

Rotary

AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2022

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POLIOVIRUS IN THE UK

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Rotary

Contact us

Editor: Dave King
editor@rotarygbi.org

Publisher: Contently Limited
contentlylondon.co.uk

Graphic Designer: Martin Tandy
martin.tandy@rotarygbi.org

Advertising Sales Agency
Century One Publishing
Rory Fear
Rory@centuryone.uk
01727 739181

Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland
Kinwarton Road, Alcester,
Warwickshire B49 6PB
01789 765 411
rotarygbi.org

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Welcome

BEFORE Covid, a couple of years ago, I visited Delhi with a multinational Rotary team as part of India's national polio immunisation campaign.

After visiting the slums of the Indian capital and speaking to health officials, I was acutely aware how fragile the polio peace is in the country. One official described the situation like "a tinderbox" for a country which has remained polio-free since 2014.

Therefore, it was a huge surprise to learn the news of the finding of the poliovirus from sewage sampling in London. Surely, polio is an artefact of history in first world countries. Clearly not.

Yet after 30 months of living under the spectre of a Covid pandemic, we do not need reminding how there are bad viruses out there, and that disciplined immunisation programmes are the only way of tackling the threat.

In this month's issue of *Rotary* magazine, we shed a light on what happened in London and what lessons are to be learned. For Rotarians, the End Polio Now campaign sits at the heart of our work.

If anything, what happened in London merely amplified the consequences if polio is not completely eradicated.

After years of campaigning, and at a time when there is talk of 'polio fatigue', maybe what happened in London tempered any complacency and has sharpened our will to complete the job.

Of course, campaigning for polio eradication forms only part of Rotary's focus.

When you read the magazine, it is incredible to witness the vast array

of work which Rotarians undertake so willingly and diligently, without reward or recognition, to make the world a better and safer place.

One example is the work of the humanitarian organisations who respond so quickly to disasters around the world with relief aid. Organisations such as ShelterBox and Aquabox which were founded by Rotarians and which have provided vital lifelines to stricken communities.

Aquabox celebrated its 30th birthday in June. We celebrate the work of the Derbyshire-based organisation and other Rotary-inspired humanitarian charities which have become vital and trusted bodies wherever there is a need globally.

On a very different tack, I discovered by accident, after speaking at one of the clubs, how Rotary shops are springing up around the country.

Besides being great promotional platforms for the work of Rotary, these stores are providing a valuable source of fund-raising. Penzance and Frome Rotarians provide two examples of how Rotary clubs can run a small, but successful business in the High Street. It takes tremendous organisation, and good contacts, but I have a feeling this feature might trigger discussion at other Rotary clubs whether they might be able to follow suit.

It is, of course, the start of a new Rotary year. We hear from Nicki Scott, who is the new Rotary International Vice-President working alongside Jennifer Jones, and also from Gordon McNally, who will become RI President in less than 12 months' time.

We certainly live in interesting times!

Dave King
Editor, Rotary Magazine



"The toilet we had before was always dirty because we never had water to clean it. But now WaterAid has made water and toilets available for our school and we have enough water."

Habtuma, 17, Amhara region, Ethiopia

Building foundations for the future

How can children thrive at school if they don't have clean water and toilets? In sub-Saharan Africa, over half of all schools do not have a basic water service or decent toilets. It means children spend their days thirsty, dehydrated and struggling to concentrate. It means that girls have nowhere hygienic and private to manage their periods, so often miss classes, or even drop out of school.

But we're determined to change this. By the end of March 2024, under the umbrella of the Sustainable WASH programme and in collaboration with the Millennium Water Alliance, we're planning to reach 11,000 students with access to water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the Amhara region of Ethiopia.

Habtamu's school has already seen the benefit of clean water and decent toilets, and Habtamu is proud to have also received training from WaterAid in hygiene awareness. He's now the Sanitation Minister of his school's WASH club, and trains other students on good hygiene practices.

Can your club help us reach even more schools like Habtamu's? Pledge to raise £1,000 or more towards our Ethiopia – Elevating Impact project, and we'll send your club detailed biannual reports on how your support is transforming lives. **Together, we can spark lasting change with access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. Together, we can ensure children like Habtamu realise their potential.**

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THE POLIO BOMBSHELL

Following the discovery of poliovirus in London, how likely is it that the disease will return to these shores?

STORY BY **DAVE KING**

WHEN the bombshell landed in Beckton, it exploded with a ferocity which could be felt the world over. Polio had been discovered in London's Docklands.

Not since 1984 has there been a case of polio in the United Kingdom, which was declared polio-free in 2003. Polio is considered eliminated in most first world countries - Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only two countries in the world where the infection is still classified as endemic.

However, its sudden emergence in east London reminded us of the irreducibly global nature of health.

The announcement was made in June by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) who had discovered the poliovirus in samples collected between February and May this year from the Beckton sewage works which serves a

population of four million in north and east London.

Scientists believe the virus originated from someone who was immunised aboard with the live oral polio vaccine, which hasn't been used in the UK since 2004. No actual cases of polio have been detected or confirmed.

For Rotary, which has been at the heart of efforts to tackle the debilitating disease since launching its PolioPlus campaign in 1985 becoming a founding member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, the news from London was a major blow.

Mark Esho, a member of Leicester Novus Rotary Club, woke up paralysed from the neck down after contracting polio aged just five. He said that when he heard the news about the polio discovery in the capital, his blood ran cold.

He said: "When I saw the news from London, it sent a shiver through my

spine. I thought the last thing we need is a polio outbreak.

"It's a horrible, horrible virus. I just pray that this doesn't happen to someone else."

Just days before the news broke, Colin Powell from Radlett Rotary Club in Hertfordshire, was speaking to the Prince of Wales about living with polio when they met at St Paul's Cathedral for the Platinum Jubilee Thanksgiving Service for Her Majesty The Queen.

He said: "For all of us within Rotary who work so hard for polio eradication, such news brings great sadness.

"My first reaction is that people should not panic, but just ensure that not only new-born babies are vaccinated against this wretched paralysing disease, but also adults who were not previously vaccinated.

"I received my polio vaccine upon the birth of my first grandchild following



"MY FIRST REACTION IS THAT PEOPLE SHOULD NOT PANIC, BUT JUST ENSURE THAT NOT ONLY NEW-BORN BABIES ARE VACCINATED AGAINST THIS WRETCHED PARALYSING DISEASE, BUT ALSO ADULTS WHO WERE NOT PREVIOUSLY VACCINATED."

medical advice when I was aged 47. This left me extremely depressed for several weeks thereafter thinking how different my life would have been had the polio vaccine been available when I was born in 1949.

"Let's hope that we can turn bad news into good news by all of us in Rotary now working with even more vigour to globally eradicate polio."

Following the announcement of the Beckett discovery, the UKHSA sought to allay fears, suggesting the risk of someone catching polio in the UK was low. However, they urged parents to ensure their children have been fully immunised against the disease.

Dr Vanessa Saliba, a consultant epidemiologist at UKHSA said: "Vaccine-derived poliovirus is rare and the risk to the public overall is extremely low.

"Vaccine-derived poliovirus has the potential to spread, particularly in communities where vaccine uptake is lower.

On rare occasions it can cause paralysis in people who are not fully vaccinated, so if you or your child are not up to date with your polio vaccinations it's important you contact your GP to

catch up or if unsure check your red book.

"Most of the UK population will be protected from vaccination in childhood, but in some communities with low vaccine coverage, individuals may remain at risk.

"We are urgently investigating to better understand the extent of this transmission and the NHS has been asked to swiftly report any suspected cases to the UKHSA, though no cases have been reported or confirmed so far."

An inactivated polio vaccine is used in the UK as part of the routine childhood programme.

It is given to children three times before the age of one, and then again at three and 14 years of age.

In rare cases, the virus can be transmitted to others and mutate into what is known as 'vaccine-derived' polio.

Although weaker than the original, or 'wild' form of the disease, it can still cause serious illness, including paralysis, in people who are unvaccinated.

Polio vaccine coverage in the UK has fallen slightly in the last five years, from a peak in 2013 to 92.6% in 2020/21 for children aged one.

But coverage of the teenage booster shot, given at age 14, has fallen further due to school closures during the covid pandemic, and in London it was 71%, although this has now risen to 78%.

UK coverage for all childhood vaccinations, which covers diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, hib and hepatitis B, plateaued between 2011-12 and 2013-14, and has since declined, according to analysis from the Nuffield Trust.

Judith Diment, a member of Rotary International's PolioPlus Committee, admitted that although the detection was disturbing, it was not unexpected.

She said: "This is another example of what we have been saying for many years – as long as polio exists anywhere it is a risk to children everywhere. It is only a plane ride away.

"We know how to prevent and stop such outbreaks, and have demonstrated that these strategies work, even in the most challenging environments.

"The poliovirus is opportunistic and will exploit gaps in population immunity wherever it finds them.

"Rotarians can play a key role in raising funds and awareness to achieve 📍



"THE POLIOVIRUS IS OPPORTUNISTIC AND WILL EXPLOIT GAPS IN POPULATION IMMUNITY WHEREVER IT FINDS THEM."

a polio-free world and ensure that we protect the gains we have worked so hard to achieve.

"Note the vital importance of continued vaccination in polio-free countries to mitigate the risk of a possible outbreak. It's important for Rotarians to continue to reinforce confidence in immunisation as a safe and effective way to protect against polio and other vaccine preventable diseases."

Following the detection in Beckton, UK health authorities declared a national incident and informed the World Health Organization (WHO) of the situation.

Monitoring the events closely in Geneva is Aidan O'Leary, the Director for Polio Eradication at the WHO. Like Judith, he was unsurprised by the news from London.

"No country is immune from polio, as this event in London clearly highlights," said the Irishman.

He praised the UK health authorities for detecting a public health threat before it was able to cause any infection.

"Thanks to this, the UK is now able to respond: meaning expand and strengthen further their environmental disease surveillance, alert health providers to look out for symptoms of paralysis in children, and – most importantly – identify clearly any vaccination gaps and ensure those

children may also be fully protected.

"These are exactly the right things to be doing. Until polio is eradicated, this is the best thing any country can do: maintain strong disease surveillance and high vaccination coverage, to minimise the risk and consequences of any polio re-emergence."

The WHO official said that the incident in London had given a tiny glimpse of what might happen if the common goal of global polio eradication is not reached.

"The reality is, we will continue to see such events, until we achieve global eradication," added Aidan. "It's inevitable.

"The good news is that we know what it takes to eradicate polio. We have the strategies. We have the medical and diagnostic tools.

"From a biological and technical point of view, the feasibility of achieving eradication is completely established.

"We have tremendous support, from tremendous partners.

"Rotary International and Rotarians around the world are, of course, leading the way; raising funds, engaging with leadership in polio-affected and donor countries.

"Political, community and medical leadership in Pakistan and Afghanistan, the last two countries which remain

endemic to wild poliovirus, are literally in overdrive to finding the remaining 'zero-dose' children, i.e. those children who have never been reached and immunised.

"Political fora, ranging from the G7, G20, the Commonwealth to the World Health Assembly, all recognise the opportunity.

"All are urging for global commitment, all are calling for increased support and leadership in finishing the remaining strains of wild poliovirus transmission.

"But we cannot achieve success unless we redouble our efforts. The event in London, and others elsewhere, must spur us on.

"All countries will benefit equally from a polio-free world, but that means they should also invest equally into achieving such a world.

"In October, Rotary International and other partners, such as the Government of Germany, are hosting a global polio pledging moment at the World Health Summit.

"This is a perfect opportunity for international partners everywhere to come together to recommit to this effort, and we hope of course that the Governments of the UK and the Government of Ireland will join their Rotary friends at this event too." ●

“The school has a warm, happy and positive feel to it and it's rewarding to be part of it”

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A PORT IN STORMY WATERS



WHEN Storm Desmond wreaked havoc in north-west England in December 2015, Rotary was there to help.

Towns in Cumbria experienced their worst floods ever. The Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Disaster Recovery Trust stepped in to ensure that two community buildings – the 1st Kendal Scout HQ and the Kendal Deaf Centre – were rebuilt.

Money was raised through the combined efforts of Rotary clubs in Kendal, Kendal South Westmorland, and those around the country, as far afield as Chichester and Hemel Hempstead.

However, owing to shortfalls due to insurance cover, additional help was needed. The Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Disaster Recovery Trust was approached to bridge the gap in funding. This allowed for repairs to the buildings to be completed.

According to Chairman, Brian Stoyel, this is very typical of the unheralded work of the Trust. Established in 2007, it collates donations and awards grants to Rotary projects which rebuild communities.

“Rotary knows that helping rebuild

communities in the long-term is just as important as responding to the immediate aftermath of disasters,” he said.

“So, in addition to Rotary supporting communities in the immediate days and weeks after a disaster, Rotary can use the Trust’s fund to help in the long-term rebuilding of sustainable community projects, both home and abroad.”

Brian pointed out how in recent years, the Disaster Recovery Trust has collated funds for earthquakes in Italy, New Zealand, Nepal and Haiti, flooding in the UK, Ireland and Pakistan, as well as hurricanes in the Caribbean.

In 2019, the Trust responded in the Bahamas following Tropical Hurricane Dorian, helping to rebuild the country, particularly schools and local businesses.

And in Nepal, the Trust helped rebuild a school in Laangarche, Sindhupalchok in 2017 following the devastating earthquake two years earlier.

Compared to Global Grants awarded by The Rotary Foundation, the scale of grants given by the Trust is much smaller.

However, they are looking for community projects to support. There are adequate funds available to help

rebuild communities which have experienced flood disaster in the UK.

Brian added: “With the money in the UK fund, I have appealed to District Governors asking them how we can spend it. Perhaps it is a lack of understanding.”

