Rotary MARCH 2022

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Welcome

QUALITY is a fundamental human right necessary for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Despite huge strides made over the past 50 years, females still face inequities in health and education, while experiencing violence

This was a point recognised by Rotary International President, Shekhar Mehta, who has prioritised projects which focus on improving the health, education, well-being, and economic security of women - particularly girls across the globe.

and poverty at higher rates than men.

Shekhar wants to inspire clubs and districts to carry out service projects which empower girls and which fits within Rotary's seven Areas of Focus.

The goal is to raise awareness of the need to empower girls through direct action, working to close the youth gender gap across Rotary activities.

And that is a central theme of this month's Rotary magazine.

I hope you will feel inspired by some of the stories told including the Yorkits project run by Issy Sanderson at York Ainsty Rotary, and the amazing tale of Nahla Summers with her acts of kindness, built after the most tragic of circumstances.

The cover story of Father Peter Walters' stoic work in the drugs-riddled Colombian city of Medellin is focused on the street children, many of whom are young girls rescued from the drugs gangs.

Thanks to the Catholic priest and his charity 'Let The Children Live' some go on to have careers in nursing and teaching. Many become loving and responsible parents.

Separately, in June's issue of Rotary magazine, we will be paying tribute to Her Majesty the Queen in her 70th year as sovereign. I would love to hear from Rotarians whose lives have been directly touched by the Queen, through meetings and visits, and direct support of your club activities.

What are your personal Rotary memories of Her Majesty the Queen in this Platinum Jubilee? Please share your stories and images. You can get in touch at: editor@rotarygbi.org

Dave King Editor, Rotary Magazine







This magazine is available as an audio experience for visually impaired readers and is accessible for all our members. Please visit: rotarygbi.org/listen







Volunteer Expo Live is all about connecting communities, and bringing together a cross section of society all under one roof. Find volunteering opportunities to suit you, celebrate what unites us and help us rebuild together.



We are excited to announce that Hannah Ingram-Moore and Ben Cohen will be speaking at Volunteer Expo Live!



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© Downing Street Photography - Prime Minister Boris Johnson

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A future for the forgotten

Since 1994, Father Peter Walters, a Rotarian from Stratford-upon-Avon, has been working in the notorious Colombian city of Medellín, trying to keep marginalised children from the clutches of drugs gangs.

STORY BY GEORGE BICKNELL AND ALEKSANDRA TROJAK





the side of the mountains, and it is there that the divide between the rich and the poor is most evident.

Some 400 armed gangs operate in the city. Many children are forced to work in the heat and fumes of the Medellín streets – putting them directly at risk to the threat of drugs, crime, and prostitution.

In the middle of all chaos is Casa Walsingham, a house that has become a place of hope for such marginalised children; and where you will find Father Peter.

Although Father Peter is not at all the sort of person you would expect to be working in the streets of Medellín, over the last 28 years he has helped thousands of street-children and other marginalised youngsters with his charity Let The Children Live!

He has no plans to leave any time soon, but explained: "I love living in Colombia. I love the people, and I love working with the children.

"Nowadays, other members of my team do most of the work in the street. I am mostly involved in the fund-raising and the planning of new programmes.

"As long as God gives me the energy, I will carry on."

And to think, this remarkable journey all started with a holiday.

In 1982, Peter Walters was a 27-year-



old theology student who saw an advert for a flight to Colombia at a particularly good price.

He reflected: "For a long time I had been intrigued by South America and hoped one day I'd be able to go over there, but this was for a holiday and not to end up living there!"

Father Peter flew to Cartagena on Colombia's Caribbean coast for a holiday when he had a problem with his ticket. "This meant that I was going to be stuck in Colombia for longer than my money could last, and I was reduced to eating once every other day."

It was on one of his non-eating days when Father Peter had a fateful encounter with a group of street children who at first saw Peter as a typical foreign tourist able to give them some food or money.

"When they found I did not have any money to give them, they were very amused because they'd never met a poor foreigner before.

"As I got to know them, I became increasingly concerned about the way they were having to live and how they were treated."

Such was the nature of their lives, that these children were tagged 'The Disposable Ones'.

"We have disposable nappies, disposable cups and plates – things we use and chuck away. We don't think of people being disposable, let alone children being disposable: yet, in those days, some people considered the street-children to be hardly human.

"In the streets, these children often got caught up in drugs, crime and prostitution, so they were often seen as a menace to society. In those days there were sometimes lethal outbreaks of what was called 'social cleansing'. People who were considered undesirable – prostitutes, drug addicts, street kids – were 'cleansed' from the streets."

Appalled by what he had seen and heard, Father Peter set out to find the Archbishop of the city where he was staying, to see if he could help his new friends.

Archbishop Rubén Isaza shared Peter's concerns about the street-children and, after several meetings, gave the young Briton a piece of advice that would change his life for ever.

"In the end, he said 'the Church is very committed to helping children like the ones you've got to know, but maybe God is calling you to do something to help them.' So then I was hooked."

Father Peter returned to Colombia every year to spend his holidays working for the street-children as a volunteer with the Salesian priests at Ciudad Don Bosco in Medellín. He made Medellín his base because this was where the violence was worst, and the need greatest.

He said: "We would go out early in the morning looking for children, some as young as six, who'd been spending the night sleeping under bridges or on the pavements.

"We brought them something to eat and drink, and invited them to a centre where they could spend the day. Those who accepted that invitation often ended up leaving the street and going into residential care."

In 1988, Peter was ordained as an Anglican priest, and founded the charity Let The Children Live! whilst working at the Anglican Shrine in Walsingham, Norfolk.

But, as the violence in Colombia grew worse, he found it harder to leave the street-children, so in 1994 went out to live in Medellín, adopted the Catholic faith, and was ordained as a Catholic priest the following year.

He then started a Colombian charity to run projects and with funds raised in Great Britain and Ireland, he has been able to open two sanctuaries for the children Casa Walsingham and Casa Bannatyne.

Casa Walsingham is a day-centre for street-children and other marginalised youngsters, such those with special educational needs, along with under-age mothers and their babies. A variety of **•**



groups and programmes operate there.

The children can have a healthy meal, and are supported by teachers and psychologists. They also have a chance to play games and enjoy being children once again.

Casa Bannatyne is a residential home initially set up for children needing long-term care. However, rising costs eventually forced the charity to cease admitting new residents. When the youngsters who were living there had reached adulthood, the house became the base of Cor Videns, the charity's choir, which Father Peter started to give a voice to children who are so often ignored, and whose cries go unheard.

Over the years, some of the children helped by Let The Children Live! have gone on to obtain professional qualifications.

These include several nurses, an industrial engineer, an orchestral conductor, a psychologist and a doctor.

But as Father Peter says: "The ones I'm proudest of all are those who, despite having an exceedingly difficult childhood, have grown up to become loving and responsible parents.

"They are trying to give their children a better start than they had. If that happens, and we have broken the cycle of an abused or abandoned child becomes an abusive or abandoning adult, then we have achieved something worthwhile."

Father Peter considers his children to be the ultimate victims of the drugs trade. It is money spent on cocaine and heroin which keeps that trade going, fuelling corruption and violence which has afflicted Colombia for so long.

Although the murder-rate in Medellín has decreased significantly since the 1990s, the underlying problems of poverty, crime and family break-up that make children take to the streets remain unsolved.

"The authorities in Medellín claim that there is no longer a street-children problem in the city.

"But this is because the children who are found living in the street are often confined in a special rehabilitation unit at the city's mental hospital. Children who do not want to be caught keep out of sight, so their plight is less visible."

Lockdowns imposed in Colombia to control COVID-19 prevented children from going to school, and their parents from going to work. The situation was especially difficult for some 90,000 Venezuelan refugees who had fled to Medellín. "During the lockdowns, these families could not work, so they had no income. We ended up sustaining more than 1,200 people with food parcels for about eight months."

Without the help of Let The Children Live! the future of hundreds of marginalised children in Medellín would be very bleak. But, like all charities, Father Peter's organisation needs funds to keep doing its vital work.

He explained: "In these difficult times, the support of individual Rotary clubs for small but very efficient charities like Let The Children Live! can be a tremendous help.

"No-one is going to solve the problem of street-children on a worldwide basis any time soon, but supporting small charities like ours in different parts of the world can save and transform children's lives.

"That's what Rotary does so well. It encourages small initiatives that make a big difference to individual human lives." •

- Information

If you would like to know more visit: **letthechildrenlive.org**



















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LEAVE NO GIRL BEHIND

A Rotary task force and its ambassadors take aim at the gender gap



N his address to the Rotary International Convention in June 2021, Shekhar Mehta urged Rotary members to put improving girls' futures at the forefront of their work.

He said: "It is important that we empower girls as we all find that, more often than not, the girl is disadvantaged.

"We will serve all children, but our laser focus will be specially on the girl."

Shekhar made empowering girls one of his presidential initiatives, and his focus is particularly timely.

Women continue to face economic hurdles, declining levels of political participation, and challenges in the workplace, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic is among the factors which have extended the amount of time that experts estimate it will take to close the gender gap from an already daunting 99.5 years to 135.6 years.

"Especially for girls, creating opportunities that enhance their education, safety, health, and well-being has the power to transform their futures — and also to transform their families and communities," explained Elizabeth Usovicz, a member of the RI Board of Directors.

"Rotary members worldwide can make a difference in transforming communities by empowering girls."

Elizabeth is also the chair of the Empowering Girls Task Force, which was established as part of the Rotary President's initiative.

Within zones and regions, Rotary has designated Empowering Girls ambassadors who can provide resources for districts and clubs and suggest ways to incorporate support for girls into existing projects or make it the basis for new ones.

"The Empowering Girls initiative is a club and district-level service opportunity," she noted.

Annemarie Mostert is one such ambassador. A member of the E-Club of Southern Africa D9400, Annemarie is also a member of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers.

"Educated women are more likely

to have greater decision-making power within their households," Annemarie wrote for Rotary Africa-South last August.

"Let's encourage our girls to be smart, to study science and mathematics, to have a positive body image, to step into leadership positions.

"As people of action, we will be helping communities to break the cycle of poverty.

"By helping girls access quality education, we ensure economic independence, food security, resilience, environmental sustainability, and a better world for all.

"Our call to action is to leave no girl behind.

"Every Rotary and Rotaract club should implement at least one Empowering Girls activity this year.

"Set up a global grant by focusing on health, education, or economic independence. Partner with a Rotary Action Group, share best practices, collaborate with other clubs and civil society."



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The unspoken identity

Rotarian Elizabeth Amoaa, from Andover in Hampshire, was diagnosed with uterus didelphys in 2015 after years of pain, and without ever knowing what was wrong.

STORY BY **DAVE KING**

OR a lot of her adult life, Elizabeth Amoaa had endured lengthy spells in hospital with the most unbearable pain, without understanding why. But it was only six years ago, following the birth of her daughter that Elizabeth discovered why.

Elizabeth, who was born in Ghana, was diagnosed with a rare congenital abnormality of the womb called uterus didelphys. This when two smaller tubes in a female fetus fail to fuse into a single uterus. Instead, they grow into two separate structures.

She had previously been diagnosed with uterine fibroids and doctors told her she was infertile, so when she gave birth to Rashley in 2010, she knew Rashley was a miracle baby. Despite countless ultrasound treatments during pregnancy, nothing was spotted.

Born with two wombs, two cervixes and two vagina canals, 36-year-old Elizabeth has now come out publicly to share her plight, making headlines across the world with her new book 'The Unspoken Identity – the woman with two vaginas'.

"After a long health journey with multiple surgeries and complications, I want to encourage women to seek early diagnosis, treatment as well as raise awareness towards women's reproductive issues," explained Elizabeth, who is a member of the Rotary Global Hub.

"I also wanted to combat menstrual poverty - and this is what inspired me to set up Speciallady Awareness in 2017."

Elizabeth revealed that, although she was not diagnosed until later in adult life, she had exhibited symptoms from the age of six-years-old.

"I have had many hospitals admissions, recurrent infections, chronic pains, yet doctors failed to provide me with answers and early diagnosis.

"My periods were always very heavy. I used to complain a lot about abdomen pain, but when my mother took me to the hospital, doctors just kept giving me iron supplements and multi-vitamins, and said I was anaemic or had a yeast infection.

"I just believed that, and continued taking my supplements."

In 2015, following private medical care from the British Forces Health Service based in Germany, she was finally able to get the answers she had sought for so long.

Doctors discovered two wombs in 2015 and then, a year later, after keyhole surgery, two cervixes and vaginas were found. Elizabeth was later diagnosed with stage 4 endometriosis and secondary infertility.

She added: "I was really overwhelmed because I finally got the answer to all my doubts about my health after all these years. It was really hard for me to take in,

and I was very upset.

"I always knew something was wrong, so to actually be diagnosed with something was a bit of a relief.

"This whole time I thought I was going mad. People would always ask 'why are you always sick?' I knew they were thinking I was just making it up and that it was all in my head."

What followed were six surgical procedures and a silent miscarriage, as well as other health complications. Now Elizabeth is able to reflect on the journey she has endured.

