finally...

From Managing Editor Dave King
editor@rotarygbi.org

Don't mention the F-word

WOW! I am still on such a high after the success of Volunteer Expo. As a digital event, showcasing the impact of volunteering, and how the third sector has been the thread binding the fabric of society during this horrendous pandemic, the two-day event surpassed expectations.

What Volunteer Expo underpinned was the value of charities and organisations, such as Rotary, during the post-Covid recovery. It showed how the nature and shape of volunteering is rapidly changing.

The online spectacle was inspiring, challenging and informative.

Chapeau to the Rotary Great Britain & Ireland team at Alcester who pulled this off, along with our supportive partners.

It was two years ago in Torquay when it was announced that a century of traditional Rotary conferences were being scrapped in favour of Rotary GB&I partnering with third sector groups to host Volunteer Expo at Birmingham's NEC in 2020.

I was very circumspect. I enjoy meeting Rotary friends at national conferences, sharing ideas and learning from others.

I hesitate to use the word 'fellowship' because, as I was reminded by a Rotary club in Ireland recently, that word has old-fashioned, even religious connotations – and we need to find a better word.

But I enjoy that togetherness in a Rotary environment. This was a notion endorsed months later at the Rotary International Conference in Hamburg, Germany, which was like having a new turbo engine fitted to your Rotary mojo!

And I'm booked for Houston in 2022.

As someone currently organising the Rotary in the Thames Valley District

Conference in Oxford next March, I firmly believe that Rotary still needs these regular gatherings of the clans. They provide a fresh focus for Rotarians and re-enforce our values and ideals, even though declining numbers and fiscal reality in recent years would suggest the contrary.

So maybe we have to think differently.

For Oxford 2022, we have bolted on a technology tournament as part of the three-day conference, which features a host of top speakers. Rotaractors are organising an environmental challenge, and possibly a small scale District Rotaract conference on the opening morning.

Even the Rotary Village – aka The House of Friendship – has been given a shake-up with Rotary Pledges. Here, each of Thames Valley's 57 Rotary clubs are being invited to sprinkle individual pledges of up to £500 in total to charities and club projects participating in the Rotary Village.

By the way, if your cause would like to be part of Oxford 2022, please get in touch!

Now if every club stumped up £500,

Rotary in the Thames Valley would be giving away £28,500. Realistically, that's not going to happen. But my target is to donate between £5,000 to £10,000 to hard-pressed causes during conference weekend, helping organisations who really need our support right now.

The theme of the conference – Rotary Doing Good In The World – also builds on the notion of Rotarians meeting friends and networking again after so long.

That's right, good, old-fashioned F!

Hopefully, next year's Volunteer Expo will be face-to-face at the Birmingham NEC, building on the phenomenal success of May's stunning digital showcase.

Rotary can be proud of hosting the UK volunteering show and being at the forefront of the conversation.

At a time when Rotary clubs are thinking about life after Covid, many of us suffering from Zoomsomnia after months of staring in front of a screen, it will be great to meet in person once again – but please, don't mention the F-word! ●



Dave King interviewing Kids Against Plastic Co-Founder, Amy Meek, at Volunteer Expo

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