To be considered for a grant from the Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Disaster Recovery Trust, projects must:

- Address a community need, with the aim of providing sustainable development.
- Demonstrate a benefit to the community as a whole, and not an individual person.
- Have significant Rotary involvement and visible Rotary identification.
- Rotarians must be actively involved and take responsibility in each grant project, and regularly report on the status of the project. ●

Information

Contact Brian Stoyel
brian@stoyel.co.uk

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PREPARING FOR THE WORST

| STORY BY **YIOTA LIOPETRITI, SHELTERBOX** |

THE 2020 Atlantic hurricane season was the most active on record, producing an enormous 30 named storms - 14 of them hurricanes.

The next year saw another above-average season. In fact, 2021 was a terrible year for disasters. July 2021 saw an unprecedented number of extreme flooding events everywhere around the globe – from India to Western Europe, as well as devastating wildfires in places such as Cyprus, Turkey and the USA.

Looking to the year ahead, experts are predicting yet another above-average Atlantic Hurricane season, the seventh in a row.

| WHEN DOES THE HURRICANE SEASON START AND END?

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from the 1st of June to the 30th of November each year. It covers the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

Hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones are all tropical storms, the only difference is where they originate from: hurricanes form in the tropical Atlantic and the Eastern Pacific Ocean, typhoons in the West Pacific Ocean and cyclones form south of the equator, off the coast of places such as Australia and Madagascar.

In 2021, the Atlantic hurricane season was the third most active on record. By early August, we had already seen five named storms, including one hurricane. The first, Elsa, formed on July 1st, seriously affected parts of St Lucia, Cuba, Florida, and the Dominican Republic.

| WHAT ARE THE PREDICTIONS FOR 2022 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON:

This year, the Colorado State University is forecasting 19 named storms and nine hurricanes, four of which are predicted to be major hurricanes. Despite the prediction of this season being well-above-average yet again, we still do not know with certainty if this year will be as bad as the two previous years, but we want to be prepared

| HOW DO HURRICANES AFFECT COMMUNITIES?

An abnormally active hurricane season is not good news for families living in at-risk locations in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico.

Imagine having to protect yourself from a global pandemic that has affected hundreds of thousands of lives already, whilst also preparing for potentially some of the most dangerous hurricanes of the decade. It's unimaginable.

Here at ShelterBox, we are constantly on standby, monitoring weather events using a number of alert systems. For hurricanes, there are some more bespoke monitoring systems, so we keep an eye on the US's National Hurricane Centre.

| HOW DOES SHELTERBOX RESPOND TO HURRICANES?

There are always challenges when responding to hurricanes, the widespread destruction can affect families in serious ways – both physically through losing loved ones, and mentally with trauma.

In addition, infrastructure damage can affect not just ports, airports and roads but can also present extreme challenges for governments as they try to support their citizens. The past two years have presented further challenges: the coronavirus pandemic has meant that it has been more challenging for our response teams to travel to hurricane-hit countries.

However, being official project partners with Rotary International has meant that on-the-ground assistance from local Rotary clubs has filled this gap and proven invaluable.

The Rotary Club of San Pedro Sula played a vital role in our 2020 Honduras response, taking on the complicated task of getting our shelter kits into the country and organising the unloading of eleven 40ft containers.

They also utilised their Rotary networks and coordinated other Rotary clubs around the district. This approach, combined with our strategy of storing stock in various locations globally, means we are still able to get shelter to families who are in a vulnerable position, no matter what.

| DOES CLIMATE CHANGE CAUSE MORE HURRICANES?

Whilst climate change is not increasing the number of hurricanes, the rising temperatures are causing storms to become much more intense and have a far more devastating impact.

As a result, in recent years, we have seen far more of the highest possible categories of storms – Categories 4 and 5. But it's not just catastrophic hurricanes, it's floods, droughts, wildfires; the list is long.

At ShelterBox we are dedicated to supporting families after disaster, but we can't do it without Rotarians.

Vital support from Rotary clubs in Great Britain & Ireland will help us to be ready to respond when disaster inevitably strikes, and practical assistance from clubs in the affected countries means our help will get to those who need it most. ●

| Information |

To hear more about ShelterBox's life-saving work, and updates from around the world, why not book a speaker by visiting:

shelterbox.org/rotaryspeaker Or call us on: 01872 302600

Find the full Colorado State University Report here:

tropical.colostate.edu/forecasting.html

GETTING BACK ON THEIR FEET



DISASTER Aid UK & Ireland (DAUK&I), a project of Denton and Audenshaw Rotary from Greater Manchester, has been helping people get back on their feet after disasters by giving them 'a hand up, not a handout' since 1974.

Having started life as Rotary Life Box, in 2010 they joined fellow Rotarians in the USA, Canada and Australia to form Disaster Aid International.

Each country can work autonomously but can also work on joint projects under the Disaster Aid International banner. Each country partner is sponsored by a specific Rotary club and there are currently ten globally.

Deployments to Dominica in 2017 and Indonesia in 2018 have previously featured in *Rotary* magazine.

Projects in 2019 in the Bahamas, Kerala and Mozambique followed and the charity's strategy of Disaster Aid Response Teams (DARTs) to oversee operations has proved a tried and trusted response.

Fast forward a few months into early 2020 and as the world reeled from the impact of Covid-19, it was obvious that it was not safe to deploy DART members.

Far from hampering their efforts, DAUK&I became flexible, adaptable and

resourceful, just like its DART members.

Having used, the now ubiquitous Zoom since well before Covid for meetings, they further embraced it to aid communications and managed to be involved in projects along with Disaster Aid country partners and local Rotary clubs in Brazil, Guatemala, Bangladesh, Central America and Beirut.

In 2021 as Covid-19 continued to challenge, a number of oxygen concentrators were supplied to India.

An innovative but simple means of supplying crucial treatment to those desperately in need.

Tents and other aid were sent to Haiti following an earthquake.

Having worked on a number of projects with the Rotary Club of Greater Changanacherry in Kerala, India, Sawyer water filters which were distributed following flooding and landslides.

The key to working remotely is in dealing with Disaster Aid International partners, local Rotary clubs and other trusted partners.

Not always easy at a distance and DAUK&I would always prefer to deploy DARTs where safe to do so.

War might be even more of an impediment to deploying DARTs, but

as Covid receded, the war in Ukraine in 2022 marked the return of DARTs.

If the team were not quite in the front line, they were certainly closer than most of us would care to be.

Arriving in Suceava, Romania in March 2022 they liaised with Rotarians in Romania and Ukraine. Within Ukraine the power supply is inconsistent and in a medical setting potentially crucial.

A plan was formed to work with Romanian and Ukrainian Rotarians to provide back-up generators which are scarce. A supply chain was established, sourcing generators in Romania for delivery to specific locations, including hospitals in Ukraine.

So, a bit closer to business as usual for Disaster Aid UK & Ireland and with climate change, Covid, natural disasters and wars its help will continue to be needed. ●

Information

Contact www.disasteraiduk.org for more details, to join the newsletter or request a speaker.



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AQUABOX CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF AID

| STORY BY COLIN PETTY |

What started as a small project by two Rotary clubs in Derbyshire has grown on an international scale.



AQUABOX, the Rotary charity based in Derbyshire, has celebrated its 30th birthday – and has continued to send water filters and humanitarian aid to disaster zones and conflict areas around the world, despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

Scores of guests gathered at the Aquabox depot in Wirksworth in June to celebrate the charity's birthday, with a speech of welcome by Mrs Elizabeth Fothergill CBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire. "It is my pleasure to be here to celebrate the 30th birthday of a quite remarkable Derbyshire charity which has made a massive impact around the world," she said.

It was in 1991 when two members of Wirksworth Rotary Club, Mike Hoole and Peter Hare, came up with a way to improve on the club's charitable work.

Wirksworth Rotary Club members were already contributing to an emergency box scheme initiated by the Rotary Club of Denton, helping to fill wooden boxes of humanitarian aid which were sent to disaster areas around the world.

Mike and Peter's idea was to replace the wooden box with a plastic crate so that with the addition of a charcoal filter, chlorine sterilising tablets and a tap, the crate could be used as a water reservoir and filter, to convert polluted water into safe drinking water.

That led to the creation a year later of a new charity, named Aquabox. But there was a financial hurdle at the outset: the plastic box manufacturer stipulated a minimum order of 3,000 boxes at a cost of £30,000, money the club didn't have. But Wirksworth Rotary Club members rose to the challenge, and personally underwrote this commitment to the tune of £1,000 each.

During its first 10 years, Aquabox aid was sent to disaster zones across the world: Africa, the Caribbean, south America, south-east Asia and even North Korea.

Aid was also sent to conflict zones like Kosovo, Croatia and Serbia, supporting families caught up in the Balkan wars.

The 2004 tsunami presented the charity with a new challenge, and

"DURING ITS FIRST 10 YEARS, AQUABOX AID WAS SENT TO DISASTER ZONES ACROSS THE WORLD: AFRICA, THE CARIBBEAN, SOUTH AMERICA, SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND EVEN NORTH KOREA."

volunteers and Rotarians across the country worked around the clock to pack chlorine tablets, and fill and dispatch Aquaboxes to countries worst hit by this devastating natural event.

Then in 2010, Aquabox was approached by John Griffiths, who had developed a simple ultra-filtration hand pump to convert polluted water into clean, safe water for drinking, for cooking and for washing. This was a giant leap forward: instead of using a carbon filter and chlorine tablets to provide safe drinking water for a few months, the new pump could process thousands of litres of water – and it could go on working for years.

The Aquabox family filter, designed to meet the needs of an average family, went into production in 2011.

John Griffiths helped to set up a filter assembly operation at Aquabox's Wirksworth depot, and teams of volunteers were recruited and trained to assemble and test the new filters.

Over time the original design has been refined and improved – currently the teams are assembling the Mk3 version – and in 2016 the charity was honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a charity can receive.

When Covid-19 arrived in early 2020, the Aquabox trustees realised it would have a serious impact on the charity. Most of its filter assembly and box packing volunteers, are retired, and were judged particularly vulnerable to the virus, so normal activities had to be curtailed.

But it also created the opportunity to move to a new depot on the same estate, fitted out and decorated by volunteers, so that when production was able resume after lockdown, it was in a much more efficient environment.

Fortunately, the charity had built up

stocks before the pandemic, so it was able to continue to send filters and aid while the depot move was going on.

"We managed to send shipments to both Yemen and Syria, as well as a further shipment to Nepal," said Roger Cassidy, chair of trustees.

"And we also bought in a further consignment of Mk3 filters to supplement our own stock, which meant we were able to send aid to Beirut after the disastrous explosion in August 2020.

"We got the volunteers back into the new depot and resumed production in time to meet the new demand from Ukraine – so far we have sent five shipments, with more planned."

Since Aquabox switched to assembling the ultra-filtration pumps in 2011, the volunteer teams have manufactured more than 24,000 filter units and sent them to disaster areas and conflict zones around the world.

The ultra-filtration core filters down to 0.02 of a micron (a micron is one thousandth of a millimetre) – and that's smaller than the smallest known water-borne disease pathogen, so nothing gets through.

The filter protects against cholera, typhoid, polio, dengue fever, guinea worm and many other water-borne diseases. A simple daily back-flushing process clears the accumulated bacteria and viruses, and leaves the filter ready for further use, and every filter has the capacity to process up to half a million litres of water.

Over the past 30 years, Aquabox filters have provided untold thousands of people living in extreme

deprivation with access to safe, clean water for drinking, for cooking and for washing. It's almost entirely the work of unpaid volunteers – even now, there is only one paid staff member, and he's a part-timer.

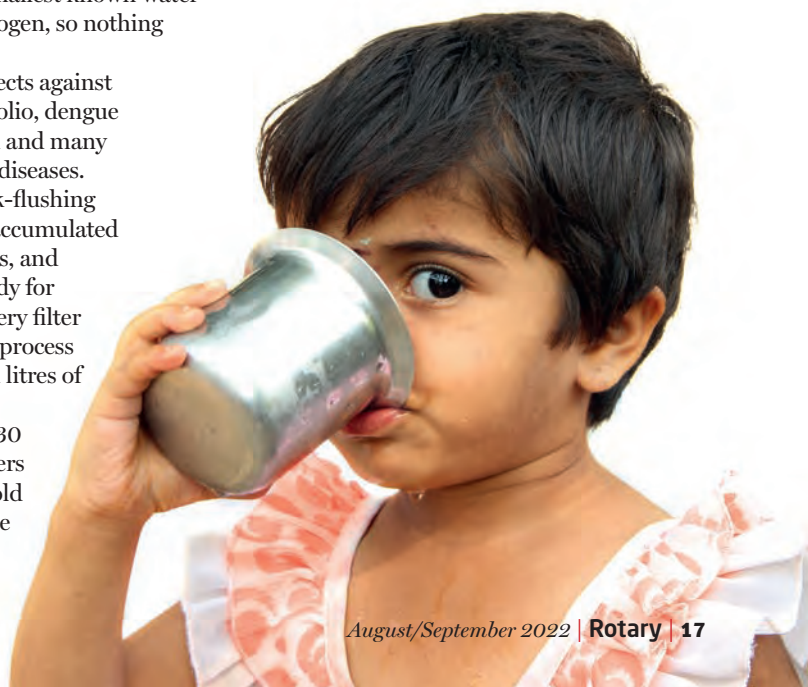
All of this has been funded almost entirely by donations, notably donations from Rotary clubs across the British Isles. There is no way of knowing how many lives have been saved by Aquabox's intervention, but it must be a huge number.