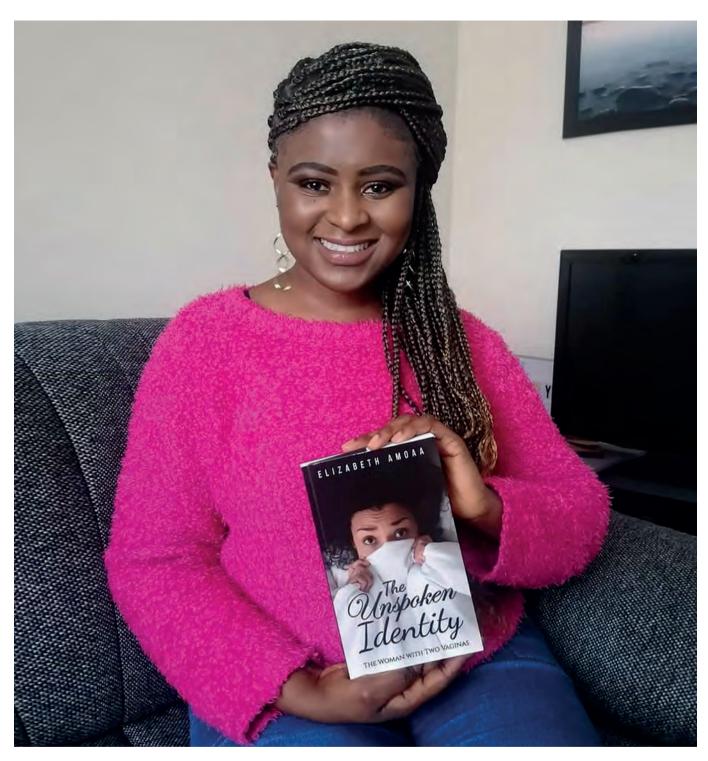
"This whole experience has been an emotional rollercoaster. One second I was being told I wouldn't be able to conceive. The next, I'm giving birth to my daughter.

"Though I am blessed to have my daughter, I feel very upset and annoyed as they should have done a proper investigation. If there was an early intervention, I wouldn't have gone through what I have today.

"That's why I have decided to share my story to encourage other women and young girls seek early diagnosis to prevent further medical complications and unnecessary surgeries.

"The book talks about my journey into the discovery of my rare congenital abnormality and other reproductive health disorders and my quest to share my findings with the rest of the world.

"I decided to write this book because many women and young girls are suffering in silence with gynaecological



conditions. Moreover, these topics are still seen as taboos in some communities."

Since Speciallady Awareness was established in 2017, the charity has conducted outreach projects in Ghana. It has also donated sanitary products, educational materials and medical items worth thousands of pounds to hospitals, schools and communities.

Elizabeth said that becoming a Rotarian has helped her to network with people who are passionate about changing lives like herself. She urged fellow Rotarians to take action to help encourage women and young girls to seek early diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

"These disorders can have effects on the woman's, or young girl's, mental health, lifestyle, career and relationships," she added.

"Also, I plead with Rotary International to assist in combatting menstrual poverty in rural areas in Ghana and other parts of the world where teenagers or young girls cannot attend school due to lack of accessibility of sanitary towels."

Elizabeth is taking part in a virtual event powered by the Rotary Global Hub on March 8th where influential women can share their journey and describe how they have impacted their communities.

Information | -

If you would like to know more please visit: **specialladyawareness.com**



EMPOWERING GIRLS TAKING ACTION

Guernsey Rotarian, Jannine Birtwistle, describes her role heading up Rotary's Empowering Girls initiative, as an ambassador for Great Britain & Ireland.

QUALITY is a fundamental human right that is critical for a more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Today, girls and women face inequities in areas including health and education, and experience significant violence and disproportionate poverty.

Rotarians can help enhance their safety, health, education and well-being.

Rotary International President, Shekhar Mehta, has asked all Rotary clubs to get involved.

This could be highlighting what is already being done, adapting existing service projects and identifying new ones which, in some way, address the inequities that girls face on a daily basis.

Wherever we live, whatever the socio-economic landscape is, whatever local and national governments and other organisations are already doing and whatever Rotary clubs are already involved in, including a focus on the empowerment of girls will have a short, medium and long-term positive impact.

That positive impact is not just for the girls, their families and their communities now and in the future but also globally. So let's take action together.

In this edition you will read just a few examples of what clubs in Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland are already doing to create positive change in the lives of girls both internationally and in their local communities.

A few possible first steps:

- Realise that this is something that we can each take responsibility for whatever our gender, age, or passion.
- Look at what your Rotary, Rotaract, Interact or RotaKids club is already doing with an empowering girls lens.
- Listen to young people.
- Reach out to your community using your existing networks and establish new connections to identify the real needs locally, what is working, where are there gaps and where could there be improvements.
- Collaborate with other groups in the family of Rotary and your community to share understanding, expertise, resources, and ideas to better meet those needs.
- Be the catalyst and conduit for working together.
- Reach out to me for more information and support, and to share your success stories.

So, whether you are involved in:

- Setting up an after-school mentoring and tutoring programme for girls;
- Providing menstrual hygiene education to boys and girls in the community;
- Advocating for mental health services specific to young girls and teens, such as those that focus on preventing suicide

- and dealing with substance abuse and addiction;
- Improving access to education for girls so they can make informed choices later about issues that can have an environmental impact, from family planning to sanitation to food security;
- Promoting projects that develop a girl's confidence to use her voice and to assume leadership positions or to create more role models and mentors for girls;
- Advocating for programmes aimed at improving the safety of girls in their home, their school, and their community;
- Facilitating projects that provide skills and experience to girls so they can improve their future access to jobs;
- Putting a focus locally on stories from your area about how COVID-19 has affected women and girls; you are helping to empower girls and build a better future.

As Rotarians, these are steps we can all take in our communities to create brighter futures. •

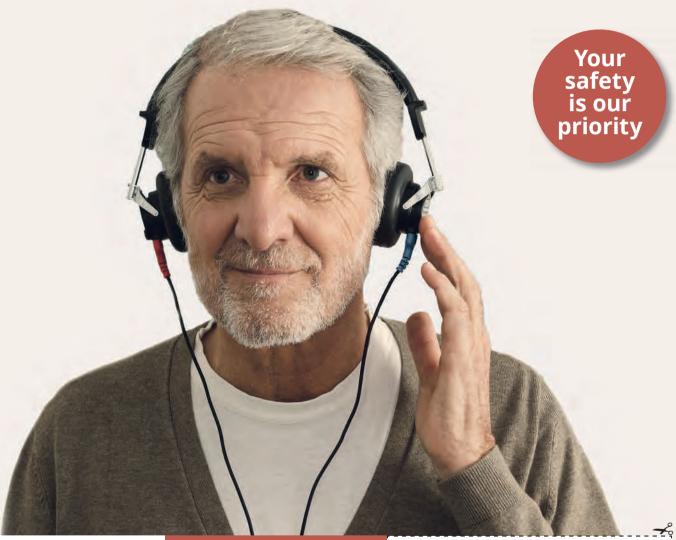
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EVERYONE DESERVES DIGNITY

STORY BY **RICHARD BENSON**

N mid-August last year, Afghan families who had fled Kabul following the western troops withdrawal began to arrive in Manchester.

These were the first of the Afghans to arrive in the UK and, in many cases, they were afraid, confused and carrying only the clothes they stood up in.

Accommodation had been arranged in local hotels, but they needed basic essentials like toiletries, nappies and baby food, blankets and phone chargers. Obtaining and supplying things like this on a large scale isn't easy – but the Border Force officers knew who to ask.

Care4Calais volunteers in Manchester received the call at noon.

By mid-afternoon they had hired a van and got hold of what was needed; by 4.30pm they were at the airport with a delivery that included 1,000 blankets, children's colouring books, prayer mats, and women's headscarves.

Subsequent days saw deliveries of sanitary towels, nappies, baby milk, shoes and clothes.

"That's the Care4Calais can-do attitude," says Beth, one of the volunteers who helped. "I've volunteered with lots of charity organisations, but the great thing about Care4Calais is their ability to break down barriers and do what's needed."

That unique attitude has been the hallmark of Care4Calais since its founder, Clare Moseley, created the organisation to help refugees in northern France in 2015.

Operating all year, it supplies essential aid and support to refugees across the UK, and in France and Belgium.

The charity provides warm clothing, bedding, food and medical assistance to people in desperate need.

It also provides social support and interaction, including language lessons and sports and music workshops.

Care4Calais is mainly a volunteer charity. "We're ordinary people helping other ordinary people who happen to be refugees" says Clare "We're people just like you who believe that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity.

"We're on the ground with refugees every day, and above all we're respectful of their common humanity and responsive to their needs."

Its volunteers come from all backgrounds and age groups - you

might find, say, former refugees working alongside retired bank managers or mechanics - but they share, "the urge to take action and get something done," as Clare says.

They do a huge variety of tasks, from sorting clothes donations in warehouses to distributing those donations to refugees in the UK and Europe and helping people in the UK negotiate the asylum system.

They also offer social support to people who may be traumatised, confused and lonely. Family fun days, guided walks, sport, and meals eaten together are as important as anything else, and many genuine, long-lasting friendships develop between volunteers and refugees.

"They are like angels to us," says Sani, a woman from Iran who fled to the UK when she was threatened for converting to Christianity. "Without them, I knew no one here. When you're alone, knowing someone cares means so much to you." •

— Information –

If you can help **Care4Calais** in any capacity, email: **annie@care4calais.org** and put **'Rotary'** in the subject line.

You can help to change a life

Refugees have seen family members be killed, have suffered horrific injuries and have survived inhuman torture. They have lost everything they hold dear and are turning to us for help.

Care4Calais volunteers are there with food, clean clothes and everyday essentials. We help them use legal, health and education services. And, just as important, we offer friendship and personal support in groups across the UK.

Volunteering with Care4Calais can change a refugee's life and help them build a new future. People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities volunteer for us, and find the experience incredibly rewarding and life-changing.

Can you help?

If you can help in any way please email clare@care4calais.org





www.care4calais.org



Protecting young women

Period poverty is a global issue affecting those who don't have access to safe, hygienic menstrual products – and its impact on the wider community is huge.

STORY BY **ALEKSANDRA TROJAK**

OR hundreds of thousands of young women around the world, period poverty is a fact of life. It's about having limited or even a lack of access to sanitary products. And the consequences in terms of education and general

are huge. Issy Sanderson, from York Ainsty Rotary and a Rotary 'Champions of Change' winner, has been at the forefront of an initiative called Yorkits. In many developing countries, due to poverty, many girls have no feminine hygiene provision and can't go to school during menstruation, therefore they are missing out on large parts of their education.

inequality with day-to-day living

Since 2013, Yorkits has been helping these girls by providing them with access to uninterrupted schooling.

She explained: "When girls are menstruating, they are unable to go to school. Not only does this impact their education, but also puts them as risk of abuse.

"The girls are at home by themselves, rather than in a safe school environment."

unable to afford sanitary products, with one in seven borrowing sanitary wear from family and friends. Many, as young as 10-years-old having barely reached puberty, are forced to improvise.

Issy added: "I have witnessed girls and women trying to cope in the poorest of conditions.

"Some of the women and girls use feathers, others sleep on piles of dirt due to lack of access to any type of sanitary products.

"In Nepal, when women are menstruating, they are not allowed to stay in the comforts of their home.

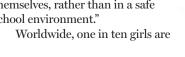
"They have to stay somewhere else, often in barns and shacks which sometimes are so small that they cannot stand up or be comfortable.

"The women are not allowed to touch food or anything others may touch, meaning they rely on others to bring them food to eat."

> It is against that background that the Yorkits project is based. Yorkits is a Rotary-run community 'hands-on' project which involves a range of volunteers coming together to make washable, easy-to-use, feminine hygiene kits for girls in developing countries - and it goes from strength to strength.

The kits are of a low-cost design, packed into colourful and bright drawstring bags. A single kit can last a girl on average three years.

The kits contain panties, a washcloth, a bag for soiled items



and a zip lock polythene bag to wash items in areas of little water access. These are eco-friendly, cleverly designed kits.

Issy explained that the Yorkits project is designed to elevate sustainability and self-care for women who would otherwise be deprived of it.

She said "Yorkits focuses on creating sustainable female hygiene products as well as offering workshops on how individuals can make their own, making them self-sustainable and self-sufficient.

"The kits provide women with dignity and a chance to take control of their own health."

Every year, a special annual Yorkits workshop takes place at York Minster. Before the pandemic, the workshop attracted more than 200 volunteers creating kits. The next one is due to take place on Thursday, March 10th.

York Ainsty Rotary also leads its monthly Saturday workshops at the Methodist Church Hall in Copmanthorpe, four miles south-west of York, where club members work on the kits.

The programme is funded through donated materials and financial donations. The kits are taken overseas by volunteers and distributed to projects abroad which are led by Rotary, churches and other voluntary organisations.

In some areas, York Ainsty Rotary has seed-funded schools and women's self-help community groups to make their own kits out of local materials. This is greatly encouraging the development of self-sustainability.

The York Ainsty Rotarian explained the Yorkits project is having an impact. It helps empower the girls and women to take charge of their own menstrual health situations.

"This has also had an unexpected positive result of reducing the incidence of sexual abuse and childhood pregnancies," she added.

Over the past six years, York Ainsty Rotary has sent the kits to 13 African countries – Kenya, Uganda, Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, Eswatini, and The Gambia.

Kits have also been sent to India, Nepal, Myanmar and Pakistan. Recently, kits were distributed in Kolkata, India, to schools, as well as to a night-watch ambulance project. Issy said "Since being set up, over 2,000 kits have been distributed to women in need, helping hundreds of girls learn to make their own encouraging self-care.

"We have also sent kits to refugee camps in Europe. Some of my workshop team actually take the kits out to the projects themselves and work as volunteers in schools, orphanages, community initiatives and slums.

"The Yorkits kits give the girls, as well as their mothers and other women in their communities, dignity and the chance to take control of their own situations."

Information | -

If you would like to know more please visit: **yorkits.org.uk**

"IN MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,
DUE TO POVERTY, MANY GIRLS HAVE NO
FEMININE HYGIENE PROVISION AND CAN'T
GO TO SCHOOL DURING MENSTRUATION,
THEREFORE THEY ARE MISSING OUT ON
LARGE PARTS OF THEIR EDUCATION.





Freedom from Fistula

Fistula is a childbirth injury which has massive implications, both physical and social, to those affected. Freedom From Fistula is making in-roads in Africa, supported by Rotary.



abandoned, ostracised and suffering... in silence.

These are just a few words and phrases used by an estimated one million women and

RIGHTENED,

used by an estimated one million women and girls across Africa to describe their life, or existence, living with an obstetric fistula.

This is a childbirth injury caused by prolonged obstructed labour and lack of access to maternity care.