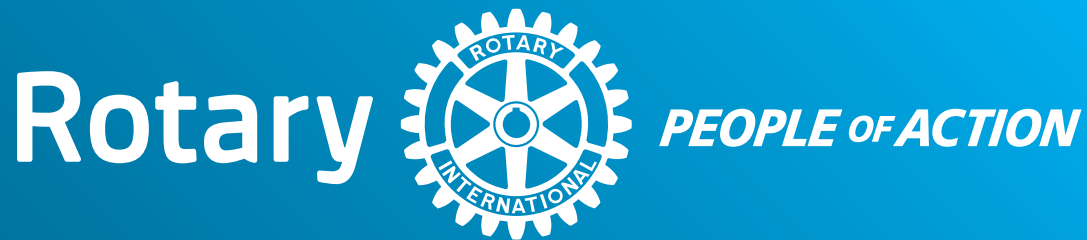
And it all began with two Wirksworth Rotarians who saw the need for clean, safe water – and who had the vision and the drive to do something about it. ●

| Information |

For more information contact:

www.aquabox.org





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The Pencil Case Wines Project

A collaboration with
WineClub
by Majestic

Hermanus, South Africa, is famous for whale watching and quality wines. But lack of employment opportunities, exacerbated by the Covid pandemic, mean that many families struggle economically. Unsupported by the local government, parents here are challenged to provide their children with the basics required for schooling.



A word from Mark Capon Director of Wine Club by Majestic

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For every case purchased via the QR code below, a donation of £10 will be made towards the Pencil Case Wines Project.

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Wine Tasting Event Friday 30th September

Those who subscribe are invited to join a tasting event hosted by **Richard Bampffield MW** and our **Majestic expert, Christine Barkey**.

This will take place **ONLINE on Friday 30th September**.
See our Rotary Facebook or Eventbrite to book your places.



This will take you
to our webpage.

ROTARY SOCIAL

Since the last edition of Rotary magazine, there have been many exciting developments and announcements in the world of Rotary and volunteering. Here is where you can find them across social media.

| STORY BY **GEORGE BICKNELL** |



TWITTER | FACEBOOK | **YOUTUBE** | INSTAGRAM

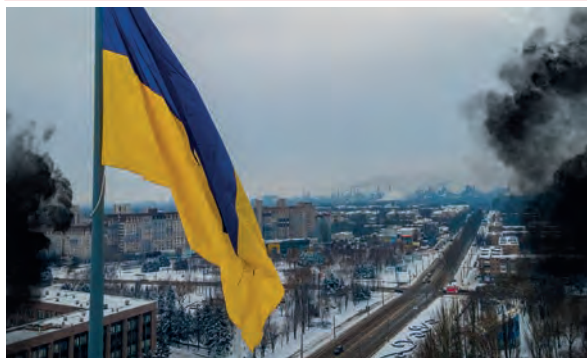


OUR NEW ROTARY AMBASSADOR

Rotary Great Britain & Ireland is delighted to announce that rising wheelchair tennis star Abbie Breakwell will be taking on the role of Rotary GB&I Ambassador. Abbie spoke in detail about her Rotary journey so far and her plans for new role in a video on the Rotary GB&I YouTube channel.



TWITTER | FACEBOOK | **YOUTUBE** | INSTAGRAM

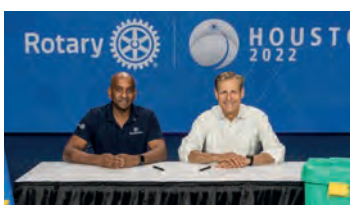


HEAR FROM UKRAINIAN ROTARIANS

Hosted by Jannine Birtwistle, this seminar allowed viewers to hear directly from Rotarians in Ukraine about what their own Crisis Team and Rotarians across Ukraine are doing in response to ongoing conflict in the country. View the whole seminar on the Rotary GB&I YouTube channel.



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SHELTERBOX PARTNERSHIP RENEWED

During the most recent Rotary International Convention, Rotary International and disaster relief charity ShelterBox announced a three-year renewal of their official partnership. Read more about the exciting and important work these two organisations will be doing over the next three years on the ShelterBox Twitter page.



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SHEKHAR MEHTA IN RWANDA

In one of his final engagements as Rotary International President, Shekhar Mehta and his wife Rashmi visited the Kigali Public Library, Rwanda - a landmark set up by Rotarians that is now the biggest library in the country. See highlights from the visit on Shekhar's Facebook page.



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ROTARY MEMBERS SUPPORT REFUGEES

Rising a dramatic 8% over the last year, the number of displaced people globally stands at the highest level since records began. Rotary International has provided a set of ideas for how Rotarians can take action to support refugees which you can find on its Instagram.



TWITTER | **FACEBOOK** | YOUTUBE | INSTAGRAM



ROTARIAN MBE SHARES POLIO STORY

Colin Powell, a Rotarian who has lived with polio since he was six months old, recently received an MBE for services to people with polio. Colin shared the full story of his life as a polio survivor in an interview with which is featured on the Rotary GB&I Facebook page.

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Why charity starts in town

Rotary clubs are always looking for new ways of fund-raising. In Penzance and Frome in south-west England, they are reaping the benefits of opening town centre shops.

| STORY BY **DAVE KING** |

FAMOUS for its pirates and picturesque views, the Cornish town of Penzance is also home to both Penzance Rotary and Mounts Bay Rotary.

For the past eight years, the two clubs have joined forces to run a highly successful shop in the centre of Penzance which raises tens of thousands of pounds for good causes in the region.

The idea of a Penzance Rotary Shop was first contemplated by Rotarian Jon Symons in 2013.

No.1 Market Place, Penzance was home to one of the longest continually trading chemist shops in the country until 2011 when the tenant moved out and locked it up for the final two years of the lease.

The premises have been owned by the Symons family for around 200 years.

Jon's great-great grandfather and great grandfather were each born above the shop in 1825 and 1854, respectively.

It was also the location at which celebrated chemist and inventor of the miner's safety lamp which carried his name, Humphry Davy, spent time whilst apprenticed to the apothecary John Bingham Borlase in the late 1790s.

From the 1820s, for around one hundred years, the business traded as 'Symons Chemist' after which it was rented out and traded as 'Peasgood Chemist' for a further 90 years.

No sooner was the property put on the rental market in 2013, for the first time in over two centuries, than POPUP Penzance approached Jon to see if the shop could be put to temporary community use. That started the ball rolling with the idea of establishing a Rotary charity shop.

Jon, a member of Penzance Rotary,

spoke to Rotarians in Launceston at the opposite end of Cornwall who had successfully set up a charity shop. He produced a written proposal and pitched the idea of a charity shop to his club.

"I had noticed there were at least two Rotary charity pop-up shops in existence which were proving successful, albeit they had to move premises from time to time because they only had month-by-month agreements to use their premises," explained Jon.

"After speaking to Rotarians at Launceston and establishing a few fundamentals about how their venture was working, I pitched the concept to my fellow Rotarians in Penzance early in 2014.

"Penzance Rotary Club had a small and ageing membership, and my club concluded that we were not in a position to take on such a commitment."

In July 2014, Mounts Bay Rotary



had the same idea and agreed to take the premises on a three-month trial basis, with a short-term licence agreement.

The agreement required Mounts Bay Rotary to work together with Penzance Rotary to ensure the best chance of success for the venture.

Any profits were initially shared 75%-25% to reflect that it was Mounts Bay Rotary which had taken on the property, fitted it out and provided the majority of the volunteers.

Jon explained that charity shops qualify for a mandatory 80% business rates relief, with a further 20% relief being at the discretion of the local authority.

In the case of the Penzance Rotary Shop, rent is paid to the landlord, and in return, the landlord grants a secure short-term lease, pays the building insurance and maintains the exterior.

Initially, the shop traded from Tuesday to Saturday each week with two shifts of volunteers working from 10am to 1pm and 1pm to 4pm.

With two volunteers on duty at all times, this required twenty-four volunteer slots to be filled each week.

In addition, a small team of backroom volunteers put in many hours each week sorting and preparing goods for sale.

Donors are encouraged to complete a Gift Aid Form which enables Rotary to claim back thousands of pounds a year from Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs.

Special two-part price tags are used to identify which goods were donated by which donors and used to collate end of year declarations for HMRC.

The initial three-month trial proved to be a success and a subsequent six-month licence agreement was agreed.

These initial licence agreements have since been followed by a series of one-year

and then two-year leases during the last six years. The share of profits has been gradually altered to reflect the change in the supply of volunteers, now 50:50.

More recently, the Penzance Rotary Shop has been formed into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in its own right and the new CIO was approved by the Charities Commission.

Eight trustees are drawn equally, four from each of the two Rotary clubs. A new five-year lease with built in break options commenced in September last year.

Jon said that the profits made by the shop make a real difference in the community. From the outset, the unique selling point of the shop has been that goods donated locally raise money for the benefit of worthwhile local causes.

"A friendly rivalry that had existed between the two Rotary clubs in the past was soon replaced by a deep spirit of cooperation and common purpose," he explained.

The first year's surplus was £18,500. Over the first five years a total surplus of £100,000 had been distributed, and the most recent full year's surplus was £35,000.

"Each of the two clubs have committees to process grant applications and these committees advise their respective clubs on the worthiness of the applications."

Remarkably, over the last two years during the pandemic, the shop's income has been higher than ever.

Although there were many months of enforced closure for the shop followed by a further period during which volunteers were unavailable, two notable factors worked in the shop's favour.

Firstly, the shop received support from Cornwall Council with a £25,000 retail grant. They also benefited from a

bequest from a customer who bequeathed the contents of her flat to the shop, worth almost £30,000.

As the impact of the pandemic hit, Penzance and Mounts Bay Rotary clubs amalgamated their grant-giving efforts to provide financial relief to families in their area hardest hit and experiencing the greatest deprivation.

Jon explained: "The south-west contains some of the most economically deprived areas in the country, parts of Penzance and Newlyn being particularly underprivileged.

"In summer 2020, 20 primary schools and three senior schools were asked to identify those families that they believed to be suffering the greatest hardship.

"Many households had lost all income with the sudden cessation of work and then discovered that their employment status meant that they were ineligible for government support in the short term.

"The suggestion to each school was that they provide up to ten households with £50 each to help them through the hardest time whilst they applied for support. The exercise was repeated twice more, the most recent being in the run up to Christmas 2021."

The Rotary clubs also made donations of more than £6,000 to local food banks and in total, in excess of £40,000 has been distributed in hardship relief alone. ●

| Information |

facebook.com/RotaryShopPenzance
[Penzance and Mounts Bay Rotary](https://PenzanceandMountsBayRotary.rotary-ribi.org)
rotary-ribi.org

OPEN FOR BUSINESS



SINCE April last year, the three Rotary clubs in Frome in Somerset have been collaborating to run a charity shop in the town centre.

Frome, Frome Selwood and Frome Town Rotary Clubs have taken over the old M&Co premises in the Westway Centre.

The store is open from Wednesday to Saturday, from 10am to 4pm, and is manned and managed by Rotary club volunteers, operating as 'Rotary in Frome'.

The new charity shop, the largest of the five which the clubs manage, was eight months in the planning stages, with an initial January opening delayed because of the third national lockdown.

It sells houseware, furniture, books and bric-a-brac which has been donated.

The venture has been a big success, not only promoting Rotary in the town, but also raising valuable funds – with weekly takings of around £3,000 and no added costs.

Within a week of opening 18 months ago, the charity shop had sold out of donated items, and the Rotary clubs were

calling on the community to help them stock up.

"At first, we were completely full," explained Richard Lines, from Frome Rotary.

"We couldn't take anything in. But then, all of a sudden, we opened and we had four really big days. We had really good takings and we sold a lot of stuff, including significant bits of furniture.

"It's a very hopeful sign for the future, and with the majority of funds going to Frome charities and deserving causes."

The shop is also persuading the community to promote its "recycle, re-use, re-purpose, and renew" message, encouraging people to do more to support the environment.

"It's all about keeping stuff out of landfill and recycling what we can – which is one of Rotary's seven 'Areas of Focus,'" added Richard.

According to Robert Norman from Frome Selwood Rotary, the store has impressed shoppers. "Shoppers come into the shop and have often said 'this looks like a John Lewis store,'" he explained.

The local newspaper, the Frome

Times, recognised the three Rotary clubs by honouring them as 'Group of the Year' in its community awards for their charity work, but also for the achievements with the shop.

Ian Buick, Past President of Rotary Club of Frome, said: "This has been a big behind the scenes operation for everyone on the management group as well as the team who have transformed the sales area.

"I would like to take this opportunity to give a huge thank you to everyone from all three clubs for the amazing shop they have created."

And Jenny Bennett, Past President of Frome Selwood Rotary, said:

"The generosity of donations by the general public received so far has been overwhelming plus there has been a lot of hard work put in by all the clubs involved in cleaning, pricing and making the premises meet Covid requirements."

The shop is now moving forward by accepting donations of furniture large and small, kitchen equipment, homewares and electrical. They cannot accept donations of clothing. ●



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My Convention

Heidi Eggleton, the outgoing Chair of Rotaract GB&I, reflects on a week spent in Houston, Texas in June as part of the Rotary International Convention.

CONVENTION PICTURES BY MIKE THORN



WHEN I was reflecting on my greatest memories of the Rotary International Convention in

Houston, I realised that it wasn't the programme itself (although impressive it was), but the connections I made. So, I would like to tell you a few stories of the inspirational people I met who made Houston so special for me.

My time began by reconnecting with Rotaract friends I made at the RI Convention in Hamburg three years ago, and at the International Assembly in San Diego.

The first person I saw was Kennedy Gayah, Chair of Rotaract Africa.

I've known Gayah for many years and the last time we met was when we went bowling together in Nairobi.

Now in Houston, Gayah was responsible for the RI Instagram page during one day of the convention and assigned me as his assistant.

We had the pleasure of interviewing past RI President, Holger Knaack, and his wife Susanne, who told us that they were most excited seeing old and new friends.

Gayah and I explored the House of Friendship, a giant hall full of stalls promoting various Rotary Action Groups and charity projects.