Tragically, the baby usually dies and the mother is left incontinent, often shunned by both her family and community, while being condemned to a life of shame, isolation and despair. The injury can also be caused by violent rape.

After seeing the scale of the problem through her involvement with Mercy Ships, Dame Ann Gloag, a former nurse and co-founder of the international transport company Stagecoach, set up Freedom From Fistula in 2008 to help women and girls suffering from obstetric fistula.

Currently, the charity operates fistula, maternal and child health projects in Sierra Leone, Malawi and Madagascar.

Freedom From Fistula runs the only dedicated fistula care centres in these countries, recognised as centres of excellence by the respective Ministries of Health.

The women the charity treats range in age from young girls - the youngest patient was a five-year-old rape victim - through to women in their 70s and 80s, many of whom have suffered from fistula for years.

The charity provides free surgeries to as many women and girls as possible – restoring dignity and transforming lives.

However, Freedom from Fistula wants to reduce the occurrence of obstetric fistula by offering free and accessible maternal care.

It also wants to provide free fistula surgeries, family planning advice for men and women, education and vocational skills for fistula patients, and free outpatient clinics for children who are up to 15-years-old.

The charity also provides training for healthcare professionals to strengthen

capacity in the healthcare systems.

Since 2008, Freedom From Fistula has performed more than 8,500 fistula surgeries, delivered more than 20,000 babies, provided care to more than 160,000 women and children and trained more than 600 nurses midwives and doctors.

For many years, Rotary clubs in Scotland and across the world working in partnership with Freedom From Fistula, have offered invaluable support.

In particular, Rotary secured two Global Grants to fund the training of 60 nurse midwife technicians in Malawi and buy Landcruisers, kitted out as ambulances, which provide a lifeline for the Freedom From Fistula team to access patients in rural areas.

Rotarians are once again working in partnership with the charity to secure another Global Grant to improve fistula, maternal and child healthcare in Sierra Leone, with District 1020 (south of Scotland) once again taking the lead.

This project fits well with Rotary's maternal and child health care area of focus. The generosity shown by Rotarians fund-raising through the pandemic meant that £221,672 was raised to support their work.

Freedom From Fistula's biggest project is the Aberdeen Women's Centre (AWC) in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

AWC is a hospital providing free maternal, fistula and child healthcare, as well as family planning and re-integration programmes. It is a self-contained facility, where more than 90% of staff are Sierra Leone nationals.

This Global Grant will support the delivery of free fistula, maternal and child healthcare services at AWC where more than 23,000 women and children are helped every year.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Freedom From Fistula managed to keep operating its maternity unit and children's outpatient clinic. Fistula services were suspended early in the pandemic, but started again in late 2020.

- Information -

If you would like to know more visit: **freedomfromfistula.org.uk**

Case Study

lizabeth, from Malawi, married at 22 and suffered with fistula for seven years. During her second pregnancy, Elizabeth faced challenges when she went into labour. The doctors operated and were able to save her baby, but unfortunately her uterus was badly damaged and had to be removed.

In 2014 Elizabeth's husband moved to South Africa leaving her to care for two children.

Though her husband was still supporting her, she felt alone.

In 2017 the district hospital referred her to our Fistula Care Centre where she was operated on and cured.

During her stay, Elizabeth was very active. She spent time interacting with other patients and sharing experiences.

She enjoyed attending patient activities such as arts and craft classes and cooking classes.

She has since used these skills to make crafts which she sells in her village and also to make nutritious meals for her children.

Elizabeth is happy to be able to attend church and interact with members of her community. These things might seem small to others, but they are significant to Elizabeth.

In 2017 Elizabeth received a solar charging station that she uses to charge phones. Since receiving this she has made 30, 000 Malawian Kwacha (£27)

In 2019 Elizabeth was selected to be one of the former patients to be making reusable sanitary pads in her home district. She received a manual sewing machine and some start up materials.

So far Elizabeth has made 250, 000 Malawian Kwacha (£250) from making pads and clothes.

Elizabeth partnered with her brother, a tailor. They have opened a shop at the local market. Elizabeth is happy she is now able to put her children in school.

Elizabeth started talking at community gatherings and sharing her experience as a fistula patient and encouraging others to receive treatment at the centre.

WORKOUT FROM HOME

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Breaking the silence

Menstruation is a normal and healthy part of life for most women, however stigma, taboos and myths can prevent adolescent girls from developing health habits. A Rotary Action Group is tackling the issue.

STORY BY **DAVE KING**



Sharmila Nagarajan

T the height of the Covid pandemic, London Rotarian, Sharmila Nagarajan, decided to beat the boredom by reaching out to other female Rotarians and set up a casual

WhatsApp group.
That was in April 2020, barely one

month into lockdown into the UK.

Within a matter of months, this informal digital discussion forum became a fully-fledged Rotary International Women's group featuring more than 250 members from 21 countries.

Sharmila, a member of Tower Hamlets Rotary, was initially joined by Vidhya Srini (Chennai Temple City Rotary) and Denise Klischan (Ibiza Rotary)

"We all came together via WhatsApp, with the aim of connecting female Rotarians from all over the world to raise a common, women-oriented project," explained Sharmila. And that common project was menstrual health.

"Menstrual health is not just a women's issue. In fact, 2.3 billion people across the world live without basic sanitation services, while according to UNICEF, only 27% of people in developing countries have adequate handwashing facilities at home.

"As a result, 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 or the 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."

These were some of the underlying factors behind the establishment of a Rotary Action Group focussed on menstrual health and hygiene.

And so, in March 2021 and with the approval of the Rotary International Board, the Rotary Action Group Menstrual Health & Hygiene (RAGMHH) was formed.

Menstrual hygiene management is a globally-recognised public health challenge.

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

These include menstrual-related shame and taboo in some countries, or period poverty which is a reality in the developed countries. There is also the allimportant universal issue of soil pollution, due to the menstrual product waste.

These are all themes which chime with Rotary's areas of focus including literacy, maternal & child health, peace, preventive health care, economic development, and the environment.



RAGMHH is open to Rotarians across the world to spread awareness about 'period poverty'.

Rotarian B Dakshayani is the group's director of fund-raising and a talented artist. In November last year, some of her paintings went on display at an exhibition in Kingston, Surrey, to raise funds for RAGMHH.

A member of the Rotary Club of Meenambakkam in Chennai, India, she donated one of her paintings to the Rotary Passport Club in District 1130 (Rotary in London), which will be auctioned by President Sujay Paul.

Daksha has been a Rotarian for 21 years and a beneficiary of Rotary's Youth Exchange Programme 30 years ago.

She explained: "In countries like the UK, US, and Europe, people are surprised to learn there are women in several countries who cannot afford sanitary napkins.

"As a result, in some villages in India,

women are forced into isolation on the outskirts during their menstrual cycle.

"Our RAG is keen to give ease and comfort to all women across the world.

"We want to educate them about menstrual hygiene and availability of various options such as cloth pads and menstrual cups.

"We are working on extending these conversations with men as well so that better understanding may lead to healthier relationships.

"We need funds to help adolescent girls and young women with menstrual health and hygiene resources."

The group's tagline is: *Break the silence - Speak up*.

To achieve menstrual equity that means resolving a number of key issues such as access to sanitary products, proper toilets, hand washing facilities and sanitation. Hygiene education, and waste management is also key.

RAGMHH has been conducting

train the trainer sessions and awareness programmes for its members. Menstrual products have also been distributed to needy areas, with Asia and the African region being key focus areas.

Workshops have taken place to educate girls and women on cloth pads and menstrual cups.

"It shouldn't be forgotten that young boys can benefit from menstrual hygiene education too," added Sharmila.

"Educating girls and boys on menstruation at an early age at home and school promotes healthy habits and breaks stigmas around the natural process.

"We are asking people to think global and act local." ●

- Information

If you would like to know more please visit: ragmhh.org

GIVING WORKING WOMEN A HELPING HAND

Brian Jonson from Marlow Rotary reflects on an empowering women project which is making a difference in Liberia, West Africa.

T's 3.45am on a Monday morning in a tiny village in Liberia. The daily morning routine has started again for Musu, who runs a small bakery business from her house; never a day off and very little time for herself.

Before business hours, she'll have to walk outside in the dark to fetch a bucket of water, light a fire on a small, single-pot charcoal stove and boil water for the morning wash for herself, her two kids and her husband.

After washing, it is time for breakfast – this is where the struggle starts each day. There's no electricity in her home, breakfast is leftover rice and greens from the day before – warmed on the same little charcoal-fueled stove.

Musu would love to enroll both her children in school as the opening of the school year approaches but, despite baking daily, money is tight and education has to be paid for. Musu questions whether she will have the long-term funds required to keep the children in education.

Where can she turn? Musu has been dreaming and praying about growing her business and saving a little to cover her expenses from month to month – so that even in the lean times, she can give her family the money and stability they deserve

Musu never finished high school. She reads and writes at 6th grade level – much better than many of the women in her neighbourhood, who buy her baking each morning for their kids on the walk to school.

Musu started her business nearly two

years ago and having a basic trade, enables her the chance to earn an income while staying close to home.

The only classes Musu has heard of teach women baking, sewing and soap making, but she is unaware of business coaching which could help her needs and give her business long-term stability.

Her husband works as a day labourer, so his income is irregular. The little profits she makes on good days from sales of cornbread and doughnuts helps keep food on the family's table, but insecurity and uncertainty are a constant worry.

Musu is one of many women trying desperately to support her family, but the pressures of day-to-day living, or survival, are incredibly hard.

In the West we take running water and electricity for granted, but not for Musu. This is Africa, and the poor infrastructure is not limited to the slums.

In the centre of Monrovia there is no piped water, it has to be brought in by tanker or distributed in plastic bags, which the women carry home on their heads.

Electricity, when available, is unreliable with a reliance on back-up local generators. Roads are poor and new ones built with overseas aid are deteriorating rapidly.

It is against this background that the Rotary Club of Monrovia operate, working with Non-Governmental Organisations, hospitals and the government.

They play a very active role in supporting the local community as they have done for many years.

Currently the club is operating six



Rotary Global Grants, including the first deployment of Mercy Ships' 'Global Mercy' in 2022.

During the Ebola pandemic, they worked hands-on with the Liberian Government to build a medical oxygen plant and, with the aid of a Global Grant, equip the plant, as well as fund the training of 40 nurses and technicians.

Their 'Empowering Women in West Africa' project went live in October last year. It recognises the issues of the women trying to survive and build their businesses in the slums of Monrovia.

Educare, a highly competent and

"THE DAILY MORNING ROUTINE HAS STARTED AGAIN FOR MUSU, WHO RUNS A SMALL BAKERY BUSINESS FROM HER HOUSE; NEVER A DAY OFF AND VERY LITTLE TIME FOR HERSELF."



well-respected women-based not-forprofit organisation, is managing the project.

Monrovia Rotary has shared a longterm partnership with Marlow Rotary in Buckinghamshire, a link which first started during the 2014 Ebola pandemic.

For the empowering women project, they have organised the funding of a Global Grant in partnership with four Rotary clubs from France, Italy, Belgium and Germany.

Peace-building is a major focus of the programme. This will help women from the poor slum communities around Monrovia, who already run small enterprises, to expand their basic business and financial management skills.

To begin with, 200 women will take part in the programme. Initial business training will take place in the communities, with Rotarians working alongside Educare.

This will avoid the women having the unnecessary travel expense of attending a formal learning centre.

Women will be able to compete for small equipment grants to help their new businesses. The courses will be tailored to their individual needs. If we can improve their skills and financial stability this will improve living standards and give long-term stability to themselves and their families.

The project is for a 10-month period, and can hopefully be replicated by Rotarians elsewhere around the world. •

- | Information | -

If you would like to know more please email Brian Jonson: jonson@sky.com



DOING IT FOR CHRISTINE

Phil Godfrey from Solihull Rotary has raised more than £273,000 for a charity to support a condition which killed his wife. Here, he writes about a cause which is close to his heart.

ADLY, the reasons for miscarriages are many.
Antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) is an autoimmune condition which affects the blood and causes it to clot too quickly. It is the most significant treatable cause of recurrent miscarriage, and women with APS are five times more likely to have a stillbirth.

My wife Christine (pictured) suffered from APS for some 40 years, but was not diagnosed until 2005, by which time she had become totally paralysed and confined to a wheelchair, needing 24 hour care.

One of the implications of APS is infertility, and as such we never had children. Sadly, she died from the condition in 2015. All this due to thickening and clotting of the blood.

Since then, I have been touring the British Isles, giving talks to Rotary, Inner Wheel and other groups to raise awareness of APS which, hopefully, will help to change the miscarriage story in this country. So far, I have been made very welcome at 380 clubs, and raised £273,000.

In light of the publication of the Lancet series of papers on miscarriage, in April 2021, which describe the prevalence, impact and evidence for best practice in miscarriage care, an overhaul of miscarriage services in England is now urgently needed, so it is effective, fair and equitable to all.

Tommy's, the St Thomas' Hospital Baby Charity based in London, together with 22 other miscarriage-related charities, are now pressing the Health Secretary to include an overhaul of miscarriage services within the Women's Health Strategy, being formulated this year.

The short-term national economic costs of all causes of miscarriage, associated with immediate costs to hospital and community health and social

services, are estimated to be £471 million annually to the UK.

Taking a wider view of miscarriage would undoubtedly raise this figure, once GP-associated costs and the costs of caring for couples with psychological conditions caused by a miscarriage are included. Other factors to consider would be longer-term employment and occupational status, income, and receipt of social welfare benefits.

Women after one miscarriage are 1.2 times more likely to have a premature birth. After two miscarriages that figure is 1.4 times more likely and after three 1.8 times.

Miscarriage is associated with an increased risk of placental dysfunction disorders in later pregnancies.

A review found that after three miscarriages women are 1.7 times more likely to experience placental abruption in a later pregnancy, and 1.6 times more likely to have a stillbirth.

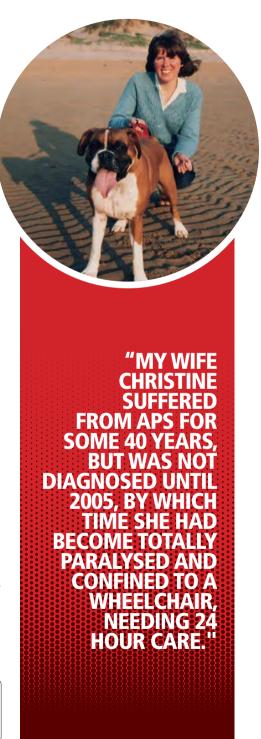
Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress and suicide are strongly associated with miscarriage. It is important to note that it is not only recurrent miscarriage that is associated with these psychological conditions, but also that one miscarriage can have a significant psychological impact.

APS Support UK, which I have been supporting, is one of the 22 charities involved. APS is associated with other complications such as infertility, pre—eclampsia, low weight babies and premature births.

I would be delighted to speak to other Rotary clubs and organisations about this cause, which is very close to my heart.

Information -

If you would like to know more please email: philogodfrey@btinternet.com or call: 07770 406870





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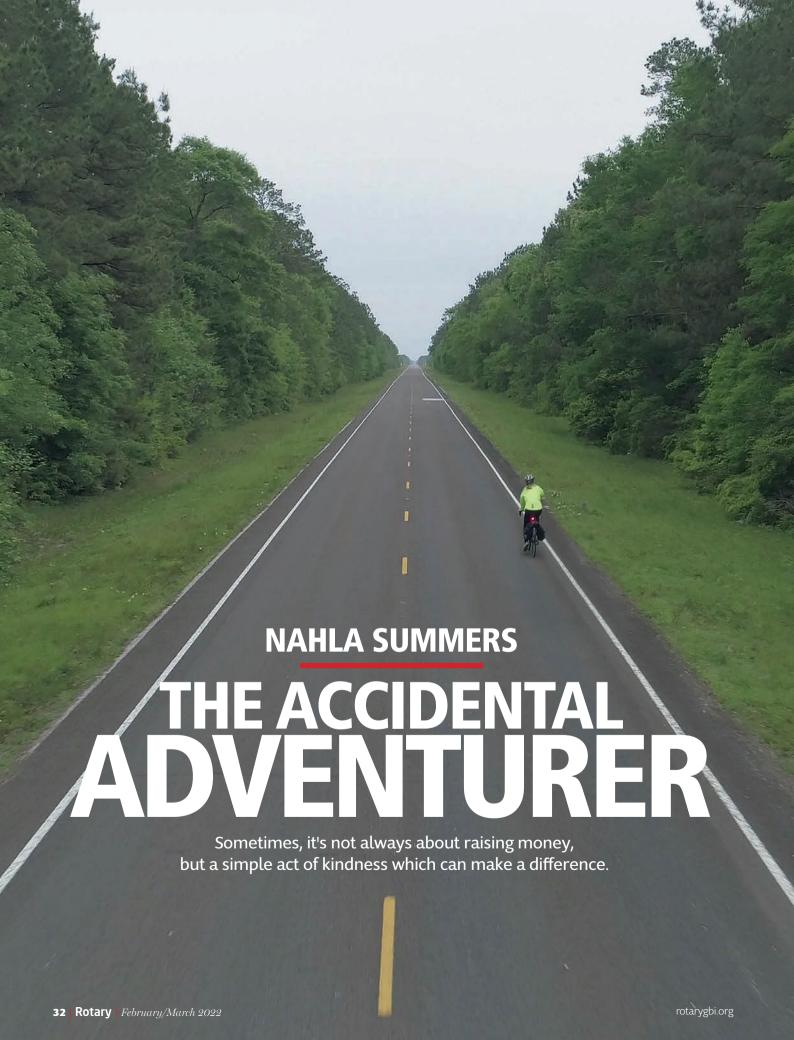
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Paul was taking part in a charity cycle ride. Whilst on the ride, Paul phoned. He said he was finding it difficult to breathe.

I asked for his location so I could go and pick him up. There was no answer. Paul had dropped the phone while he had a heart attack.

I had moved from my hometown in Dorset, and we were living in a beautiful cottage, just across from the beach in Weston-Super-Mare. We both had busy corporate jobs but were happy and ready for the next stage of our lives together.

After Paul's funeral, I wasn't eating or sleeping. Then one day, I decided to leave the house and walk across the road to the beach. As the sun was setting, there was a man on a horse. I was mesmerised, watching them dancing in the sand in a figure of eight motion. At one together.

A man walking his dog approached me. I looked a total mess.

He asked me if the horse was mine. I told him he wasn't. But he then continued to talk to me, sharing some incredible stories about how he had worked with horses in American and their healing power.

It was that single act of kindness which allowed me to emerge out of the darkness of trauma. It was the catalyst to start living again, and accomplish great things.

I climbed Snowdon with no idea that there was actually snow at the top. I cycled across America having not owned a bike in 20 years and purchasing one from Gumtree just six weeks before.

And I walked 500 miles from Swanage to Gretna Green relying only on the kindness of strangers. I sold my house and all my possession, and for the first time I found myself free.

Then, in 2020, I set a Guinness world record for travelling on a stand-up bike, clocking 5,007 miles and passing through 69 UK cities to make the biggest Strava Art across England by writing KINDNESS whilst a pandemic was raging.

I did it not for people to donate money to a charity, but instead to make an act of kindness for a stranger.

To date, around 250,000 acts of kindness have been generated through my social enterprise Sunshine People.

This has become a huge, selfpropelled social experiment with knockon effects which keep coming back around

The stories and learnings that have emerged about society and the world are fascinating. They give a new insight which has never been heard before.

I would like to move Sunshine People into the education sector and drive data which will show how the UK fares to other countries in measuring well-being and kindness.

"IT WAS THAT
SINGLE ACT
OF KINDNESS
WHICH ALLOWED
ME TO EMERGE
OUT OF THE
DARKNESS OF
TRAUMA."

But why? I became fascinated by the impact 10 minutes of kindness can have on a person or a situation.

I started to research it and the lack of it; the trends and curves in society.

I discovered that kindness is not as simple as an act, it is actually a value that is expressed through our interactions.

I interviewed hundreds of people and analysed the idea of kindness.

I found that seven core values appeared to underpin the idea of kindness; gratitude, empathy, integrity, trust, time, connection and courage.

In many workplaces and social groups, these values are missing from our culture. Not intentionally, but because they are so often hard to deliver on.

They require an element of vulnerability, strong communication and deep compassion which is not encouraged or usual within society. For example, consider how our institutions and countries are run. They run on the idea of one person being wrong and one person being right.

That is what we understand in a democracy; the very opposite of the values of kindness.

Kindness is not a fluffy concept, but an imperative value to adopt if we are to move into a new generation and future.

The institutions we have relied on cannot sustain the new ways without a kinder approach.

I have written a number of books, and product a podcast about "The Culture of Kindness". I want to start a conversation and transform workplaces.

Kindness improves productivity and ultimately removes stress and anxiety, not just in workplaces but in families and society as a whole. •

- Information -

Nahla is a member of the Rotary Club of Social Innovation. If you would like to know more visit: **nahlasummers.com**







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T the start of the Rotary year, I challenged every club to plan and host at least one practical and action-oriented Rotary Day of Service. The event should address a challenge facing your community that fits into one or more of Rotary's areas of focus and bring together volunteers from within and outside of Rotary.

Rotary Days of Service can motivate Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact clubs to plan innovative and impactful projects. They can showcase your work as people of action and introduce prospective members to your club.

I've been inspired by your response so far, and I want to share with you just one project that has captured my imagination.

India is home to an estimated 74 million people with diabetes, a disease that is a leading cause of death. Furthermore, about 50 percent of those people remain undiagnosed.

Rotary, together with the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India, saw the urgent need to diagnose, track, and treat those with diabetes. Working together and with other organisations, we hosted a nationwide blood glucose testing camp on September 29th, which is World Heart Day.

The camp was spread across more than 10,000 sites in India, with more than 2,000 Rotary and Rotaract clubs participating in the effort. More than one million blood-sugar tests were conducted in a day, a milestone recognised by the Asia Book of Records.

But more important than breaking a record is the fact that tens of thousands of people learned that they may be living with diabetes.

They can now be treated for the condition, and they also have been made aware they should take extra measures to shield themselves from COVID-19 and scores of other diseases caused or worsened by diabetes.

This month, on February 23rd, the anniversary of Rotary. Let us celebrate with more service days, showcasing Rotary's work in our areas of focus. I look forward to hearing about your Rotary Days of Service

Please share your projects on Rotary Showcase, or browse that website to find inspiration and project partners. In particular, I encourage you to execute projects that focus on empowering girls, as they have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

The Empowering Girls programme is resonating very well with members of Rotary as well as with non-Rotarians.

The governments and NGOs in various countries are appreciating this meaningful initiative. Let us keep focusing on it.

I am also happy that the Each One, Bring One ethos is bringing fruitful results. Let us ensure that all club members introduce at least one person to Rotary, and that we then all work to engage new members and keep them in our clubs.

In whatever we do, remember that we must push ourselves to grow more, do more as we Serve to Change Lives. ullet







David Ellis Chair of the Executive

PLAY YOUR PART IN THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

S we enter a new year we all look forward to a positive outcome to the pandemic. Many club, district and international events have fallen through due to this global situation and this is hard for our organisation as meeting face-to-face is a key component. But a positive opportunity lies ahead!

2022 marks a major milestone, one that is unlikely to be seen again, our Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which will culminate with a celebration in June during an extended bank holiday.

David Ellis, Chairman of the Executive for Rotary GB&I, has been in negotiation with Her Majesty's Pageant Master and Rotary has been offered the honour of lighting beacons during the June celebrations.

Many clubs took part in previous Jubilee Beacon events, and it is hoped to repeat this for the Platinum Jubilee.

The call is out to clubs to take part and you can visit queensjubileebeacons.com for full information. This is a fantastic positive public relations opportunity, so please consider being part of this historic event.

Rotary is also involved in the lighting of beacons in every Commonwealth capital and it is hoped the final beacon could be lit in Houston by Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta.

Our thanks to Rotary member Sree Vallipuram (London) for the work he has given in organising this.

Once again, Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland is at the centre of Thank You Day.

This year, Sunday June 5th is the day when clubs are asked to connect with their communities and host a Big Lunch event. Head to thebiglunch.com/ **getyourpack** to get started.

You may decide to embed a service activity either ahead of or during the lunch - an environmental project may work well; you might plan for a communal 'bring your own picnic' or work with the wonderfully diverse communities within our towns and cities for a 'street feast' - the ideas are limited only by our own imaginations!

Local councils are supporting community plans and the Arts Council has created a fund to support activities. Head to bit.ly/ArtsCouncilJubilee for more information.

This is a wonderful opportunity for us all to work with our communities to help everyone enjoy some much-needed fun and laughter as well as improving our local environment.

The Jubilee website platinumjubilee.gov.uk offers lots of ideas, resources and funding suggestions.

Please visit it and record your events on the map so everyone may join in and

see Rotary in Action.

Finally, remember to use the social media tags #PlatinumJubilee and **#HM70**. A free official Platinum Jubilee Emblem is available for download!

Please join in this weekend of celebrations and host a local Platinum Jubilee Thank You Day event; your community will value and remember the energy and enthusiasm that your Rotary members brought to this pivotal moment in history - The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Information -

For more information and support in taking part in Jubilee celebrations, please contact your District Community Officer. Plus, let us know how you're marking the occasion by emailing pr@rotarygbi.org



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NEW BEGINNINGS WORKING TOGETHER

NTERING each new year often brings a feeling of hope and expectation, but for this to be realised we need a plan. Usually, we have a rough outline of 'what' we are aiming for but have we stopped to think about Why we need to refocus?

Nine months ago, our clubs voted overwhelmingly in support of change to the governance model of our Association, Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (Rotary GB&I). The 'why' of this change, put simply, is to provide an infrastructure that will give continuity and focus in serving the needs of our members.

There are many side benefits to this change, but fundamentally we needed to grasp the nettle, creating greater capacity for our dedicated team of governors to support and lead district services, whilst simultaneously providing a team dedicated to the support of each governor, maximising the potential of Rotary in these islands.

Globally, Rotary has a strategic plan comprised of four priorities to: Expand our Reach; Increase our Impact; Enhance Participation; and Increase our Ability to Adapt. In support of these four priorities, we are all asked to consider what we do and check that at least one or more of these priorities is positively affected through our actions.

Rotary GB&I has embraced these four priorities and built a strategic action plan, focusing attention towards growing and strengthening Rotary membership and increasing support to The Rotary Foundation. The team responsible for bringing this plan to life in 2022/23 is the Rotary GB&I Board.

The newly-appointed board members are currently working together to focus on the why, what, and how of Rotary in this region.

Collectively, they form the first Regional Board for Rotary International and are providing a platform to take learning and shape services in other parts of the Rotary world. Their responsibility is enormous and essentially everything they do has to start with 'why', including 'why Rotary', but we can all help with this...

As members, we support communities at home and overseas through the Rotary network. We share that intrinsic feeling for the why of Rotary, but recognise the need to be able to

articulate this message to others.

That message should be personal. It should be based on your lived experiences of being a member.

But, in these times of new beginnings, we need to work together to help others understand why Rotary is so valuable to society and why being a member gives each of us so much more than without it.

To ensure our new beginnings in 2022 come from working together, would you share your 'Why Rotary' message with us: surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5J9NSW6



Create the next generation of peacebuilders

By Foundation Trustee Chair John Germ

Read more online: rotarygbi.org

Enjoy your conservatory all year round



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"What a difference a day makes as the saying goes, and yes, that's all it took to install."

Mr & Mrs Barber, Wells

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"There is no doubt that the conservatory is much warmer than previously, and no, the room is not darker either!"

David Birch, Chichester

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"The conservatory is now used throughout all seasons of the year and is far more comfortable to sit in whatever the weather outside."