Admittedly, the most popular

stall was the sale section in the Rotary merchandise shop, which sold out quicker than toilet paper during the early Covid days! I loved creating content for Rotary International, and even more so with a friend and colleague.

As well as old faces, I got to see 3D versions of my pandemic-virtual friends and colleagues. Mitty Chang is a Rotaractor and Rotarian living in California. Mitty and I have been Facebook friends for over two years, but our paths had never directly crossed.

I have always been impressed with his achievements and ambitions in Rotary, particularly his goals of organising a leadership retreat next year.

When I saw Mitty at the convention centre in Houston, I decided to go and say 'hi', and we quickly connected over our shared passion for leadership development and a flexible model of Rotary.

Mitty and his wife are expecting their first child, and he is excited for her to be surrounded by the love and kindness of the Rotary world.

First on my schedule was the Rotaract pre-convention which was a two-day event prior to the main Rotary programme with the aim of providing content targeted towards Rotaractors.

One highlight for me was keynote speaker Alia Ali, CEO of Empathy Catalyst Consulting.



I was chatting with Mitty when Alia asked if he would take a few action-shots during her presentation, but as Mitty was unavailable, I volunteered to help her out. I took a few photos, and in return got to hear Alia who spoke about different types of burnout and burnout personalities.

The speech helped guide many of us through a few key tools for managing and avoiding burnout. One message, in particular, that stood out was praising unsustainable workloads of our peers.

This is something that I resonate with. Sometimes people comment on how impressive my workload is. But, my close friends and I all know that my workload can be unsustainable.

Alia's guidance has enabled me to start managing my burnout by making sure I assess my schedule and responsibilities in a realistic way.

After her presentation and over the week I was able to get to know her more. I am grateful to Alia for being an inspirational presenter, an empathetic listener, and a great friend who brought me gluten-free brownies!

Many of the connections I made in Houston were international. But, one of my most treasured connections was Andrew O'Hare from Glasgow.

Andrew has been involved in Rotary through his partner, David Breton, who holds multiple leadership positions within Rotary, and is driven, like many of

us, by his values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

When I met Andrew in Houston, he had been a member of Rotary for just one week. Andrew radiated positive energy and a passion to improve communities. Andrew represents the present and future of Rotary. As someone in their early 20s, sometimes I am left without much representation in the Rotary GB&I world.

Yet, meeting Andrew and David (28 and 32-years-old respectively) re-emphasised that Rotary is an organisation for people of all ages.

Andrew reminded me that it is not always the length of time you spend in an organisation that matters, but what you do with that time. Andrew is a real person of action!

After seeing lots of existing friends, I didn't think it was possible to make many more connections. Fortunately, I was wrong.

One of the highlights of my trip was becoming friends with Shivanj Ramchandani. Shiv comes from a passionate Rotary-oriented family and divides his time between studying in Miami and being at home in Jamaica.

I was introduced to Shiv by our incoming RI Vice-President, Nicki Scott, who knew Shiv's dad. Little did Nicki know, her small act of kindness would lead to the beginning of a great friendship.

Shiv quickly became my conference

buddy, and anyone who has been to a Rotary Convention knows it is common to make a few close friends who you sit next to in the general sessions, or maybe catch up with at the end of the day.

Shiv became my conference buddy who I would often meet first thing in the morning to plan for the day.

Since returning home, Shiv and I regularly check-in with each other, asking about family, work, and other daily stresses that life throws at us.

As well as now having a great Rotary connection, I have a new best friend.

Being in Houston reminded me that the backbone that guides us in Rotary is the friendships and connections we develop with each other.

I am grateful to Mitty, Alia, Andrew, Gayah, and Shiv, for coming into my life.

The kindness they emit mirrors that of other Rotaractors and Rotarians I have met during my time as Chair of Rotaract GB&I.

I look forward to opportunities to make more connections. So what's next? Will I be seeing you in Melbourne next May? ●

WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER



ROTARY International President-Elect, Gordon McNally, has admitted shedding tears of sorrow at the war in Ukraine. And the Scot, who will take over at the helm of the organisation in less than 12 months' time, has insisted that Rotary needs a renewed focus on peace.

Gordon, a member of South Queensferry Rotary in Lothian, was speaking at the Rotary International Convention in Houston, where he accepted the Presidential nomination.

He said: "To quote the great philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton, 'I am standing on the shoulders of giants you have charged me with a great responsibility'.

"And I give you my pledge that I will carry out my duties to the very best of my abilities, and with every fibre of my being."

Peace was a key part of Gordon's seven-minute speech. "It is, after all, something that is in our very DNA," he told delegates.

"Like me, you must have been horrified by the brutal and unprovoked

war being waged on Ukraine by Russia. I have shed tears of sorrow at the atrocities we have watched play out on our television screens as the days have turned to weeks, and the weeks have turned to months."

However, he said he had shed tears of pride and joy over the \$15 million donated globally to The Rotary Foundation's Disaster Fund, with tens of thousands of Rotarians providing practical, hands-on help to those affected by the conflict.

He added: "Never forget, peace is more so much more than the absence of war or armed conflict. This is freedom for healthy adults and children.

"Peace is clean water and sufficient food. Peace is education, human rights, dignity, clothing, housing and concern for mankind. But above all, peace is love.

"By showing love. Rotary can help the helpless, Rotary can give hope to the hopeless and Rotary will lead the way towards peace in our world."

During his speech, Gordon spoke of how Rotary has grown through the Covid pandemic as the experience has taught Rotarians to care for each other and the world. He pointed out how the world today is so divided, which is the opposite

of what Rotary stands for.

He explained: "We are an organisation that believes in finding common ground and our humanity.

"It falls to us to take up the hard work of reaching out; not just to the ones where it comes most easily but, more importantly, to those with whom we might assume we have nothing in common.

"And then to earn the light, we discover so much that draws us all into a common cause.

He added: "The Scottish rugby team, of which I am a passionate supporter, uses the slogan of 'better together' and it's not wrong. Together we will achieve much more than we can working alone.

"We're in a time of great change and equally great opportunity within Rotary. But what about the world around us?

"Our world is in a time of great turmoil. One where Rotary's historic commitment to building and fostering peace has been challenged like never before.

"And that is why I think we need a renewed focus on peace within Rotary." ●

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WE'VE all taken our own path to become a member of Rotary. Some of you joined because your father was a Rotarian. Some of us signed up because an employer tapped us on the shoulder and asked us to attend a meeting. Others became members only after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling made it possible. Yet each of us entered through one mechanism — an invitation.

An invitation that unlocks our imaginations and allows us to know that everything and anything is possible. Each one of us has that same opportunity — the honor to extend an invitation.

It is awe-inspiring to imagine how we can look out across our communities and identify our future leaders. It's often tempting to attract people who are exactly like us. It's a special form of ingenuity to consider how people who are seemingly very different can, in fact, share our values and have some of those same talents, just waiting to be unleashed.

It's time for Rotary to take our next step in advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) across our organisation.

Embracing an experience where people feel included is more than just making our membership numbers more diverse. It's about making our meetings and events places where we can speak openly and honestly with each other, where our members feel welcome and safe.

This means removing barriers for entry and opening doors for inclusion. Our values remain our strength — and our commitment to excellence requires us to maintain high standards for our members as well.

I believe we are all committed and determined to advancing DEI across Rotary. This is rooted in the deepest traditions of our organisation, and it will ensure that we remain vibrant and relevant for decades to come.

A few years ago, our Rotary Board set the ambitious goal of increasing the share of female members to 30 percent by 2023. We have less than a year to go, but I believe we can meet and exceed this target.

We need Rotary leaders to rise from every continent, culture, and creed. We need young members and young thinkers to take on larger roles and responsibilities. We need to listen to new Rotary members just as keenly, and with as much respect, as those with many years of membership.

During our recent convention in Houston, we heard from astronauts about their journeys into space. We reflected upon a time in the 1960s when U.S. President John F. Kennedy urged the world to dream, with his declaration that we would “go to the moon and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”

Fully committing Rotary to DEI and meeting our ambitious membership targets may seem as unlikely as a moon shot. But I know that when people of action are committed to a big goal, we make it worth every ounce of our energy. ●

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NICKI SCOTT
RI DIRECTOR 2021-23

BE INSPIRED

OUR *Rotary* magazine for June and July showcased some of the amazing work being done by Rotarians in these islands to help with the Ukraine crisis. I am so in awe of how much is being done. I understand we are now up to more than £3 million in donations and £1 million plus in kind, over and above the more than 20 Rotary International disaster grants of £25,000 each of which have been secured.

When in Houston for the International Convention, I was able to share this with our General Secretary, John Hewko, and we decided to record a brief video to thank you all.

Ukraine is not the only country with citizens suffering.

If people displaced as a result of conflict were a nation they would be the 14th largest country on earth! Our world needs us now more than ever and our Rotary mission of peace has never been more relevant than it is today.

But peace is so much more than the absence of war: it is an integral part of all of our work as Rotarians and Rotaractors.

In June, we hosted a fantastic webinar 'We are all Peacebuilders' which took a deep dive into what this means and how it translates tangibly into the service projects we all work on.

The keynote speaker was Steve Killelea, an entrepreneur, philanthropist and founder of the Institute for Economics and Peace. He has been recognised as one of the world's 100 most influential people for his work in this field.

Thank you Jannine Birtwistle for making this happen and your dedicated work as Rotary GB&I peace specialist.

In its simplest of forms, peace-building can be as simple as being kind to others. A smile translates in any language!

Let us all bring warmth, understanding and empathy for our fellow human race into everything we do. The world will be a better place for it.

I encourage you to take a moment to watch both of these videos which are available on demand on our Rotary YouTube channel:

Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland

I think you will find both inspiring and uplifting to see how much the service we give makes a difference. ●



IAN RISELEY
FOUNDATION TRUSTEE CHAIR

IMPACT OF FOUNDATION

DURING my travels, Rotary often comes up in conversation. Most people associate us with local projects and fundraisers — which is great — but few know what a global force Rotary is. It's easier to understand this aspect of Rotary through an example, such as how Rotary responded to the devastating bushfires in Australia in late 2019 and early 2020.

The result of extreme drought, global warming, and adverse weather conditions, the fires caused catastrophic damage. The need for help was obvious and substantial.

No stranger to forest fires themselves, Canadian Rotarians knew the best way to help was through The Rotary Foundation. They were soon joined by Rotary clubs and districts in other countries and Taiwan, resulting in three Foundation global grants totaling \$280,000 to support the economic recovery of farmers affected by these fires.

One farmer wrote a letter of thanks on behalf of the remote communities we helped, saying they "were in disbelief that Rotary clubs from other countries would step up and help our relatively small farming region" and adding that "they were very grateful and honoured to be considered worthy of such aid."

Friends, this is the kind of impact your Foundation has every single day around the world and why it deserves the support of all Rotary members.

The most significant projects done in Rotary's name are those accomplished through The Rotary Foundation.

The list goes on and on. Think of the impact of our polio eradication efforts, our peace education programmes, and our Programmes of Scale grants. All these efforts to make the world a better place emanate from our Foundation.

The Foundation also impacts our club experience, membership, partnerships, and so much more.

The more visibility and impact we have through Foundation projects, the more people want to be part of what we are doing as partners or as members. Everybody wins.

To me, Rotary and its Foundation are inseparable — you can't have one without the other. They are two sides of the same coin. I love the friendship and fellowship and projects I experience as a member of the Rotary Club of Sandringham, Australia; but I am also thrilled to be part of a global movement that is changing the lives of countless people through The Rotary Foundation.

Remember that other side of the Rotary coin and support your Foundation. By doing so, you will also be supporting your fellow members who are bringing to life the projects our world truly needs. ●



AMANDA WATKIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
FOR ROTARY GB&I

BIG CHANGES AHEAD

As we move forward into this new Rotary year, it's important to take time to glance back and recognise just what's been achieved in the last 12 months.

Rotary makes a massive difference to the lives of so many through continued support for vaccination centres, foodbanks, Ukrainian response, young peoples' development, older citizen care, environmental challenges and so much more...

On top of the service from our clubs that so positively impacts communities at home and overseas, Rotary here in Great Britain and Ireland has been setting its foundations to drive stability and services that support the needs of our districts, clubs and individual members. The flagstones have been laid and the new governing body (the Rotary GB&I Board) is now operational.

However, this organisational change didn't happen by magic. It took a dedicated approach, involving many people who challenged each other's thinking to create a model of operation to provide continuity of leadership and strategic direction for the short, medium and long term.

I would like to recognise our 2021/22 senior leaders who picked up the baton from their predecessors to bring about this change at the operational level.

In May 2021, our clubs voted to bring in a new governance model and during 2021/22 plans to implement the change were created.

The Governing Council, under the leadership of RI Director Nicki Scott, supported by the Rotary GB&I Continuity Team, worked through how to keep the best of the old and make space for the new. The result is a functioning Board that has hit the ground running on July 1st, 2022!

I am so excited to be working with our leaders and the Rotary Support Centre Team is equally driven to deliver improved services and member resources.

By example, if you head over to the members area of our website you'll find the new, improved platform that houses valuable information and downloadable material to help you do what you do best, serve your communities while having an amazing club experience.

More new services will be coming onboard during 2022/23 with a key development being a new data management system named Rotary View.

In the next magazine, I look forward to sharing detail on this system and the benefit it brings to our clubs. Until then, enjoy the new Members Area at rotarygbi.org/members ●



GARTH ARNOLD
CHAIR OF THE BOARD
FOR ROTARY GB&I

PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

By the time you are reading this we will be one month into the new Rotary year and under way with our new regional Board and me as your inaugural Chair.

These are exciting times for Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland and the wider world of Rotary. Following confirmation by the recent Council of Legislation of the regionalisation pilot, we have become the first regional Board along with Australia/New Zealand.