Mr & Mrs Gibson, Portishead

MOULD & CONDENSATION

"This is the best thing we have done in this house. Used to run with condensation and now zero."

Karen Thomas, Chippenham

COOLER IN SUMMER

"You could have fried an egg on the table in there in the summer, I now look upon the conservatory as a new room. It is quiet, restful and cosy."

Carol Doyle, Surrey

REDUCES ENERGY BILLS

"I've already turned the underfloor heating down. Lovely job guys, thank you!"

Anne Bird, Bristol

QUIETER IN BAD WEATHER

"For the first time in 10 years we do not have to close the door to the conservatory when it rains, as the noise is minimal and before I found it difficult to hear the TV over the loudness of the rain on the old roof."

Mr & Mrs Bailey-Webb, Warsash

"It's the best home improvement we have ever made. Our conservatory is now our dining room in the garden."

Mike Millis, Middleton On Sea









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Letters to the editor

Every issue, we invite Rotarians to discuss topics featured in the magazine, or wider Rotary concerns.



Making a spectacle!

EVERY few months we send to Vision Aid many pairs of spectacles kindly donated by our local optometrist clinics. I have been informed that Vision Aid may well have ceased operating.

Is this correct, and if so, is there another organisation that will accept used spectacles for distribution in the Third World?

Peter Bartram

Looe Valley Rotary, Cornwall

Editor's note: Vision Aid Overseas' glasses recycling scheme permanently closed in 2020. Vision Aid Overseas has ended its recycling scheme in the UK and will no longer accept used spectacles from the public, optical sector, and community groups, however, we believe Specsavers, VisionExpress and Boots Opticians will accept used glasses for recycling.

The wonders of RYLA

MAY I congratulate you on your article in the October issue of the *Rotary* magazine about the Rotary Centre, the longestrunning Rotary project in the world.

I found it extremely interesting and believe the Rotary Club of Sheffield should be congratulated for the work its members have done to help disadvantaged children over many years. I know the Peak District well and I cannot think of a better place to stimulate children to meet new challenges which will help them in their future lives.

Indeed, my own club the Rotary Club of Wollaton Park, Nottingham has supported the RYLA scheme for several years.

Our President, Angela Perkins, has established close links with a detachment of the Army Cadets and a local Youth Club. We have sponsored eight young people who have attended the Buxton Camp under the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards scheme, so far.

All the young people who attended have stated that Rotary has taught them how to cope better with the stresses and strains of life. Indeed, one was so inspired with what she learnt on the weekend that it stimulated her to gain her A levels and she is now attending university, the first member of her family to do so.

I hope you will permit me to make one small correction. Sergeant Arnold Loosemore VC was not the only native of Sheffield to be awarded the VC. Major William Barnsley Allen, RAMC MC VC gained his medal in September 1916 for conspicuous bravery in the face of the enemy.

Rotary continues to give young men and women confidence which will contribute much to our society in the future. Long may it continue.

John Dornan

Wollaton Park Rotary, Nottingham



Readers' letters | CONTACT US

Every issue, *Rotary* magazine publishes a series of letters from Rotarians featuring a number of topical issues We welcome your letters on any subject to do with Rotary. Submissions should be no more than 250 words long. If you would like to contribute please write including your name and address and then emailing: **editor@rotarygbi.org** or post to: *Rotary* magazine, Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland, Kinwarton Road, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6PB The comments made on this page do not necessarily represent the views of Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland, and Rotarians.

Why no mixed gender?

THE recent article about Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) in District 1010 (North Scotland) in the October *Rotary* magazine was interesting, informative and a testament to the pioneering work of Jim and Jenny Banks.

However, it was disappointing to note only one mention of mixed gender activities, held on a single day more than 30 years ago.

It would be interesting to know if any other districts, apart from Scotland, still adhere to the archaic practice of segregated gender camps in this day and age.

Accommodation is not an issue, as Nethy Bridge routinely runs mixed sex groups for other organisations.

Our club has discussed this matter at some length, and having heard no persuasive argument to justify the continuation of such a policy we have decided to discontinue support for separate gender RYLA camps.

Our most recent participants in 2019 advised us that they did not follow the exact same programme - our young lady questioned why only the boys were permitted to camp out.

In similar vein, the boy wondered why he didn't have an opportunity to learn

some of the soft skills that the girls were able to work on, rather than the masculine "toughen me up" overnight sleep out.

Both raised another point. If they were to be young leaders of the future, how were they to learn such skills with only 50% of the population attending their course?

This scenario also questions District 1010's failure to embrace Rotary's policy of inclusion and diversity. Are separate gender camps fit for purpose in the 21st century?

Is there any cogent reason why "coed" camps cannot be trialled, for at least one year, and then evaluated?

This would also potentially resolve the problem of girls' camps being oversubscribed, in contrast to the boys' camps which generally struggle to fill all vacancies.

The residential layout at Nethy Bridge allows for various different permutations of the accommodation plot and would offer a solution to fix any imbalance when used for two consecutive mixed gender camps.

Michael Clark

Alloa Rotary, Clackmannanshire

Future Rotary

I WRITE in response to the letter "What could an irresistible Rotary club look like?" (Rotary, October).

At the outset I should make it clear that I recognise the need for innovation and flexibility in the development of the Rotary movement. In particular, I recognise that some traditional formal elements of club meetings may be redundant. This includes what the letter disparagingly describes as "bling and bells".

What I take exception to, however, is the offensive way in which the use of speakers at meetings is denigrated and dismissed. I would go so far as to say that someone who comments "If I want to learn something I'll check my phone" as demonstrating a staggering level of ignorance.

During my time of Rotary

membership, I have learned an incredible amount about many and varied topics and engaged in discussions with many interesting speakers.

I joined Rotary in my mid 40s. Unusually, I am a member of a breakfast club and, almost without exception, I find that the day of my club meeting is the most productive day of the week. This is largely due to the stimulation provided by a speaker. It should be added that in many cases, a speaker provides a stimulus for a service project or fund-raising activity.

In terms adopted by the letter writer, Jill Moss, we still manage to "do stuff" despite apparently wasting our time listening to speakers!

Mike Parker

Bolton Daybreak Rotary, Lancashire.

Attracting Covid volunteers?

AT a recent council meeting of my club to discuss falling membership following the pandemic, the question was asked "is Rotary relevant anymore?"

We saw large numbers of volunteers during lockdown wanting to help neighbours but getting those same people to commit to Rotary seems much more difficult.

To the question is Rotary relevant anymore, one only has to read *Rotary* magazine to see the needs of people all over the world not just in the UK, to realise the answer is a resounding 'YES'.

How do we get this message across to people and get them to join us in Rotary?

Rod Wafer

Haywards Heath Rotary, West Sussex

Love the audio magazine

I HAVE just listened to my first *Rotary* magazine podcast. I have been registered blind since early childhood and although I have been a Rotarian for just over three years, I have never read the *Rotary* magazine.

Occasionally I have picked up on others' comments on articles, but now for the first time I've been able to absorb some of the incredible work and achievements that have been made possible by this fantastic organisation.

Thank you so much for making the magazine available in audio format via a podcast. The production and the readers are excellent. I now look forwards to listening to future editions and will let other members know about the podcast and how easy it is to listen to.

Keep up the good work.

Peter Taylor,

Teignmouth Rotary, Devon

Convention is not environmentally-friendly

AN email arrived in my inbox from Rotary International advertising the 2022 Convention which is to be held in Houston, Texas.

According to the publicity material accompanying the announcement, it is stated that 20,000 delegates from around the globe are expected to attend in person.

It is unlikely that those travelling to the USA will adopt the Greta Thunberg mode of transport and travel by sailboat, nor that those already resident in the USA will travel by foot, bicycle, or even solar powered vehicles!

The reality is that the preferred mode of transport for the majority will be via air travel. I have studied the publicity material several times to try to find any indication that there is any consideration for the impact this travel will have on the environment, unfortunately I have found none.

Have we not learnt any lessons from Covid-19 restrictions that face-to-face interactions are no longer required for meetings, presentations, or discussions?

After all, we achieved this during the pandemic, let us not just slip back into the old ways of working.

Hopefully, Rotary GB&I will formulate a recommendation relating to offset the environmental impact for those members who may be thinking of attending the convention.

To quote Greta Thunberg, less blah, blah, blah and more action. Let us start by getting our own house in order by insisting on all GB&I clubs instigating their own net zero carbon statement and plan.

We owe it to the generations who will replace us.

Richard Witham

Rotary Satellite e-Club of Barnard Castle, County Durham

Remember King Canute?

THE huge sums that our government - and other world governments - have poured into fighting Covid will pale into insignificance compared to what climate change will cost the world.

I certainly do not deny that the world's climate may be changing.

Climates have always changed and don't require any stimulus from humans in order to do this. In fact, humans weren't around for much of the time.

Scientists can - particularly when it can be used to their advantage - prove anything.

Unfortunately, modelling is often far from accurate in highlighting trends. Most of the fear surrounding climate change has been created by such modelling.

The many thousands of scientists who disagree with the rubbish being poured out by the media are silenced by not being given the opportunity to make their cases to a wider audience.

Only those who sing from the approved hymn sheet are allowed a voice.

Surely, when it is such a serious subject that could bankrupt the world, we should be allowed to hear both sides of the debate instead of being fed the 'approved' version as unquestionable fact.

Every incidence of extreme weather is seized upon as evidence of climate

change - even when that falls within normal expectation.

If the climate is changing, then let's spend whatever money is necessary to protect our future by adapting our lives to fit with the change.

We cannot stop the inevitable so let's learn to live with what we are given.

Our landscapes and seascapes have been scarred with thousands of wind turbines and our whole lives will shortly be turned upside down by the strength of feeling that has been created by the constant drip, drip, drip of climate propaganda.

At what point in the future will we ever know whether our sacrifices have, in fact, saved the world? Could there ever be a time when we are told "It's okay, the climate is now stable, we can now revert to normal living?" Can the scientists tell us that? Surely one of them can produce a model which will provide us with the answer?

Nature, God, or whatever alternative force is out there, controls the climate. The last person who thought he knew better was King Canute.

Terry Durrance

Southport Rotary, Lancashire

Happy memories

MY first reaction to the article concerning the Rotary Centre at Castleton – wow, and the memories started flooding back (*Rotary*, October).

My father was a member of Sheffield Abbeydale Rotary Club and involved in the camp during the 50's and 60's - the International Camp era.

My sisters and I have lovely memories of going to the camp and meeting all these "foreigners" and every year we had one or two of the boys to stay with home hosting, as did many of the members of the club.

We always seem to have boys staying from Finland and other Scandinavian

countries. It was very enlightening. One year a young man taught me some swear words and to this day I daren't repeat them as they are either very rude or just plain silly!

Another year, my sister was the camp cook as she was studying catering at college and I was her lackey, which was fine, until I dropped a whole tray of uncooked beefburgers! Happy days.

Thanks for the article - great times.

Janet Lane

Wife of a Bradford on Avon Rotarian, Wiltshire.

Rotary club of the irresistible

I THINK the letter from Jill Moss in October's *Rotary* magazine is most meaningful, and worthy of discussion.

I write as one of the old-timers and founder members of our club, and I am fearful of Rotary's long-term prospects.

The Covid-19 pandemic is producing seismic changes in many areas of society, in voluntary organisations, religious movements, the work place etc.

Many organisations will wither on the vine without fundamental changes. Rotary is no exception and could easily slide into this category.

I have always been proud to expound the values and achievements of Rotary.

However, the perception still exists of Rotary as a club for elderly business/ professional men, suited, tied and raising money for good works.

Agnes Maude Royden, who was a prominent suffragette, pacifist and feminist, is often misquoted from a speech that she made in 1910 as follows: "The Church of England is the Tory Party at prayer". Regrettably, we are still viewed by many outsiders as "the middle classes and middle aged at lunch". A view that is unlikely to encourage younger people of diversity to join our ranks.

Jill's club seems to me to have grasped one of the keys to our future. Her club has embarked on a programme of gradual diminution of "bells and bling, formal meals and speakers". They now meet for weekly informal lunchtime drop-in meetings with



a monthly formal business meeting in the same hotel with meal.

This brave new initiative has apparently been a rip-roaring success and has been able to attract new members, full-time, part-time and retired. Her club has benefited from an increase of a third in membership, and can boast a 50% male/female and ethnic diversity. Their membership ages now range from 37 to 100-years-old.

What a fantastic result and surely it must be one way that can lead to an active vibrant club, able to fulfil our proud motto of 'service before self'.

My hearty congratulations to the Rotary Club of Milton Keynes. Floreat Rotary!

Richard Lowe

Sheffield Vulcan, South Yorkshire

Rotary in Dad's Army

MAY I correct Rotarian Mike Kearley with regard to Captain Mainwaring and Sergeant Wilson discussing Rotary in the BBC comedy "Dad's Army" (Rotary, October).

The episode "Brain versus Brawn" opens to show the good Captain in rather expansive mood at a Rotary dinner as he welcomes Wilson to the event as his guest, thus establishing that he, the captain, is a Rotarian.

In the episode, "The Honourable Man", we learn that Wilson's uncle, a peer, has died, thus entitling him to be known as The Honourable Arthur Wilson. Word swiftly reaches the local golf club and he is invited to become a member. Captain Mainwaring is furious as he has been trying unsuccessfully to join the club for years.

The first of these episodes was shown in December 1972 and it is good to know that our organisation was considered important enough to feature in a programme 50 years ago.

Trevor Morgan

Windsor St George Rotary, Berkshire



Wood stoves not the way forward

I AM sure I will not be the only Rotarian writing to you regarding the item on page 12 of the December issue of *Rotary* magazine.

In this graphic, attributed to the University of Leeds, one of the 10 ways to reduce your carbon footprint is reported as:

"Increasingly fashionable renewable options such as wood stoves and underfloor solar heating can reduce CO2 by 0.64 tons every year."

In fact wood burning stoves are the biggest cause of UK particle pollution and a recent study based on UK government data shows that "Fires are used by just 8% of the population but cause triple the particle pollution of traffic".

No one should be encouraging the increased use of wood burning stoves, least of all in an article, and a magazine issue, dedicated to climate change.

Geoff Snare

Warsop, Shirebrook & District Rotary, Nottinghamshire

Outdated mantras

I CRINGE every time the Object of Rotary and the Four Way Test are read at our business meetings - they are outdated. Can we have a competition to devise new mantras?

David Telford

Saffron Walden Rotary, Essex



VOLUNTEERING IS FUN!

Nicki Scott, Rotary International Director, and Leader of the Association for Rotary GB&I, discusses putting the fun into Rotary.



F it sounds like I am saying that to reassure myself, there may be an element of truth to that! Sometimes I think we are at risk of being way too mired in administer-ing what we do instead of keeping it simple and just doing what we love.

I am a great believer in being mindful of our Four Way Test as a personal compass:

- 1. Is it the truth?
- 2. Is it fair to all concerned?
- 3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
- 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Perhaps we should add a fifth? **Will it be fun?**

Giving service to others is WHY we joined Rotary and that is what gives us joylet's not forget that! A meeting focused on actually doing a service project is way more rewarding than a meeting to talk about it.

Throughout my professional and

volunteering life I have always questioned WHY? Why are we doing what we are doing? What purpose is it serving?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the working world and the volunteer sector were forced to embrace technology in a way we had never done before, even though it had been available to us for many years!

It has been a gift in so many ways: accelerating much needed change, bringing us out from behind closed doors, offering greater inclusivity and giving us back precious time previously spent travelling.

But, it can also detract from our basic human need to connect, interact, work along-side each other and laugh together.

As we deal with the ongoing pandemic and isolation that it can often lead to, let us embrace the best of what technology offers and question the rest. In fact, let us always question how can we work smarter, not harder.

I have come to love the phrase 'Rotary Rocks'. For starters, it really does rock the world thanks to all of the amazing work

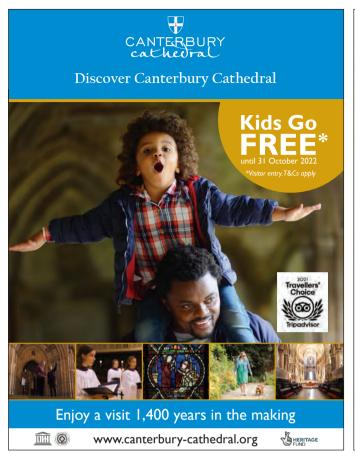
that all of our Rotarians do throughout each year. We have been doing that now for 117 years as of our birthday on February 23rd, 2022!

I am also a huge fan of the late Stephen Covey's third of seven habits of highly effective people: "First Things First" - what he fondly referred to as Big Rocks!

"Putting first things first means organising and executing around your most important priorities. It is living and being driven by the principles you value most, not by the agendas and forces surrounding you."

In Rotary, our real work is to **'Serve to Change Lives'**. In building forward better, fairer and greener - what should we be doing more of and what should we not be doing at all?

Let's keep our focus on Rotary Rocks! •





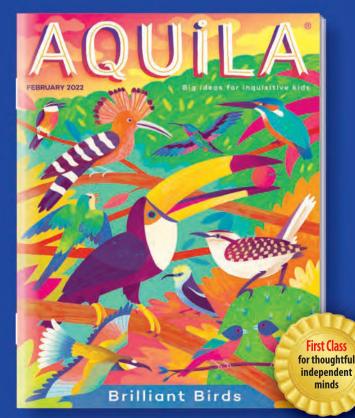
Are you a Rotarian who loves aviation?

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For more information or the latest programme, email <u>membership@iffr.uk</u> or go to www.iffr.uk







A Vibrant Children's Magazine

AQUILA Children's Magazine is a seriously intelligent publication that's written with a playful sense of humour. Every month there's a beautifully illustrated educational topic with first class Science, Arts & General Knowledge, and although AQUILA is perfectly designed for curious children of 8 –12 years, many adults love reading it too!

In this issue: Everything you have ever wanted to know about birds – from avian dinosaurs to egg-straordinary every-day chickens and their more exotic cousins in the wild. There's a fabulous, colourful art project inspired by artist Frida Kahlo and her parrots, plus we ask what can we learn from the extinction of the Mauritian Dodo?

"...Advanced & Philosophical,
Curious & Puzzling"

Richard Robinson, Brighton Science Festival

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THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

Rotarian Tony Flinn was paralysed after a cycling accident in 2003. Far from stopping life in its tracks, he is living life to the full.

STORY BY **DAVE KING**

"WITH NO TIME TO STOP, THE IMPACT WAS BRUTAL, DAMAGING HIS SPINAL CORD."

ONY FLINN doesn't remember much about the accident 18 years ago which changed his life.

He was cycle training one evening through the

village of Stapleton in North Yorkshire, when a car pulled out in front of him. With no time to stop, the impact was brutal, damaging his spinal cord.

Tony also suffered 20 broken bones, a brain haemorrhage and a collapsed lung.

Most of the injuries have repaired, but the complete spinal cord injury at T5 is permanent. Tony will never be able to walk or stand up again.

"I can't describe the day of my accident," said Tony. "I only know what happened because of eye-witnesses. I have amnesia from about four days before to about one month afterwards.

"I was in surgery for 13 hours, followed by intensive care for a few weeks, then the high dependency unit for a while thereafter.

"I don't recall a Damascene moment when I realised the enormity of my accident. It hit my family badly, though.

"I lost four teeth and had to undergo major facial surgery. I had to breathe through a tracheostomy, a tube in my throat for a while, so I couldn't speak.

"But I have never been depressed or angry for more than a few minutes. It was just an accident. The driver admitted full responsibility despite his insurance company telling him to deny it."

Tony is one of life's self-starters.

A Geordie of humble beginnings from Newcastle, he was the first in his family to go to university and, after being made redundant in 1999, started his own business, Onyx Scientific Ltd which soon began to grow.

An active sportsman, Tony lives by the motto of working to live, rather than living to work. In 2001, he took up triathlons, and it was while training for an event two years later, that he hit the car on his bike.

"It was almost like learning to live again in a quite different way after the accident," explained Tony. "I had to move house to more suitable accommodation.

"But I was determined to get back home and work. I left hospital after four months, was back at work and began to return the company's good fortunes."

He secured a management buy-out in 2007 and sold the business four years later.

In the meantime, he continued his passion for sport taking up sit-skiing, competitive sculling, dinghy and later yacht sailing, buying a 40-foot yacht originally kept at Hartlepool marina, obtaining his Royal Yachting Association Day Skipper and Coastal Yachtmaster qualifications.

"A piece was still missing from my life," reflected Tony. "Much of my ablebodied social life was based around golf. Once this ended, my social life effectively



ceased to exist. So, I joined Richmond Rotary Club in 2011 which filled this gap, since fellowship is the most important aspect of Rotary for me."

Bored after the sale of his business, Tony relocated to Lincolnshire in 2014.

He is currently a director of several companies, as well as serving as a management consultant.

However, by now, the yacht is berthed in Oban, on the west coast of Scotland. What does someone do to overcome this distance barrier? They learn to fly!

He bought a Piper Cherokee, got his private pilot's licence in 2016, and joined the International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians.

For a few years he flew to Oban from his home airport of Sandtoft in North Lincolnshire to go sailing on his yacht, based at Dunstaffnage marina.

Despite the disability, longer sailing trips to Ireland and the Isle of Man have been accomplished as part of the 4,000 nautical miles clocked up as skipper.

In the air, Tony has now flown more than 450 hours in his own aircraft with adapted hand controls. His wife Rosi is happy to fly with him, and their daughter Jessica is learning to fly as well.

Because of the tenacity needed to get his wings, Tony was nominated as the IFFR Pilot of the Year and is now President of the UK section, a section of 120 members.

As a Rotarian, Tony initially transferred to the Epworth & Isle of Axholme Rotary Club after his move to Lincolnshire and is now a member of Doncaster Rotary.

Tony admits that following the accident, he is a lot more laid back than he used to be.

He has even taken up painting again and started selling some of his works.

"I tend to see the bigger picture and not get bogged down by details," he responded. "I suppose you could say I am overwhelmingly optimistic.

"I don't have a bucket list, I am very much a dilettante - every few years focussing on something else, but cannot foresee what might come up.

"I am always by nature a positive person. I never see a reason not to do something. I always find a way. One of my pet hates are people who automatically think of reasons against doing something.

"The Rotary club and IFFR activities with like-minded people are ideally placed in which to manifest his positivity." •

Information

If you would like to know more about the International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians visit: **iffr.uk** and Tony's own website at: **tonyflinnartist.co.uk**

Rotary Young Citizen Awards 15th Anniversary

EVE CONWAY, FOUNDER OF THE ROTARY YOUNG CITIZEN AWARDS

HE Rotary Young
Citizen Awards,
recognising hundreds
of inspirational
young role models
since they were
launched in 2007,
mark their 15th
anniversary this year.

The awards were started with my then boss at BBC News, Kevin Bakhurst, who was controller of BBC News24, and Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland, to overcome negative stereotypes of young people that so often dominate the news headlines.

They showcase the good work that many youngsters are doing to help others locally and globally.

From tackling issues around mental health, child poverty, anti-social behaviour, through to campaigning against plastics pollution to supporting cancer patients, the homeless, migrants and refugees, these are young people who are real "changemakers" stepping up today to change the world for the better for tomorrow.

Through their amazing work, they are inspiring other young people.

The Rotary Young Citizen Awards will again be presented by BBC TV Presenter Ellie Crisell at Volunteer Expo in Birmingham on Saturday, May 7th.

Here's a look at how the Young Citizens nominated by Rotary clubs continue to make a positive impact on the world, focusing on some past winners:

Bethany Hare was 12-years-old when Leeds Rotary nominated her for a Young Citizen Award in 2012 in recognition of the fundraising she had been doing for a local children's hospice for youngsters with life-limiting illnesses, setting up her own charity Bethany's Smile.

Ten years on, her goal is to raise £300,000 to build Smile Cottage as a holiday/respite home in Yorkshire where families can go and spend quality time whilst creating precious memories, when they are faced with the news that their child has a short life expectancy.

Bethany has also landed her dream role playing Cher in Channel 4's Hollyoaks.

She said: "Winning a Rotary Young Citizen Award has had a huge impact on my life. Rotary is such an amazing organisation.

"The award was the biggest honour and the constant support from Rotary with my charity events, fundraising and singing and believing in me from such a young age gave me the confidence to keep going. Rotary has 100% helped me with my performing and my acting career."

Music has played a key role in the life of **Grace O'Malley** and her fund-raising for charity from the age of 12.

She won her Young Citizen Award in 2013 after being nominated by Padiham Rotary in Lancashire for raising tens of thousands of pounds for the Royal British Legion, Pendleside Hospice and cancer charities – and she's got big ambitions for the future.

Grace, who turns 24 in February, plans to become a professional opera singer and is studying for a Master's Degree at the Royal College of Music.

Her aim is to use her singing talent to raise one million pounds for charity.

She is also a founder member of the Rotaract Club of London where she has helped raise thousands of pounds for Rotary's End Polio Now campaign and the Crisis homeless charity organising virtual music events during the pandemic.

Twelve-year-old **Max Woosey** from Devon has pledged to carry on camping raising almost £700,000 for his local hospice so far by sleeping out in a tent in his back garden for nearly two years – and he has no intention of giving up!

Max decided to camp out from the start of the first lockdown in March 2020 after his neighbour Rick Abbott gave him a tent before he died of cancer and told him to "have an adventure" in it.

He has slept out every single night since then – even over Christmas, on his birthday, and through winter storms.

He took on the challenge to fundraise for the hospice, which helped Max's family care for Rick before he died.

Max was "absolutely thrilled" to receive a Rotary Young Citizen Award in 2021 after being nominated by Braunton Caen Rotary near Barnstaple.

By the end of last year, he had raised over £573,000 topped up with £113,000 gift aid. North Devon Hospice said the money equated to almost 20 nurses working for 12 months.

Max was recognised in the recent New Year's Honours List with the award of a British Empire Medal.

Rotary Young Citizen WheelPower Sports Award 2018 winner 18-year-old **Abbie Breakwell** was President of Long Eaton Interact Club in Derbyshire for two years. She was nominated for the Award by Long Eaton Rotary who started the Interact club at her school.

Abbie has been playing wheelchair tennis for six years and has had tremendous success. She has been ranked as Great Britain number one girl for five years, and reached number two in the









Bethany Hare



Grace O'Malley

junior girls' world rankings in October 2021.

In world rankings, Abbie is the third highest ranked British female wheelchair tennis player who is actively playing.

In November, she was voted the 10th most influential disabled person in the UK in the Shaw Trust Power list 100.

Abbie has organised inclusive sports days at local primary schools coaching wheelchair tennis and is passionate about empowering women in Disability Sport.

In 2022, the Rotary Young Citizen

Sporting Hero Award will recognise the achievements and contribution of under-25s who have served as a positive role model to others. It can be an able-bodied or disability sports participant or a group or an individual or group, who is enabling others to participate in sport.

There is also the **Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award** which
recognises young people who have made a
significant contribution by building peace
and understanding, whether in their
school, local community or with a peace

project internationally. Nominations can be for an individual or group aged under 25.

The nomination deadline is Monday, February 28th. ●

Information -

If you would like to know more please visit: **rotarygbi.org/competitions**

rotarygbi.org February/March 2022 | Rotary | 49

Rotary Marketplace

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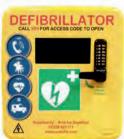
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Rotary New Year Honours List

STORY BY **DAVE KING**

OTARIANS from across the United Kingdom were recognised in the New Year's Honours List for their work in the community.

This year, the New Year's Honours List recognised 1,278 people who showed courage and leadership in their local areas, with 63% of the recipients awarded for their community work – many during Covid.