This is allowing us to try new approaches which are tailored to our region in order to grow and 'do' Rotary.

Since January, like many clubs and district teams, we have been working with our team of 16 through monthly drop-in sessions on specific training and development topics, undertaking online training and, most importantly, getting to know each other so we can work best as a team.

As your Board Chair, I will regularly share details of our work, highlighting its aims, successes, and challenges through the medium of electronic newsletters, video messages and drop-in clinics, which will be open to all members, along with website stories – and this column published in Rotary magazine.

The Board has a clear vision to grow membership, stabilise future finances, enhance the member experience and improve process efficiency. This is a multi-year ambition, and, with its practical implementation and evaluation, it will continuously evolve.

Solid continuity of leadership offers a pathway to success. This is demonstrated with multi-year thinking and true servant-leader mentality focussed on supporting our members.

Important work takes time but also critical in the Rotary GB&I change journey is that we must keep momentum moving.

We have made tremendous inroads over the past 16-18 months to lay some great foundations for us now to build on. We were acknowledged at the recent Houston Convention for our growth through the Global Hub and I know we have over 100 new membership opportunities at various stages across our districts.

Let's see how many of these opportunities we can make 'live'. Let's keep up the excellent work we have started! ●

A SURPRISE INVITATION

North Cotswold Rotarian, Nicki Scott, our current Rotary International Director, has taken on another role – Vice President of RI. Here she discusses the challenges of the year ahead.

"JEN MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT SHE WAS OFFERING ME THE POSITION BECAUSE OF WHO I AM AND WHAT SKILLS I BRING TO THE TABLE - NOT THE FACT THAT I AM ALSO A WOMAN!"

I MAGINE my surprise! President-Elect Jennifer Jones asking for a Zoom meeting on a Sunday night. She was calling to tell me her appointments for the Executive Committee for the 2022/23 Rotary International Board.

In every instance I responded with great choice! And then Jen said... "so that leaves me to ask you to be my Vice-President"! I could not believe what I was hearing! It honestly never occurred to me that Jen would pick another woman to be her VP for the year the Rotary world will have their first female President.

Jen made it very clear that she was offering me the position because of who I am and what skills I bring to the table - NOT the fact that I am also a woman!

We both believe in gender equity and the enormous value gained from a balance of diverse skills, experiences and perspectives in the boardroom.

Personally, I will be extremely happy when we no longer have to even talk about women in Rotary! We are all Rotarians no matter what gender, ethnicity, age, religion, or sexual identity we have.

Once I had had a chance to regain an element of composure I naturally said "yes, it would be my absolute honour to work with you in that capacity." My next question was: "What exactly does a Vice President do?"

Jen explained she had asked that exact same question when she was appointed to the role by Past Rotary International President, John Germ.

In plain terms he explained that she would take over as President if anything happened to him.

As you can imagine I am extremely thankful that Jen is extremely fit, healthy and full of energy for the year ahead. It is going to be quite a ride!

I was fortunate to get to know Jen when I started on my District Governor journey in the Chicago area and Jen was my Rotary International Director.

I soon found myself with many opportunities to grow and strengthen my own leadership skills in short succession with some tough decisions to make. I don't believe in accumulating titles if you are unable to be fully present and perform in the role to the best of your ability.

The Rotary role that probably tested me the most was that of Institute Chair for Jen's successor, Rotary International Director, Rob Knuepfer.

I was working full-time with Vistage International to start my own CEO Group in Chicago.

I soon learned the benefits of creating a clear vision, building a strong team and delegating to empower others to grow and achieve results in their own right.

We would not have pulled off that ambitious event however if I did not have my District Governor classmate, Shannon Scheffel, as my Vice Chair. We had got to know each other well working on a Joint District Conference. As this was a first, Jen came to support us and added considerable value with her storytelling skills at the same time.

Shannon knew both my strengths and my weaknesses, and our skillsets complemented each other extremely well.

We pushed each other hard, embraced difficult conversations, when necessary, and together achieved much more than we would have individually.

I crossed paths again with Jen while serving on the RI Strategic Planning Committee. We both so enjoyed that role - working together with a great team of Rotarians to help shape the future direction of our organisation.

To think that we will now be working this coming year as President and Vice President, together with a highly talented and committed Board of Directors, to translate our organisation's Action Plan into reality is amazing. I was going to say it is a dream come true, but I can honestly say it was not a dream that even entered my head!

Jen has some great priorities for us all to focus on this year.

Her idea of an Impact Tour to highlight and draw attention to the great work of our Rotarians is brilliant. The aim is to enhance our perceived relevance outside of Rotary.

We are an army of committed volunteers who know our communities very well. It would be great if we could collaborate with other non-profits to save them from having to grow their own volunteer base in countries far from their own headquarters.

This sector is way too fragmented and we all compete for the same fundraising pool of individual and corporate donations. We could achieve so much more working together.

Caring for our members is also extremely important. Engaged Rotarians are happy Rotarians with a sense of purpose, passion and influence.

It is very empowering and fulfilling to play an active role in the work of Rotary.

I often talk about being addicted to

the concept of self-actualisation - and have gained so much personally by pushing myself to do all that I possibly can for others.

I would also like to do more to champion the importance of our core values and taking action to uphold those.

I understand that any organisation has internal politics but I strongly believe that the essence and spirit of Rotary is a strong differentiating factor in today's overcrowded world of challenges and opportunities.

We all need to play our part in protecting the integrity of our brand, be kind to others and overcome divisiveness.

If we truly all believe in our Rotary mission for a more peaceful world, then that has to start with each one of us.

I imagine a world where Rotary is the movement of choice for anyone wanting to contribute to making our world a better place. ●



Letters to the editor

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

Blessed to be a Rotarian

READING the article about Colin, the poor homeless man who has sadly died in April's *Rotary* magazine, two experiences came to mind.

Firstly, in the 1950s, I was a police officer at Southwark, South London which covered a patch from Waterloo Bridge to London Bridge and down to the Elephant and Castle area.

We still had a great many war-damaged premises and, as a result, a great number of homeless people sleeping rough. Thankfully The Salvation Army had a hostel in Blackfriars Road and gave shelter to some of the poor souls.

Move forward to the 1990s and I was a Methodist Church minister in the Thames Valley with a wonderful congregation of folk mainly from the Caribbean islands of Anguilla, Monserrat, and St Kitts.

To be honest, I thought I had died and gone to heaven enjoying such wonderful people.

I was also secretary of a wonderful Rotary club in Slough with some really hard working and devoted Rotarians, indeed what a lucky man I was.

However, my dream life was to end and I was moved to Whitechapel in the East End of London to care for around 800 street homeless people and had to raise large sums of money to keep the Mission there operating.

I joined the Rotary Club of Stepney, became secretary there, and I cannot praise enough Rotary clubs in the East End, Essex and Kent whose presidents rallied round by making the Mission their charity of the year.

We even got the BBC involved when Pam Rhodes visited the Mission and worked alongside my wife and I before a wonderful Songs of Praise which highlighted the work of Rotarians.

I felt richly blessed to belong to such a caring organisation as the Rotary club!

Secondly, I must congratulate you on the items about the terrible war that is going on in the Ukraine, especially allowing a Ukrainian Rotarian to lead our thoughts, masterful to say the least!

Yet again I have seen the men and women of so many Rotary clubs throughout the world pulling together to do what we can for the peoples of that

poor, tortured country.

I cannot understand the politics that are involved between those two nations, but what I do know is that Rotarians have really lived up to 'service above self'.

I congratulate every one of them, whatever faith or none, who care about the plight of the children, men and women of that tortured nation.

| Revd John L. Lines MBE

Deal Rotary, Kent

Tribute to Colin

I WRITE following the article "Life in a Bag" (*Rotary*, June). The article gives an accurate account of how Colin provided inside information on the needs of the rough sleeper having travelled that road himself.

Colin was a true ambassador for Rotary, without him or his family ever realising how he had given service above self. Without his input, the project would never been as successful as it proved to be.

As a result of the article, we have had enquires from a number of Rotarians, in particular one club which has requested they visit us to see the project first hand, with a view of learning from one another and sharing the brand name. All this is a tribute to Colin for his guidance.

We now work with the local Government-employed Rough Sleeper Navigator, who we meet on a monthly basis, and we are updating the rucksack and contents to reflect local needs.

If you would like to learn more about our project, please contact me.

| Hazel Brindle

Sowerby Bridge Rotary, West Yorkshire
hazelbrindle@rocketmail.com



Prizes for ideas

THE first female Rotarian President of Rotary International, Jennifer Jones, wrote a wonderful article concerning her incoming role in *Rotary* magazine (April, 2022). She said that ideas were not only for the young, but people of all ages.

One of the concerns of St Marylebone Rotary Club, of which I am a member, has been getting new members.

When I joined the club in 1983, we had 42 members but now we're only about 20. Most of those members have been with the club for many years and new members have not always stayed.

Now is the time to put our minds as to how to recruit long-term stayers.

When I was at forester training school, we were taught that one way to overcome a problem was to write down 20 ways to do it. The first 10 were relatively easy and then it got more difficult. It was those last ones which were usually the best.

I have written down 20 ways and will ask the rest of the club to do the same and then they need to be collated. I'm sure a lot of the ideas will be similar and there will be some which are incredibly good if they can be

implemented. We will have quite an ideas bank.

There could be a prize for those who are deemed to have given the best ideas and then a further first prize when members are recruited.

It could be a Paul Harris fellowship. The club would have to pay \$1,000 for this but the membership fees gained from new members would then self-finance this prize.

Ideally, I would like to return to the numbers we had when I joined.

Peter Schweiger

St. Marylebone Rotary Club, London W1



Big thanks

IT is with sincere thanks that I write to thank you and your assistants for the Rotary in Ukraine feature articles (*Rotary*, April).

I found it truly inspiring that Rotarians in that part of the world have a lot to face up to and I wish them all well in their endeavours.

The feature gave us an excellent insight into the situation. I believe that you and your staff must have worked hard to achieve such a good presentation within the limited time that you had. So well done.

The article and photographs showed that we are Rotarians the world over.

Our beliefs and principles are the same, and that, in itself, will unite the world as one to bring about lasting peace and understanding.

Terry Fisher

Hoddesdon Rotary, Hertfordshire

Caribbean praise

I EXTEND heartiest congratulations to Sheffield Rotarian Jamie H Jamerson who appeared in *Rotary in Profile* (*Rotary*, June) who I have had the distinct pleasure of knowing all my life. He was my immediate neighbour in the beautiful Caribbean paradise twin island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. I am more familiar with his home name of Haron, who has always been a people person, very easy going, smiling, approachable, dependable, and helpful.

No better honour could have been proffered upon him and I know Haron will do well as the President of such an august organisation as he continues to lead his team to contribute to the inclusion and well-being of all persons in his community and beyond.

Dianne Adams Le Cointe

Trinidad and Tobago

Home guard memories

I HAVE just read the letter from Patrick Farrelly of Braunton Caen Club regarding the Home Guard and Rotary during World War Two (*Rotary*, April).

The Rotary Club of Torquay was formed in 1920 and as such there were a number of the membership who were connected with the Home Guard.

The Home Guard did sterling work and were often very professional in their endeavours.

Here in Torquay, they manned the coastal artillery with guns located around the bay.

The one located on Corbyn Head, Torquay sea front, suffered a breech blow back whilst on an inspection during the evening of August 11th, 1944. The result was the death and injury of a number of Regular Army, Territorial Army and Home Guard (Royal Artillery).

In respect of the event, a national memorial to the Home Guard has been erected on the site, and the Torquay Branch of the Royal British Legion, of which I am the President, hold a service there on August 11th at 11am every year.

Just a bit of further history, Torquay Club was sired out of Bristol Club, who, in turn, was sired out of No1 Club London where my grandfather, George Arnold, was a founder member. Keeping the link going!

Colonel Gerald Arnold

Torquay Rotary, Devon



Let's see: why are we in Rotary

*We are Rotary
We are a global family
We unite and socialise
To foster service and a
worthy enterprise*

*We love to serve society
Create harmony joy and unity
We aim to advance international
understanding
Good will and peace
with real meaning*

*We've provided many a
ShelterBox for cover
We strive to eradicate Polio
until it's all over
We meet in a variety of places
Fellowship with lots of faces*

*We're looking to make a difference
Our objects make a lot of sense
Our founder was Paul Harris
His aims and drive we hope
still carries
There's many a club all over the world
We're sure he'd be proud for us all
to shout loud*

| Alan Doggett
Hitchin Tilehouse Rotary, Hertfordshire



Global grants for local needs

CONGRATULATIONS to Derek Smith and Ashley Grey (*Rotary June*) for sharing details of their ground-breaking programme of leveraging a Rotary Foundation Global Grant to create a high impact community project local to the clubs in District 1090 with the Thames Hospice.

Please allow me to share a few points which may be of interest to others following the lead and applying for similar locally hosted grants in the future:

1. Partnership: Clubs could partner with District(s) to secure additional funding through District Designated Fund enhancement.
2. Community needs' assessment should involve stakeholders and beneficiaries -

patients' groups, health professionals and others in small or large target areas.

3. International partner: it is possible to count on Rotarians from Scotland, Wales or Ireland as international partners for a grant application hosted in England, and vice versa. The Rotary Foundation will treat them as separate countries.

Finally, I wonder if the number of District Grants supported projects was just 23 in a year? Could these have been many more, with multiple projects within each of the 23 District Grants approved by the Rotary Foundation?

| Himansu Basu
Rotary in Gravesham and Ebbsfleet, Kent

Canute correction

ALTHOUGH I agree with much of Terry Durrance's letter (*Rotary*, February) may I correct one statement. He has repeated the incorrect interpretation of King Canute's actions. Canute placed himself on the beach and attempted to turn the tide back to prove that kings, especially himself, did NOT have power over nature, as some of his courtiers asserted.

| Roger Boyce
Rotary Club of East Sutherland,
Caithness & Sutherland

Rotary having fun

REGARDING Nicki Scott's article (*Rotary*, February), I spent nearly 20 years as a visitor to Kissimmee West Rotary in Florida, and they always finished their meetings with the Four Way Test and then "let's have fun".

| Peter Daley
Harwich & Dovercourt Rotary, Essex

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.

What about Rotary's telos?

THE Object of Rotary deals with the concept of ethical service in private and public life. The Four Way Test deals with truth, fairness, friendship and creating win-win situations.

In essence these two short documents, taken together being about twice the length of the Lord's Prayer and half the length of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, attempt to sum up the virtues looked for in Rotarians and of Rotary.

Rotarian virtues can only be identified after deciding the purpose(s) of Rotary and the continuing conduct of its members. Had Rotary existed in classical Greece Aristotle would have referred to Rotary's telos.

There is a common belief that the virtues are fixed: the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance; or the theological virtues: faith, hope and charity.

In fact, throughout the cultural

history of even just our own European civilisation, this is far from true.

Aristotle did not recognise charity as a virtue, choosing those qualities that maintained the Athenian polis and celebrating individuals of high status and wealth, because these possessions gave the opportunity to display magnanimity and munificence.

Homer's preferred ideal was the warrior-king. Nearer our own time Jane Austen lauded amiability as the chief virtue. Benjamin Franklin composed a list of 14 virtues.

So, the question becomes, what are the purposes of Rotary and what does this entail for Rotarians. From those decisions readers might care to offer their list of the requisite virtues and form them into succinct phrases.

| Alan Hawkes

Saffron Walden Rotary, Essex.

Merseyside welcome

I AM not a member of Rotary, but I have had the pleasure of working with the 40+ members of the Merseyside element of Rotary while on the Ukrainian Welcome Desk at Liverpool John Lennon Airport since April 4th.

The Rotarians never fail to amaze me in their level of kindness and support, not only to me, but to the Ukrainians arriving from a war-torn country. Each visitor is assured of the same level of a warm friendly welcome no matter what the time of day is.

For example, one member paid for a 35-mile journey for a young family on their way to the west of the UK, this was a significant cost and also a major part of their onward journey.

Another Rotarian accompanied a young Ukrainian to the local railway station ensuring that she was placed on the correct train, enlisting the help of the staff at the railway station.

Not forgetting to mention the sweets, chocolates and toys brought to the Welcome Desk.

| Yvonne Gardner

Liverpool John Lennon Airport,
Ukrainian Welcome Desk

An invite to Rotary

I AM the President Elect of the International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians (IFMR) Great Britain & Ireland Chapter.

At our recent AGM, we discussed the question of inviting non-Rotarian motorcycling friends to join us on any of the four weekends away we organise each year as a means of attracting new members to Rotary.

However, I have searched the Rotary GB&I website and can find no mention of International Fellowships (other than Peace Fellowship).

I then searched the RI website and managed to find a list of Fellowships but only after some time clicking on various links which took some perseverance.

It appears that Rotary International or Rotary GB&I don't promote these 'hobby' fellowships and I wonder why this might be?

It's significant that I received an email from a Rotarian from District 1285, which is Rotary in North West England and the Isle of Man, an adjacent district to my own, when he was at

the Rotary International Convention in Houston, enquiring how to join. He learned of our existence by visiting a stand in the exhibition area for the IFMR.

My point being that he knew nothing of the IFMR's existence as Rotary never seems to mention them on any social media in the UK that I can see.

Although RI website has a list of Fellowships, they are hard to find.

Therefore, can I make an appeal, via this letter, to any motorcycling Rotarians to get in touch via my email initially if they are interested in learning more.

| Arthur Jones

Carnforth Rotary, Lancashire
Email: ayejay1944@gmail.com

| Editor's note |

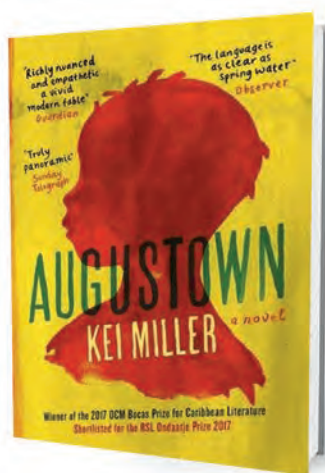
Read page 48 for a feature on the International Yachting Fellowship of Rotarians.



SHELTERBOX BOOK CLUB

| BY CATHERINE THORNHILL, HEAD BOOKWORM AT THE SHELTERBOX BOOK CLUB |

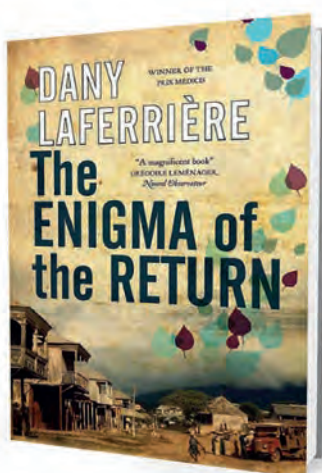
If you love books and love making a difference around the world, then the ShelterBox Book Club is perfect for you. Our current book was inspired by the communities we've worked with across the Caribbean after hurricanes, earthquakes and even a volcano eruption. Our 3,000 members voted on our next read based on these blurbs, which one would you pick?



AUGUSTOWN BY KEI MILLER

Nominally, this is the story of one day in Augustown, Jamaica in 1982. The 11th of April starts with six-year-old Kaia having his dreadlocks shorn off by a disgruntled teacher which sets off a chain of events through the whole community.

Augustown is both sprawling and microscopic. Detailed character studies sit beautifully alongside the history of Rastafarianism, love stories perch next to the horrors of post-colonial Jamaica. Kei Miller's writing is omniscient, raw and changes the way you look at the world.



THE ENIGMA OF THE RETURN BY DANY LAFERRIÈRE

At age 23, the narrator, Windsor, left Port-au-Prince in fear of his life. He has lived in Montreal for 33 years. When his father dies in New York, himself an exile for half a century, Windsor travels there to attend the funeral, and then home to inform his mother.

The book is an intriguing combination of poetry and prose that gives insight into the mind of a brilliant writer.



CLAIRE OF THE SEA LIGHT BY EDWIDGE DANTICAT

Just as her father makes the wrenching decision to send her away for a chance at a better life, Claire Limyè Lanmè - Claire of the Sea Light - suddenly disappears. As the people of the Haitian seaside community of Ville Rose search for her, painful secrets, haunting memories, and startling truths are unearthed.

In this beautifully crafted novel about intertwined lives, Edwidge Danticat has created a tightly woven tapestry that explores the mysterious bonds we share—with the natural world and with one another.

With nearly half of all the votes cast our winner was Augustown by Kei Miller which you can receive a free copy of if you sign up today using the reference code **ROTARY-AUGUST** www.shelterbox.org/book-club

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Serving up a success

Mary's Meals feeds more than two million hungry children in school every day. Rotary clubs across the UK have been supporting the charity's work.

| STORY BY **STEPHANIE FOX** |

MARY'S Meals, which started life operating out of a shed in the Scottish Highlands, provides school meals for children living in 20 of the world's poorest countries – including Yemen, Malawi, Haiti, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

The promise of a daily meal attracts hungry children to the classroom, where they receive an education that can, in the

future, be their ladder out of poverty.

The charity's work began in 2002, feeding just 200 children at a Malawian primary school. Last year Mary's Meals announced that, despite many challenges including the Covid pandemic, it is now reaching two million children around the world with a nutritious meal in school.

Its most recent expansion is in Yemen in the Middle East, serving nutritious food to more than 4,000 children affected by one of the biggest humanitarian crises in the world.

The charity's impressive growth is

fuelled by countless acts of kindness from people from all walks of life, including Rotarians. In the last two years alone, more than 200 clubs across the UK have raised over £130,000 for the charity and nearly 300 clubs have held talks or events about Mary's Meals.

This includes the Rotary Club of Oadby in Leicestershire which has sponsored a school with Mary's Meals in Zambia for the last four years.

Roger Neuberg, who is a member of the club, also volunteers and helps organise fundraising for the charity.





Roger says: “I first heard about Mary’s Meals about 11 years ago. A representative from the charity came to speak at our District Rotary Annual Assembly and I was blown away by what a brilliant and simple idea it was. I have since become a volunteer for Mary’s Meals and give talks at Rotary clubs in my area.

“Our club does an annual Swimathon and have held summer garden parties to raise money for Mary’s Meals. Sponsoring a school means that we have a real focus for our fundraising.”

Since the Rotary Club of Oadby has started sponsoring Kasupe Primary School in Zambia, enrolment has increased from 266 to 364 thanks to the promise of a nutritious mug of porridge which is served each school day.

Another club that backs the charity is the Denby Dale & District Rotary Club in West Yorkshire. Malcolm Tagg, who is District Governor for District 1040 and he has supported the charity for a number of years as a volunteer and a fundraiser.

He was introduced to Mary’s Meals by a friend and was struck by how much of each donation goes towards feeding a hungry child.

This is an important ethos of the charity which keeps its costs low,

ensuring that at least 93% of donations are spent on its charitable activities – made only possible because most of its work is done by an army of volunteers here in the UK and in the communities where Mary’s Meals is served.

Malcolm says: “Knowing that so much of what is raised directly helps the children is a real driver for me, along with the very simple concept of the charity.

“Providing food to children in school so that they are incentivised to get an education and lift themselves out of poverty is such an effective and practical plan.”

The support of Rotary clubs like Denby Dale and Oadby means that Mary’s Meals is able to continue reaching more hungry children. And the impact of those school meals is impressive.

A recent study shows that after five years of Mary’s Meals being served in a school in Zambia the number of children reporting they never worried about hunger rose by 45%.

This includes children like 11-year-old Gift, who attends Kabila Primary School in Zambia.

Before Mary’s Meals reached Gift’s school, he would often skip lessons to go scavenging for food. Now, even when there is very little to eat at

home, he knows that he can rely on a mug of vitamin-enriched porridge.

He says: “Before Mary’s Meals came, I would go home during the school day and see if I could find groundnuts to eat. I don’t feel hungry at school anymore. I get energy when I eat the porridge.

“I want to make a better future for myself. School is the only way to do that. When I finish school, I want to be a doctor and I want to be in a position where I can help my family.”

Despite the impressive progress of the charity over the past 20 years, it recognises that there is still much work to do to reach the 58 million children out of school around the world today.

It only costs £15.90 to feed a hungry child in school with Mary’s Meals for an entire year so a donation or a fundraiser, no matter how big or small, could give more children like Gift, hope for the future. ●

Information

To learn more about the work of Mary’s Meals, arrange for a speaker to come to your club or find out how your club can get involved, please visit marysmeals.org.uk or email info@marysmeals.org



It's calm seas with Rotary

Robert Burns, a member of the Greenock
Rotary Club in Scotland, reflects on the
International Yachting Fellowship
of Rotarians.

ROTARY Fellowships really are one of the best fun parts of Rotary. They are not some new idea from Rotary International - far from it!

A Rotarian in London thought it would be interesting to see if like-minded sailing Rotarians would wish to share together their love of both sailing and Rotary. They did, and so the Yachting Fellowship of Rotarians was born in 1947, after Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland, and Rotary International had approved the idea.

As it spread around the world, the group soon became known as the International Yachting Fellowship of Rotarians (IYFR).

From that small beginning, IYFR now has about 3,500 members in fleets scattered in about 40 countries, including nine in Great Britain and Ireland, all sailing under the Rotary flag, although sadly we currently have no fleets in Ireland.

IYFR is for Rotarians who enjoy spending time on the water, whether sailing, motor boating, or whatever. There is no requirement to own a boat.

Some fleets have very few boat owners, but instead they charter boats or sail on commercial craft.

In Great Britain, we have fleets with sailing yachts, motor yachts and river boats. The only requirement is to have fun!

Fleet activities vary depending on the type of waters on which the fleets are based, coastal waters, rivers, lakes and occur at varying regularity, depending on the fleet.

Our Clyde Fleet in Scotland meets at four to six-week intervals. Events may be day, weekend or longer cruises. More active members in some fleets enjoy racing, but we don't take life too seriously. In one IYFR race, we were passed by a boat whose crew were in the cockpit playing cards!

Most members go for more leisurely pursuits, either sailing in company or just meeting up at agreed anchorages or marinas for lunch or overnight, sharing a meal at a restaurant, enjoying a barbecue on a beach, or eating aboard. Sometimes, members move between boats enjoying a

different course on each boat!

In my first season with IYFR we regularly set sail in company for specific locations but, due to a variety of circumstances, on every occasion we ended up still together, though somewhere quite different from the intended destination.

However, we had all enjoyed ourselves greatly getting there.

We always end the day relaxing and looking back at its excitement and laughs and wherever, whatever the event, the fellowship is the same and always fun.

One advantage of IYFR over a usual yacht club is that we have members in many countries and so we can visit them and extend our sailing circle overseas, sampling different sailing waters.

In the past few years we have held get-togethers to sail around the Greek Islands, headed for Spain to sail along the Costa Blanca and sailing on the Black Sea near Bulgaria.

There, we anchored at a beautiful sea food restaurant with a wonderful menu, to find that because it was Monday and they were out of everything else, all they could only offer us was mussels, in one form or other, for starter, main course and dessert!

After each Rotary International Convention, a three-day post-convention cruise is organised, the nature of which depends on the location of the convention.

Sailing on the Baltic on Tall Ships, sailing on members' boats from Vancouver Island and staying on converted rice barges in Thailand are just three examples.

When the Convention was in Birmingham, over 60 of us all sailed on members' and friends' boats in the West of Scotland, taking in the odd distillery and ceilidh en-route!