Mukesh Malhotra

Mukesh, who had Covid over the festive period and also became a grandfather, received a British Empire Medal for his work in spearheading community efforts in Hounslow.

Along with other Hounslow Rotarians, Mukesh worked tirelessly to ensure food and provisions were made available, particularly to the vulnerable, in the London borough.

Through his involvement with Hounslow Rotary Club in Middlesex, Mukesh introduced with Australian Susanne Rea, Rotary World's Greatest Meal to Help End Polio, which globally has helped save over 16.5 million children.

He is also trustee of the water charity Roll Out The Barrel, whose primary aim is to transport clean water in developing countries,



Sarah Gardner

Like Mukesh, Sarah Gardner President of Elthorne-Hillingdon Rotary in Middlesex, was a recipient last year of the British Citizen Award. Sarah has set up three charities since the pandemic; Serving Our Superheroes, Well-being for All and recently CHEF – Community Health Education and Food Project.

Serving Our Superheroes was set up in response to the pandemic and has helped over 132,000 people with items worth a retail value of over £2 million.



Lisa Hunter

After mobilising Maidenhead Bridge Rotary's Covid response to support households in the town.

The 150 volunteers helped vulnerable people who were isolating during the pandemic with shopping and by collecting prescriptions.

Such was the response to the project that former EastEnders' star Ross Kemp visited Lisa's home in 2020 to see the work that was going on for a BBC programme "Ross Kemp: Britain's Volunteer Army".



Mark Esho

When Leicester Novus Rotarian Mark Esho first received an email to say he was being awarded an MBE for services to business, he ignored it believing it was a scam. Mark, who has polio and uses a wheelchair, created a new social enterprise last year, called Access Rating, to promote access for disabled people. He has also written a book about his experiences in battling with polio called 'I Can, I Will'.



Colin Powell

Like Mark, Colin also suffers with polio, and he thought the envelope received in November marked with On Her Majesty's Service, was another parking ticket.

"I opened the envelope with trepidation as I had recently received a parking ticket for encroaching on two bays in order that my wheelchair could be brought around to the driver's door," he revealed. Colin, a member of Radlett Rotary in Hertfordshire, is a polio ambassador and also a magistrate. He was awarded the MBE for his polio work and services within the criminal justice system.



Liz Barrett

Liz is principal of the Academy Transformation Trust Further Education College (ATTFE) in Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. She has been awarded an OBE for services to education. Liz is a Past President of Sutton-in-Ashfield Rotary.

Liz has worked in adult education for more than 20 years and became principal of ATTFE in 2016.



Mark Little

Norwich St Edmund Rotarian, Mark, has been awarded an MBE for services to modern slavery.

Mark began his quest against organised crime in 2001 after watching a documentary on modern slavery.

Within four months, he had travelled to India to help victims of those being trafficked. That was the motivation he needed to become the founder and chairman of the Rotary Action Group Against Modern Slavery.

Mark was delighted with the honour and said: "This award has just pushed me on to keep working, to keep pushing crime up the agenda and get more people to become aware of it. I think that will be my next challenge."



Tim Swinyard

Tim, a member of Swindon Phoenix Rotary, received a British Empire Medal for his services to the community, particularly during the Covid pandemic. Tim, who is a councillor in the Wiltshire town, launched the Swindon Support Facebook group at the start of the pandemic.

Hundreds of volunteers got involved by helping isolated and vulnerable people with their shopping, collecting prescriptions and preparing PPE gear.



Alan Clifton (right)

Alan, who is President of Middlesbrough Erimus Rotary in North Yorkshire, has been honoured with an MBE. Alan, who lives in Yarm, has been recognised for his services to children in care.

He is a former Virtual School Head at the National Association of Virtual School Heads which aims to improve educational outcomes for looked after children.



Michael McEvov

Long-standing Rotarian, Michael McEvoy, has been appointed an OBE for his services to the community in North Wales.

Michael, 87, is a second generation Rotarian who has been a member of Rhyl Rotary for 43 years. A former journalist and broadcaster from Prestatyn, he has served as a trustee of the Dolanog residential care home, a registered charity in Rhyl, for more than 35 years.



Mary Sinnamon

From Northern Ireland and Mary, who is a Past President of Carrickfergus Rotary, was awarded a British Empre Medal for services to education and for her work in the community in Antrim.



Heather Morrison

And from Scotland, Heather Morrison was made an MBE for her services to dementia support.

A member of Banchory-Ternan Rotary in Aberdeenshire since 2020, she has been a pillar of strength for the Deeside community for more than 30 years with her work in social care, helping people suffering from dementia.

Heather established the Forget Me Not Club, and she has grown the charity into a support system for the carers of those with dementia as well.

At Banchory-Ternan Rotary, Heather has also helped to raise around £6,000 to buy oxygen generators for poor families in Peru, after completing a zip wire challenge in Wales with the club's International team leader, Christina Nichol.



infocus is a year-long, online learning series. We will be joined by high quality speakers, and opening the floor to questions, to give insight into how Rotary's Areas of Focus can be brought to life in your community.



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POSITIVE STEPS

In March last year, Coventry Jubilee Rotarian, David Owen's granddaughter, Emily, took her own life. However, this tragedy brought together three dads, united in grief, who chose to do something positive.

STORY BY **DAVID OWEN**

ARCH 18th 2020 is etched into mine and my family's minds forever. It was on that day, at about 10.15am, when I received a frantic telephone call from my son, Tim, to say that his daughter, Emily, our beautiful 19-year-old granddaughter had just hung herself.

Tim rang us while the medics were trying to save Emily's life.

Despite Tim having brought her down and applied resuscitation techniques which fortunately he had been trained in, sadly, it was to be proved too late.

Emily was conveyed to Kings Lynn's Queen Elizabeth Hospital and placed on a life support machine.

It was known that she had opted to be an organ donor, so bravely, her parents honoured Emily's wish and arrangements for six recipients were made for her vital organs to be transplanted.

Emily's life support machine was turned off at 1.10pm on Sunday, March 22nd.

This is the graphic detail of suicide.

The devastating affect it has upon the immediate and wider family is catastrophic, heart-breaking and almost unbearable. The question we all ask, particularly her parents, is: 'what could we have done' and 'if only'?

Two weeks later, Emily's older sister saw an article on Facebook about another family going through the same trauma of losing their daughter Beth.

Tim contacted the father, Mike Palmer. Immediately a bond was established with a determination that, despite their grief, something good had to come to honour the memory of their daughters.

Mike had been in contact with a



specialist charitable organisation called PAPYRUS (Parents' Association for the Prevention of Young Suicide) where he learnt that 6,000 suicides a year was the biggest killer of the under-35s, including 250 children of school age.

It is a shocking statistic.

Through that charity, Mike learnt of Andy Airey who had lost his daughter Sophie in 2018.

Andy had undertaken walking challenges in Cumbria to raise awareness of suicide as well as money for the charity.

Contact with Andy was made, a kindred spirit was found, and consequently a bond between the three dads was established.

This resulted in a determination to transform their grief into positive action to support the ethos of PAPYRUS and broadcast the support that can be given through their helpline, HOPELINEUK.

This is manned 24 hours a day, throughout the year, by trained staff to help those with suicidal thoughts or to those concerned about a loved one.

Through the dads' kindred spirit, it was determined that they would embark on a walk from Andy's home in Cumbria,

to Mike's home in Manchester, and then on to Tim's home in Norfolk - a distance of 300 miles.

The idea was to publicise PAPYRUS and raise awareness of suicide, particularly amongst the younger generation who can be negatively influenced by social media channels.

In their planning it was envisaged they would cover 20 miles a day for 15 consecutive days.

Their target was to raise £3,000 each, supported by national publicity on BBC Breakfast, regional news and their own website: www.3dadswalking.uk

The walk last October took two weeks, with accommodation for overnight stops being generously given by the public.

The three dads were humbled and inspired by the people who met them and accompanied them on the walk.

Many had travelled miles to greet them en route to tell them of their own personal suicide experience within their family; some recent, and some who had gone through the same experience many years previously.

It was a heart-breaking moment, with tears shed as they listened and

walked, sometimes in appalling conditions.

The miles never seeming to be a burden as they were carried along by their own camaraderie, plus the generosity and consoling warmth of the public.

Thanks to the publicity, including live TV coverage during the walk and the support of personalities, the three dads raised £830,000 – substantially more than the £9,000 envisaged.

The money raised will help PAPYRUS engage more professional councillors to support potential victims as well as educate schools, medical bodies and other public organisations.

Suicide can devastate families, it is surprising if you raise the subject with those that you know, just how many know of someone who has taken this final step.

Information -

If you would like to know more visit: www.3dadswalking.uk www.papyrus-uk.org

LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

3D PRINTING IS A LIFE SAVER

Wolverhampton and Guildford Rotary Clubs are celebrating their centenaries, and have joined forces to support the Rotary Jaipur Limb Project.

HE year 1984 was a momentous one for the tens of thousands of disabled men women and children whose lives would be touched following a visit to Jaipur in India by a group of Rotarians.

They were visiting pioneering limb-making workshops in the capital of Rajasthan. The Rotarians saw how no disabled person was turned away.

Many patients came from great distances by any method of transport, and all were treated free of charge.

So, the Rotary Jaipur Limb Project was born.

The limbs, together with the unique Jaipur foot, are extremely basic.

They are simple to manufacture using a plastic tube which is heated in an oven to form the exact moulded shape of someone's amputated limb.

The moulds are created by wrapping the end of their existing amputated limb in plaster of Paris, which is then used as the mould to form the new limb.

The project has grown to have several permanent centres across India and Africa. Additionally, outreach mega limb camps are run when more than 500 people receive the limbs over the course of a week.

The limbs cost around £35 each, the funds being provided by donations from Rotarians across the world.

Now, in an exciting and innovative new project, the City of Wolverhampton Rotary Club has decided to mark its centenary by taking part in a global grant application to instal a 3D printing machine in its Jaipur Limb Centre in Bangalore. This will produce limbs more rapidly and at a fraction of the cost.

The Midlands club has worked in partnership with Bangalore Sadashivanigar Rotary in India, and Guildford Rotary from Surrey, who took the lead as the international partner for the grant.

The £57,600 project will cover the cost of the machine and providing the first 1,000 limbs.

Both English Rotary clubs have made monetary donations towards the project, alongside an extremely generous contribution from the Jaipur Limb Trustees committee in the UK.

However, a major share of the cost has been provided by The Rotary Foundation, the international funding arm of Rotary.

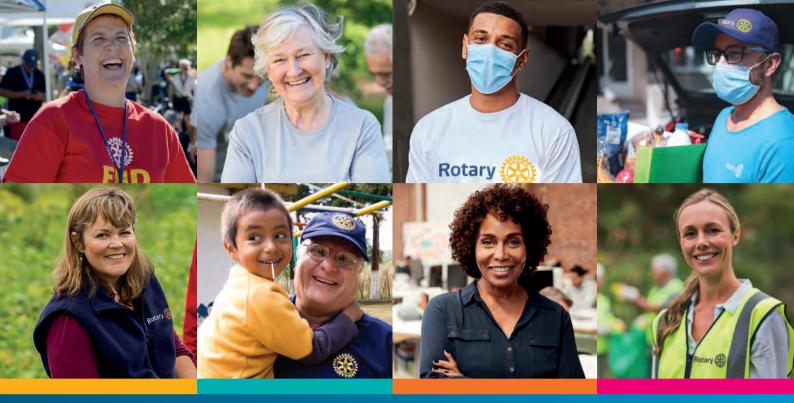
With 3D printing, the material is joined or solidified under computer control to produce a three-dimensional

object, with material being added together layer by layer. Very complex shapes can be produced, such as artificial limbs, by using a scanner over the amputee's existing limb end to programme the computer.

President of the City of Wolverhampton Rotary, Richard Green, said: "This remarkable project represents a move into future technology enabling many more amputees to be treated allowing them to regain employment, and we are proud to be marking our centenary in this unique way."

Guildford Rotary's Foundation
Officer, Andrew Jackson, added: "We
are very pleased to be able to support
City of Wolverhampton in their project
by running the Global Grant as the
international partner for this innovative
piece of equipment and the limbs it will
be able to provide."





START YOUR

ROTARY JOURNEY

If you're interested in joining Rotary there are a number of options available. Rotary is flexible, ranging from full membership to project volunteering.

Join an existing club in your area

There are around 1,700 Rotary clubs across Great Britain and Ireland. Often having multiple clubs in one area, giving you more flexibility to find one that suits you.

Form your own Rotary club

Rotary builds from the ground up. So if you've got family, friends, colleagues or acquaintances to join you, why not start your own Rotary Club? You can lead the way by facilitating new and vibrant volunteering opportunities in your area. Rotary has a dedicated team of volunteers to help you every step of the way.

Join the Rotary Global Hub

Access all the benefits of a club experience by becoming a member of our direct, online community the Rotary Global Hub. This model of Rotary allows you to connect digitally with like-minded people in location or cause-based hubs where you can join leaders, exchange ideas and take action.

Consider Corporate Membership

Perfect for business! If you and your colleagues want to work closely with your local Rotary club to get involved in the community, you can. Rotary is a great way to put your organisation's Corporate Social Responsibility ideas into action.

Get in touch and make a difference

We want to make sure your Rotary experience is the best it can be and fits around your lifestyle. We'll ask you a few questions to understand what you're looking for, before connecting you with members in your area, where you'll have chance to try a few clubs to find your best fit.

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- **Find us:** Contact your local Rotary club. Just type your postcode into rotarygbi.org/club-finder



ROTARIAN RECIPES

RECIPE book featuring more than 300 Rotarian-written recipes from 223 countries has been launched. Titled "Food the World Over", the book aims to raise funds principally for End Polio Now.

The collection of recipes was originally the idea of Rotary eClub of Innovation members Caroline Dobson from Scotland and Jack Davis in the USA. It is a unique chance to peek into other people's family favourite food and meals from our diverse Rotary family across the planet.

Caroline and Jack travelled the virtual world in search of these scrumptious delights.

Several eClub members shared an interest in cooking and started to swap recipes. That prompted the idea of creating a fund-raising recipe book, and a three-year quest to connect with cooks or discover good recipes from each of the 223 countries listed as member states by Rotary International.

A donation of \$7.50 or £5 for the PDF download is suggested and can be made on **foodtheworldover.org** or contact Michelle Render at:

renderm@aol.com



KITTIED OUT

SWESTRY Cambrian Rotary has supported the town's girls football team. The Shropshire-based club sponsored Oswestry under-12's kit for their match against Newport.

Club President, Anna Pugh said that one of the priorities that she had identified for her year at the helm was support for young people. After the match, which the Oswestry team narrowly lost, she said: "It was a joy to watch both teams give 100% effort, show great enthusiasm and a good deal of skill whilst demonstrating excellent team spirit and sporting behaviour.

"They were a credit to their parents, their coaches and themselves". •

TREE PLANTING PARTNERSHIP

OTARY clubs in West Yorkshire joined forces during National Tree Week to plant a number of trees in Whinney Hill Park in Brighouse.

Rotary Clubs in Brighouse, Elland, Halifax, Halifax Calder, Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge and Denby Dale, took part in the planting, joining officers from Calderdale Council and representatives from the Woodland Trust.

National Tree Week took place during the first week of December to mark the start of the winter planting season.

Calderdale Council's Countryside Team had prepared the ground for planting.

And the Rotary clubs then got involved with the planting of nearly 800 trees, with species including silver birch, oak, bird cherry, alder, grey willow, malus sylvestris, hawthorn, holly, rowan, elder and hazel.

The woodland is an extension to the tree cover in the park which received funding last year from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund.

The Rotary clubs got involved in

the tree planting project after reading a
Woodland Trust report which stated that
whilst overall tree cover is increasing
in England, associated wildlife is in
decline due in part to the fact that
a lot of the trees that have been
planted in the last 100 years
haven't been native species.

Stephen Ellis, Rotary
District President for Yorkshire
and North Lincolnshire, said:
"Rotary in Yorkshire and North
Lincolnshire is committed to
improving the environment by
working with local communities
to plant woodland across the
country."





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TEACHINGTHE TEACHERS



HANKS to the efforts of the eClub of Innovation, Ely Hereward Rotary and a D1080 (Rotary in East Anglia) Foundation Grant, the first pack of the 'Teach the Teacher' project has been installed in The Gambia.

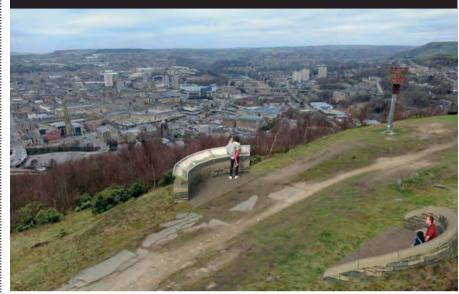
It is aimed to extend to six more sites in the country and, eventually, the rest of Africa.

The 'Teach the Teacher' installation pack comprises ten BBC micro:bit computers, a projector, a video conference camera, a 4G/Wifi hub and an uninterruptible power supply. Also, with this pack, a further ten BBC micro:bit kits were supplied by the company Arm, so students can be trained in coding.

Since the installation of the online system, instruction has been led by teachers from Cambridge St John's School. The next phase is to use the equipment to deliver live events featuring health and agriculture skills as well as entrepreneurship.

"When we define 'Teach the Teacher', it does not just apply to teachers in education, it aims to enable communities to teach each other," explained organiser, John Beer.

A CENTENARY VIEW



ALIFAX Rotary celebrates its centenary next year, and so the West Yorkshire club is planning an ambitious project to mark the occasion.

The club has begun a fund-raising campaign to create a viewing platform on Beacon Hill, which will provide a panoramic view over the town of Halifax and beyond.

It will be placed near to the beacon on the very popular walkway, the Magna Via which featured in the recent BBC TV series, Gentleman Jack, about the life of Anne Lister. The club has received the necessary permissions from Calderdale Council, as well as the support of the town's MP and Mayor. Now the plan is to raise £18,500 towards the viewing platform, with £6,000 in pledges already collected.

Halifax Rotary is hoping to complete construction of the platform by the end of March. It should be ready when several hundred members of the Anne Lister Society, including visitors from the USA and Australia, are visiting Halifax early in April to see the filming locations of the Gentleman Jack TV series, including this walk over Beacon Hill.

ROTARY IN THE HIGHLANDS

NVERNESS Rotary has just celebrated 100 years of Rotary in the Scottish Highland capital.

It is one of the oldest clubs in Scotland, which emerged from a momentous event in 1921. With Prime Minister Lloyd George, on holiday at Gairloch, and other Cabinet Ministers enjoying the recess within easy reach of Inverness, the troubles in Ireland were at a crucial and delicate stage.

That prompted a meeting of the Cabinet at Inverness Town Hall, known in the Whitehall archives as the 'Inverness Conference'.

According to Vivian Carter, Secretary

of British Rotary, who addressed Inverness Rotary in 1923: "The great part Rotary had played in the attempt to heal the Irish sore, which ultimately led to the Lloyd George Cabinet Meeting in Inverness, was an idea born in the Rotary Club of Dublin."

The prospect of participating in an international organisation dedicated to service interested active local men.

They gathered for the first time in the Palace Hotel, October 21st, 1921 to form the Rotary Club of Inverness.

For their centenary, Rotarians have produced a commemorative book tracing the history of the club.

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RECYCLED CYCLES

ACKIE Wellman from Rayleigh Mill Rotary in Essex loves collecting bikes.

So far, she has collected 640 unwanted bikes from the Southend area which are being refurbished and then recycled bound for Africa.

The bikes are transported to the Re-Cycle charity in Colchester.

There, they are refurbished and shipped to communities in Africa where they transform the lives of the recipients by providing quick and easy transport in areas that have none.

This allows girls to collect water faster, giving them the opportunity to go to school and allows adults to find work in areas that would otherwise be impossible to reach.

Jackie has been working alongside Bob Taylor, Rotarian Steve Gale of 'Steve's Van Hire' and colleagues from Rayleigh Mill Rotary as part of the project.

She said it never ceases to amaze her with the offers of unwanted bicycles she receives.

"There are that many unused cycles still remaining in south-east Essex, that I will continue with the project, which is friendly to the environment and transforms the lives of the people who receive them."

FATAL FIRE SUPPORT

OTARIANS in Reading rallied to support the community following a devastating fire which killed one person and left 20 people homeless.

Within hours, Pangbourne Rotarian Marius Hopley had liaised with rescue services and Reading Borough Council, met some of the victims and identified their immediate needs.

Pangbourne Rotary donated £1,000, while Marius with his wife Saerah, a fellow Rotarian, used the funds to supply clothes, toiletries, and other essentials specific to each victim.

A publicity campaign was started and a fund-raising site for the victims set up on the club's Facebook page.

Assistant District Governor, Tony Eldridge, notified the other nine Reading Rotary clubs who rallied to the cause with offers of help. Reading Abbey President Sue Robinson and her team organised three days of street collections in Reading town centre, which raised more than £2,000.



Tony said: "The public have been very impressed at the speed with which Rotary has acted and this, in turn, has led to some membership enquiries."

ROTARY ROSES BLOOMING



ATTON Rotary has added a rose garden to the sensory garden at the Dragonfly Gallery in the Norfolk town, in memory of long-term member, Martin Anscombe who died last July.

Three Rotary Sunrise Roses have since been donated to the Dragonfly Gallery and planted by Dragonfly Gallery staff. They were dedicated by Martin's partner, Helen, who placed a plaque in the ground.

Two of the roses were donated by Watton Rotary and the third was donated by Peter Beales Roses from Attleborough, who are the growing and marketing partners for the roses.



CAMPAIGN started in London 10 years ago, providing more than 180,000 donated winter coats for those vulnerable and living on our streets, has, once again, been supported by Rotary clubs across the UK.

In Greater Manchester, Cheadle Royal Rotary staged a three-week campaign with collection points at supermarkets in the area and a golf club which resulted in generous donations of 238 thick warm coats for adults and children.

Once the coats have been stored and quarantined at national Safestore locations, free of charge, they are sorted and then distributed amongst various local charities including homeless shelters, women's refuges and children's centres

These charities are best placed to identify the people most in need of a warm winter coat and those who have generously donated coats can be assured they will go to someone who really needs it.

Geoff Shelmerdine from Rotary Cheadle Royal said: "This is Rotary at its best supporting the local community in partnership with such a worthwhile project that is 'Wrap Up'.

"Thousands of vulnerable people, young and old in crisis, living on the streets and in desperate need of support, will at least have the benefit of a warm coat this winter through the generosity of the good people of Cheshire." •

TREE OF MEMORIES

OTARIANS in Northern Ireland staged a fund-raiser for Prostate Cancer NI over the festive period. Coleraine Rotary held several days of fund-raising, which was opened by Mayor Cllr Richard Holmes, and who was welcomed by President Graeme Strachan.

The Tree of Memories initiative was given added impetus when the club hosted Professor Joe O'Sullivan, a world expert oncologist on prostate cancer, who is developing new treatments to improve outcomes from all aspects of this disease.

His talk stressed the need for men to get checked regularly and be open to discuss the issue of prostate cancer.

About one in eight men in the UK will get prostate cancer in their lifetime.

Prostate cancer mainly affects men over 50, and the risk increases with age. Early detection is the lifesaver.





WO of Barrow's Rotary clubs, Furness and Furness Peninsular, joined forces to unveil a tree in memory of HRH Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Duke, who died last April, was an honorary Rotarian at a number of clubs.

The two Furness clubs had decided that an oak tree would form the most appropriate memorial.

The clubs were grateful to BAE Systems, Burlington Stone (part of the Holker Group), who provided the slate for the plague which was shaped and finished by The Stone Workshop Ltd from Ulverston.

Meanwhile, Peter Garwood, Community Service Lead at Furness Rotary, was presented with a BBC North West Tonight Christmas Star.

The award is made to someone in North West England who has gone the extra mile and made a difference.

Peter spearheaded the Covid vaccination campaign in the Furness area. He organised dozens of Rotary volunteers and friends to help patients at the Alfred Barrow Health Centre in Barrow. More than 80,000 vaccines have been administered there.

Check out Rotarygbi.org/news

for daily updates of Rotary news



and finally...

From Managing Editor Dave King editor@rotarygbi.org

WHY NOT READ IT AND LEAVE IT?

T'S hard to believe it is now two years since the words coronavirus and pandemic became part of the vernacular. Who could have known in March 2020 the impact which successive lockdowns, and restrictions in movement would have on our daily lives?

From a Rotary perspective, Covid-19 has been a defining point for the organisation. We have lost many members, some of whom have gone on to greater service, and witnessed the closure of a number of Rotary clubs which became no longer sustainable.

Equally, the pandemic has coincided with the growth of a number of new-style Rotary clubs, such as passport clubs and the Rotary Global Hub, providing a more flexible approach to service.

Rotary can no longer be set in its ways. We cannot do things simply because "that's the way we have always done it". Stick to that mantra and Rotary becomes as attractive as yesterday's leftovers.

In being prepared to adapt and change, let's be mindful of the audience out there; those prospective members who are Rotarians of the future.

How do we market ourselves, what image do we portray?

I was interested to read the excellent posters presented by Rotary North-East which are illustrated on these pages. The idea was hatched by Sunderland Rotarian, Josey George, who wanted to mount an advertising campaign for his club.

This was soon taken up by the district as a way of modernising Rotary's image. After all, anyone wishing to join Rotary will always ask "what's in it for me?"

Josey's campaign has been so effective that other organisations, such as Toastmasters International, have asked how the idea was crafted.

I have always maintained that *Rotary* magazine is one of our best

marketing tools because the content is presented with its audience in mind – both Rotarians, but also an external audience too.

The magazine presents Rotary across its many layers, showcasing the work which we do in Great Britain and Ireland and abroad. It spotlights the sort of people who are proud to call themselves Rotarians.

It's why this month, we are encouraging Rotarians to 'Read It & Leave It' with their magazine.

When you have finished reading the latest issue, why not pass it on to a friend or colleague?

Even better, why not drop off a copy of Rotary at your local library, coffee shop, GP's surgery, community centre or business?

Put a sticky label on the front with your club's contact details and promote your club to a wider audience. It beats picking up gnarled copies of *Reader's Digest* in the doctor's waiting room!

Of course, in this post-Covid climate, there are restrictions about what can be left where, and we are certainly not suggesting fly-tipping your magazines in an unwelcome spot.

Already, a number of Rotary clubs have latched onto the idea by leaving *Rotary* magazines at key community locations offering a shop window to our organisation.

So, unless your club has got a huge waiting list of potential members, why would you not try this? And if, as a couple, you are receiving two copies of the magazine at home, then put it to good use.

We live in a moment of great change, but also one of great opportunity. Let's use this time to spread the word about Rotary.

Let's 'Read It & Leave It'.



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PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

SHELTERBOX AND ROTARY ARE WORKING TOGETHER IN THE PHILIPPINES



TOGETHER WE CAN SHELTER FAMILIES WHEN DISASTERS ROB THEM OF THEIR HOMES

66

We took the opportunity to join ShelterBox and travel here to distribute shelter kits. We have distributed to many people who have lost their home, many people who have nothing over their roof.

— Walter Cang, Rotary Club of Cebu

Our partnership is once again in action in the Philippines where Typhoon Rai devastated communities and left over half a million people without anywhere to live. The Rotary Club of Cebu has worked closely with ShelterBox to provide extensive support with logistics and aid distributions. Shelter and aid items were reaching families within days of the disaster, thanks to our life-saving partnership.

Given how extensive the need is, we are working hard to do more and resupply aid to the Philippines.

Book a ShelterBox speaker to update your club, visit **shelterbox.org** or email rotaryrequest@shelterbox.org







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