While IYFR is not a service organisation, many fleets undertake service projects, providing disabled or disadvantaged children or young adults with new exciting experiences on the water. These vary in nature, but they all have a profound effect on the confidence, self-respect, teamwork and respect the young people have for others.

The youngsters leave the events changed people and education

departments state that such a profound effect could never be achieved in the classroom.

Many fleets in all parts of the world, have taken up our 'Plastic Free Waters' project, in which fleets undertake beach cleans, remove ghost nets or speak to many organisations to raise awareness of the huge plastic pollution of the oceans.

IYFR brings Rotarians together locally, nationally and internationally to have great fun enjoying their love of both Rotary and sailing. It builds bridges between fleets and Rotary clubs, often resulting in fleet exchanges, or fleets working together with Rotary clubs on Rotary water-based projects.

The fellowship widens members' horizons and forms long-lasting friendships. Most importantly, while achieving all this, the members are having fun together. ●

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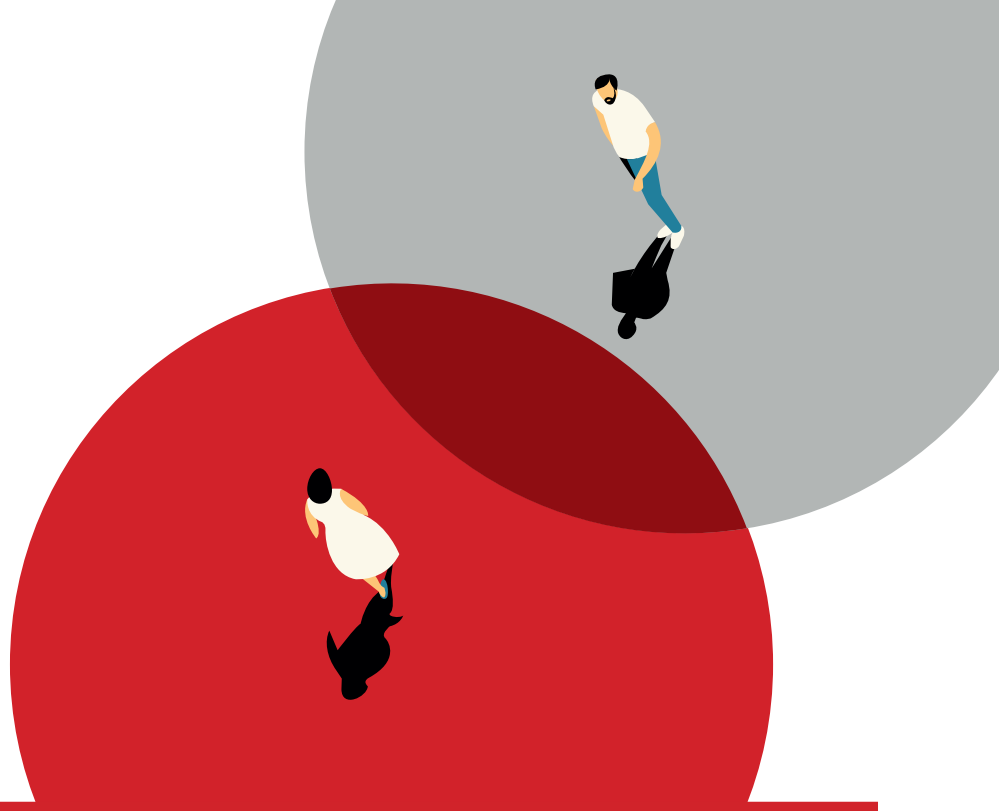
Information

If you wish to learn more about IYFR, email: robert.burns@iyfr.net or visit: iyfr.net or iyfrgbi.org

Rotary Fellowships have now increased to a total of about 100, involving various pastimes, sports and professions.

To find out more, visit:

rotary.org/en/our-programs/more-fellowships



MAKING LASTING CONNECTIONS

Graham Meyer discovers how Rotary Foundation grants free up Rotary Scholars to learn and build their networks.



WHEN Londoner Adrian Faiers got married last year, among the assembled friends and family were Sira Lee and Alizée McLorg, two young women whose scholarships he had coordinated while they pursued master's degrees at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

He marvels at the women's far-flung connection. Although one is from Korea and the other from California, they go to weddings, conferences, and Rotary meetings together.

"They have become best friends," Adrian says. Of the 1,300 or so Rotary Foundation global grants approved each year, about 200 are for scholarships.

Global grant scholarships fund graduate-level studies in one of Rotary's areas of focus.

Rotary districts can also provide

scholarships through district grants. Sira and Alizée, whose scholarships are funded by global and district grants, respectively, are taking advantage of one big benefit available to Rotary Scholars: the opportunity to build their networks — with each other, experts in their fields, and the broader Rotary world.

Particularly in places where a large number of global and district grant scholars study — such as London, which is home to the London School of Economics as well as King's and University colleges — the scholars have their own niche within the Rotary sphere.

"They become a very, very good community together," says Adrian, a member of the Rotary Club of Dulwich, Peckham and Crystal Palace, who as chair of District 1130's scholarship sub-committee coordinates the incoming scholars in London. ▶

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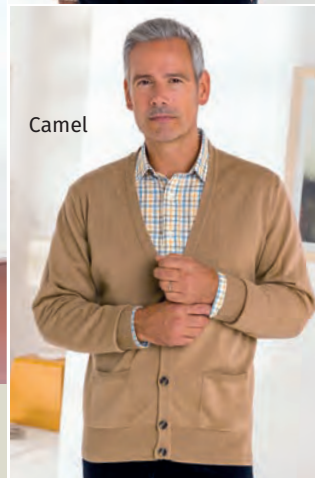
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Meet two American Rotary Scholars, who studied in England and Scotland, to find out how the connections they've made through Rotary are helping them to change the world.

KAYLA STOVALL UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Rotary and the vicissitudes of fate brought Kayla Stovall to her job as a prevention specialist for Uplift Education, a network of 45 schools centred in Dallas.

Kayla promotes programmes focused on substance abuse, teen dating violence, healthy relationships, sexual health, and suicide prevention to individual schools.

She also connects students facing homelessness with housing programmes.

Her expertise in social-emotional learning among grade school students came out of her research for her master's degree in public health.

As a global grant scholar at the University of Edinburgh, she had selected three possible topics from a prepared list of 60 or so, and chose to focus on how Scottish students' relationships with their teachers affect their social-emotional health.

"This career field chose me because of that moment," she says. It may have determined her professional path, but the catalyst was Rotary.

Kayla, 26, first encountered Rotary while attending a Rotary Youth Leadership Awards camp between her junior and senior years of high school.

"I had never heard of Rotary before," she says. "All I knew was that I would get away from home for a few days."

Among the camp's staff members was a global grant scholar — and a few years later, while working on a Rotaract

project during her senior year of college, a mentor reminded her about that possibility of a scholarship.

Kayla hadn't even considered graduate study previously. "I didn't think it was an option for me, just because I was the first in my family to go to college," she says.

Now she is a member of the Rotary Club of Plano West, Texas, and is working to promote the idea of global grant scholarships to local universities.

"I'm very grateful to be in this position — going from being a person who didn't even think this was a spot that I could have, and now being on the other end of it," she says.

Being a member of Rotary, studying in Scotland, working at Uplift: All of it, she says, comes down to forming networks that can help make the world a better place. "One of the most powerful things we have is connection," she says.

"That's when bonds are made and peace is created."

MITCHELL PAQUETTE UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

Mitchell Paquette spends a lot of time online. He works as an open-source researcher for the Citizen Evidence Lab, part of the Crisis Response Programme at Amnesty International.

When a crisis emerges, such as mass protests, armed conflict, or an environmental disaster, he and his team scour social media and other publicly available data, and then work to verify it using satellite imagery, heat mapping, and other techniques.

They are like embedded war reporters for potential human rights violations.

Mitchell, 28, came to Amnesty

after a stint with the New Media Advocacy Project, a New York state-based non-profit, doing video editing and production for human rights organisations. He was getting restless and hoping for more proximity to the fight for human rights.

"Basically, I wanted to work for the organisations I was making videos for," he says.

He attended the University of Essex on a global grant scholarship in 2018 and 2019, attaining a Master of Laws degree (LLM) in international human rights law.

In addition to his coursework, he volunteered for Amnesty's Digital Verification Corps, a network of six universities globally that trains people to sift through the enormous amount of digital content on potential human rights abuses.

After graduation, he segued to his job with Amnesty, where he now supervises DVC volunteers.

"This space is really exciting," he says.

In the future, Mitchell hopes to expand the horizons of his position, incorporating more in-person, on-the-ground testimony or working more toward legal accountability for human rights violators.

At present, he appreciates his proactive position in a human rights organisation active around the globe.

"I don't have to watch the news and see 'war in X country' and feel bad about that," he says.

"I can actually engage very immediately in doing that work." ●

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ICELAND – a Nordic island nation defined by its dramatic landscape of volcanoes, geysers, hot springs and lava fields. And this September, it will host Rotarians from across Europe.

The Hilton Nordica in Reykjavik will be hosting the 2022 Iceland Rotary Action Summit bringing together Rotarians from Zones 17-18 which includes Scandinavia, along with Iceland, Greenland, Denmark, Poland and Lithuania, and Zones 19-20, which includes the British Isles, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands.

The Action Summit is being led by Rotary International Directors Lena Mjerskaug from Norway and Rotary GB&Is Nicki Scott.

As part of a varied five-day programme from September 13 to 17,

there will be a Leadership Development Summit for District Governor Elects and Nominees on the first three days. There will be a Power of Rotary seminar on the Thursday and Friday with membership, public image and Foundation sessions open to all Rotarians.

The Rotary Action Summit begins on Friday, September 16, and features an array of top speakers including Iceland President, Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, RI President, Jennifer Jones, and past RI Presidents, Holger Knaack and Ian Riseley.

Conference organiser, Mike Thorn, said: “Many of us have had Iceland on our bucket lists and now is the opportunity to go and, at the same time, what better than the inspiration of the Northern Lights to ‘Imagine Rotary’.

“We are offering the Power of Rotary seminar as an inclusive option, as well as stand-alone, for those that only wish to attend. We have even built in time for a traditional early morning swim at the geothermal swimming pool in Laugardalslaug.

“The 2022-23 District Governors have been unable to meet as a full group. So we are building in the DG Forum with a programme which will include sections of the Power of Rotary and DG-only sessions with Jennifer Jones, plus Nicki and Lena to support them and create international debate.” ●

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PEOPLE OF ACTION

LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

ROTARIANS HONoured IN BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST

A NUMBER of Rotarians from Great Britain & Ireland have been recognised in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List.

The honours, officially announced over the Platinum Jubilee weekend, mark the public service of individuals across the UK in celebration of Her Majesty's 70 years of service.

MANOJ JOSHI

Bradford Rotarian, Manoj Joshi, has been awarded an MBE for his services to the community in the West Yorkshire city, particularly during the pandemic.

Dr Joshi, who is also a former Rotary district governor for Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire for Rotary International, has been instrumental in raising money and awareness for the eradication of Polio now.

In 2020, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire made international headlines for shaving off his then 52-year-old moustache for the cause, raising thousands of pounds.

Dr Joshi, said: "To receive the recognition in the Queen's Jubilee this year, after Bradford winning the City of Culture 2025 bid, whilst also commemorating 50 years of Ugandan Asians arriving as refugees in Great Britain, is just phenomenal.

"I am overwhelmed with the honour for the pursuit of excellence and 'service above self,' in my lifetime. This kind of recognition fuels me with momentum to continue the important work of unlocking the wells of potential for the people of Bradford District."

TONI ROBERTS

Toni Roberts from Jersey Overseas Aid has been appointed MBE for her work with the charity and Jersey Rotary Club.

She said: "I think it's absolutely fantastic, something I wasn't expecting to happen because I've always enjoyed the charitable work that I've done but it's just so wonderful being recognised and everybody's being so nice and kind.

"I'm going to continue to do charitable work and support people where I can... It's just wonderful to be acknowledged."

MICHAEL DOWNES

In Norfolk, Michael Downes, from Aylsham Rotary, has been honoured with a British Empire Medal. Michael is also Vice-Chairman of the Aylsham Learning Federation.

During the pandemic, Michael co-ordinated an appeal to collect laptops and tablets for children in the county.

KAREN TONGE

Karen Tonge, who is chairwoman of British Para Table Tennis, has been awarded an OBE.

Karen, who is a member of Runcorn Rotary Club, received an MBE in 2009 for promoting the sport at grassroots level, as well as volunteering and promoting healthy lifestyles.

A member of the British Paralympic Association National Council since 2014, Karen attended the Rio Paralympics in support of the Para table tennis team but due to Covid-19 restrictions had to support from home for the Tokyo Paralympics.

An international umpire and referee she has officiated at para events in the UK and overseas and has been appointed referee for the table tennis and para table tennis events at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Karen is a Paul Harris Fellow and was Runcorn Rotary Club President in 2016.

She said: "I am delighted to accept the honour. This reflects everything the organisation has achieved over many years in transforming people's lives and is recognition for the para table tennis world." ●



MANOJ JOSHI



TONI ROBERTS



MICHAEL DOWNES



KAREN TONGE

ROTARY CLUB WINS QUEEN'S AWARD



CHURCH & Oswaldtwistle Rotary Club has received a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the United Kingdom.

The award recognises the Lancashire Rotary club's amazing work in the community. In their nomination, the Church & Oswaldtwistle Rotarians are described as going "far beyond fund-raising, as they improve life for the whole community through an impressive range of environmental, social and youth projects".

Rotary Club Secretary, Cath Heap, said they were thrilled with news of the award.

The Rotary club has been active in nurturing an adopted woodland in the area, as well as organising litter picks in the woodland which has been neglected for 35 years.

They have also been caring for the garden in the town's library which has

been neglected.

Church & Oswaldtwistle Rotary Club has also been working at the railway station to keep it tidy. They shipped a whisky barrel from Scotland which was painted and planted with colourful flowers to put on the platform.

Cath said that they were visited by one of Lancashire's Deputy Lord Lieutenants earlier this year to assess the work of the club.

"We weren't assessed on one specific aspect of volunteering, rather we had to prove that we were providing financial, social, health and education services to the local community," explained Cath.

"We were also assessed on promoting well-being, reducing loneliness and isolation, as well as maintaining park/woodland for the benefit of the whole community.

"One of the Deputy Lord Lieutenants of the county came along and spent the best part of a day with us when we showed her around our many projects." ●

MARY HONoured FOR COMMUNITY WORK

WELSH Rotarian Mary Adams has been honoured with a

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award, recognising her significant contribution to volunteering.



Mary, who is a member of the Narberth & Whitland Rotary Club in Pembrokeshire, West Wales, has received the award for her work with the Living Memory Group.

Mary, who is District Governor Elect for Rotary in Southern Wales, is a founder and trustee of the Narberth Living Memory Group.

The group has enabled people who have become isolated because of poor health to enjoy an afternoon of socialising and friendship.

Mary said: "I am extremely proud to accept this award on behalf of all of our volunteers at the Living Memory Group. As volunteers there is no better feeling than doing worthwhile service without monetary reward."

The nomination praised her input and commitment, stating: "The group would not have been formed without Mary's enthusiasm and compassion. Many of those living with dementia and other illnesses would not have had afternoons of fun and friendship."

The group was initially a Dementia Café and started with two members. But Mary soon realised the group needed to attract a wider audience to support people who had lost the ability to socialise. Just before the pandemic, numbers had risen to 25.

As an ambassador of Narberth Primary School, Mary forged links with the children and researched, entertained and provided inter-generational activities with the members. ●



Rotary gets all fired up

Rotary clubs worldwide joined forces to light beacons
on June 2nd to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

| STORY BY **ALEKSANDRA TROJAK** |

ROTARIANS from across the Commonwealth celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by lighting beacons in her honour.

The celebrations took place at the beginning of June to mark the Queen's 70 years of service from the Pacific island of Vanuatu to Ghana, the city of London – and even Hawaii!

Sree Vallipuram from Westminster West Rotary in London was contacted by the Queen's Pageantmaster last year to enlist Rotary's help with the lighting of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee beacons in all Commonwealth capital cities.

"I had served at the Commonwealth Secretariat for several years and been a Rotarian since 1995, so I was comfortable we could meet the challenge," said Sree, who initially contacted all the District Governors in the Commonwealth capital cities.

"The challenge was to convince Rotarians that it was a worthwhile effort, especially as there was no budget allocated. A few Rotary clubs were very honoured to be asked, but many wanted to know the relevance of the event to Rotary.

"It became clear that when Rotarians engaged with each other and external parties to plan and organise the event, they would impact all the eight pillars of positive peace in varying degrees."

An important feature of the beacons being lit from the easternmost to the westernmost cities on June 2nd at 9.15pm local time was that it resulted in a global peace wave, referred to as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Rotary Positive Peace Wave.

Beacon lighting reached destinations far and wide, with the countries creating their own cultural take on the celebration:

| VANUATU

Rotarian Cornelia Wyllie from the Rotary Club of Port Vila led the lighting on the Pacific island of a beacon, floated on a bamboo raft.

| MALAYSIA

Rotarians from Greentown Rotary organised an event at the Royal Selangor Club in Kuala Lumpur attended by the British High Commissioner.

| MALTA

Seventy beacons were lit to mark each year of the Queen's reign. The then President of the Rotary Club of Malta, Robert Ghirlando, along with the British and Australian High Commissioners were present.

| LONDON

The Rotary Club of London and City Livery Club jointly organised the lighting of a beacon on the roof terrace of Nomura Bank overlooking the River Thames. The then President David Johnson welcomed a number of guests including the Lord Mayor of London.

| SOUTHERN AFRICA

Past District Governor, Grant Daly, co-ordinated the lighting of beacons in District 9400 which covered Pretoria in South Africa, Mbabane in Eswatini, Maputo in Mozambique and Gaborone in Botswana.

| NAMIBIA

Three beacons were lit by Rotarians in Windhoek, Tsumeb and Walvis Bay. Tsumeb, which is a small town 400km from Windhoek, will charter the first Rotary club in the region following the beacon lighting in Namibia.

| CANADA

Beacons were lit in the grounds of City Hall in Ottawa by the then District Governor Nominee, Teresa Whitmore and in Toronto, it was lit in Casa Loma at an event organised by Rotarian Hans Bathija.

| GRENADA

The then President Alphonsus Daniel and members of the Rotary Club of Grenada, lit a beacon in Morne Rouge Bay.

| HAWAII

Although not in the Commonwealth, Rotary beacons were lit at a number of venues to mark the strong ties with Great Britain. ●

Magazine apology

We would like to apologise to Jim Price for incorrectly publishing his article in the June/July issue of Rotary magazine, please see below the corrected story.



COMMUNITY CHAMPION

| JIM PRICE

PROJECT: CARDIFF & VALE YOUNG CARERS CLUB

NOMINATED BY: CARDIFF ROTARY

Jim Price has worked with young people all his adult life and, since 2006, he has led the Cardiff and Vale Young Carers Club which gives young carers in the Cardiff area the chance to have a break while meeting new friends having fun.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it was clear that the club would have to temporarily close and that the young carers who attended the club would need support. Jim did not let them down, keeping contact with club members over text and social media while encouraging older members of the club to stay in contact with the younger ones.

Jim also enlisted the help of the Rotary Club of Cardiff East in order to obtain supermarket vouchers the young carers could use online and sewing machines they could use to repair their clothes.

After the first wave of the pandemic had passed, Jim managed to persuade the Cardiff Council to allow the club to meet in small groups, with Jim taking it upon himself to pick them up to take them to outdoor activities. The young carers at the club all appreciate how Jim makes sure to support each of their individual needs.

ROTARY GOES PLATINUM!

All across Great Britain and Ireland, Rotary clubs came together with their communities to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's 70 years of service

| STORY BY **GEORGE BICKNELL** |



WITH a sunny, four-day Bank Holiday weekend, there couldn't have been a much better setting for Rotarians to put their love for their communities on display in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Rotary clubs from every corner of the country were keen to help celebrate this historic occasion by facilitating thousands of different events.

On every other street one could find a gazebo filled to the brim with family and friends enjoying a lovely spread of food while sporting some stellar union jack clothing. Darlington Rotary President Peter Phillips certainly turned up the style for their jubilee celebrations with a full union jack suit.

The chances are that, if you saw one of these events in your local community, a Rotary club probably had a hand in facilitating it!

From Maidenhead Rotarians in Berkshire setting up marquees to the

Rotary Club of Tunbridge Wells in Kent setting up the stage to host the jubilee entertainment, Rotary clubs were more than happy to help their community.

Lots of the Rotary clubs across Great Britain and Ireland had their jubilee celebrations coincide with the second national Thank You Day on Sunday 5th June.

Organised by The Together Coalition, Thank You Day gave everyone the chance to say thank you not just to the Queen but all the people that make our lives easier.

The event was endorsed by well-known faces such as TV presenter Gary Lineker, former Paralympian swimmer Ellie Simmonds and the current manager of England's national football team Gareth Southgate.

Clubs were more than happy to take the opportunity to get together to say thank you, Larne Rotary in Ireland bringing local organisations together for afternoon tea and Llangefni Rotary hosting a successful Jubilee BBQ.

Just outside Bournemouth, Westbourne Rotary's Thank You Day event was particularly successful, bringing their community together for a day of exceptional food and eclectic musical performances, from a local school choir to Senegalese drumming.

Clubs could also take part in The Big Jubilee Lunch as part of Thank You Day, joining millions across the UK to share friendship, food and fun.

The Rotary Club of Windsor St George got to join a line of 488 picnic tables along Windsor Castle's Long Walk, with Prince Edward and his wife Sophie joining the thousands celebrating.

It was fantastic seeing everyone enjoying the celebrations and if you want to see more examples of what Rotary clubs got up to over the weekend, head over to the Rotary GB&I website! ●

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Find out more: rotarygbi.org

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Rotary profile

Find out why our volunteers give up their time to help transform communities.



Profile:

Name: Kimberly Devlin-Neil
Rotary Club: Limavady Rotary Club, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland
Occupation: Retired police officer

Q | WHEN DID YOU JOIN ROTARY AND WHY?

I joined Rotary after being asked by my friend Hazel Simpson. I have known Hazel for almost 50 years, and we started our friendship at Brownies. I admire Hazel and have supported her in her Rotary journey over the years. I had been to at least six president night functions as a guest and then I was delighted to be asked to join the club myself. I joined Limavady Rotary around 10 years ago.

However, the last two have been a total blur of Covid and lockdowns. I served as president during lockdown, so I know how hard it has been for all the 'lockdown presidents'. Had we have known; we'd all have bought shares in Zoom!

Q | WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES YOU AND YOUR CLUB DO IN THE COMMUNITY?

Our club activities in the community are the annual Tree of Remembrance at Christmas. We collect in the two weeks running up to Christmas and then we give our community the money after Christmas. It is an enjoyable experience, and we know the money is going to the local people who are really in need.

We have also adopted a local car park in an area of town which is often forgotten. We litter pick quite often and make sure we have it 'splashed' over social media to

get a good response from the community. We do not mind getting our hands dirty to make sure our town is well kept and tidy. Quite often we have more than 20 full bin bags.

Q | WHAT CAN ROTARY DO TO DRIVE MEMBERSHIP?

This is the million-dollar question! We must be visible, and we must be active in our community. I feel that Rotary needs to reach a wider audience, be that via social media or by the old 'word of mouth'. Our clubs must be worth joining. We must be value for money, but also focus on the fun part. Our meetings should have interesting speakers and be held at a time that is not restrictive to working people or young people. In our ever-changing world, we need to focus on diversity.

Q | WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT BEING A ROTARIAN?

Personally, I enjoy meeting and talking to my fellow Rotarians. I now have dear friends in Rotary who I would never have had the opportunity to meet in my daily life. I enjoy the fun and fellowship of our club and sitting with different members each week. Catching up on our personal and family life and coordinating our business and voluntary work. I enjoy telling people that I am a Rotarian and sharing the work we do in our community and internationally.

During my presidential year in 2020/21, I am proud of our club securing a Global Grant along with Coleraine and Londonderry clubs. We were granted \$88,000 to drill a well in Nepal, to supply clean drinking water to 173 houses that had no clean drinking water or sanitation. We have also since sponsored 20 'water ambassadors' to teach locals how to wash their hands and stay safe using sanitation. ●

If you have a story to tell and would like to be featured in *Rotary in Profile*, email: editor@rotarygbi.org



and finally...

From Managing Editor Dave King
editor@rotarygbi.org

LET'S GET RID OF TABARDS!

WHILE speaking to the Rotary clubs of Manchester Breakfast, Bideford, Winchester and Kilsyth in North Lanarkshire this summer, a new Rotary revolution was launched.

Get Rid Of Tabards – or GROTs, such is the Rotary obsession with acronyms – is a frivolous, tongue-in-cheek campaign, hatched by my good self, designed to smarten up Rotary.

So, what is it with this tabard fetish? That crazy compulsion to dress like a health and safety officer at any community Rotary event.

One wonders whether there is psychological counselling for extreme sufferers of tabardophilia who resort to wearing their day-glo uniforms in bed or in the bath? Does the public act of tabard-wearing release a steady flow of endorphins to the brain which creates temporary feelings of self-importance?

Now, when I floated the idea at the Rotary clubs, there was some laughter, but also some stoney faces. One lady in Bideford confronted me to say she loves wearing her tabard. At that same

meeting were a group of visiting German Rotarians who didn't know what a tabard was; ein hellgelber Wappenrock – natürlich!

Now, there's absolutely no argument about the necessity of tabards with stewarding at community events where there are hazards and a genuine safety need. The inevitable risk assessments say so. In fact, a luminous tabard, complete with Rotary logo, is the de rigueur fashion accessory for any serious parking attendant, or event marshal – usually accompanied by a silly hat!

But when I flick through social media photographs of Rotarians refurbishing a picnic spot, engaged in tree-planting, decorating a special school or collecting money in the town centre only to get a searing eyeful of dazzling yellow bibs, I asked myself: seriously?

Come on, be honest: it's not a good look. Call the fashion police. Arrest the miscreants, Constable, for visual pollution in a public place! Tabards remind me of the obsessive Martin Bryce, played by the brilliant Richard Briers in the BBC sitcom, 'Ever Decreasing Circles'.

There are numerous examples of Rotarians engaged in community work sporting stylish and colourful branded polo shirts, jackets or t-shirts, some adorned with the strapline 'Rotarians At Work'. It is time to get smarter.

Why does this matter? Because it is about public perception and promoting the Rotary brand. Take the lady pictured below. Nice marketing shot, but does she really need to be wearing a tabard for litter picking? Could there be a danger of low-flying crows?

As society picks itself up from the ravages of Covid, so Rotary is dusting itself down with a firm focus on membership. Now, more than ever, everything we do in the name of Rotary has to have added membership value.

If you're collecting for Ukraine, then make sure you're promoting your club too. If you're hosting a youth competition, tell the parents your club exists and follow up with an open house invitation.

And if you are organising an environmental project, then engage the community to take part by promoting the activity widely on social media – and again, follow up with a set-piece event.

Frequently there is talk about how we attract the younger generation. We hear the phrase 'People of Action'.

Well try this one for size: "Join Rotary, be a part of the community and wear your tabard with pride"! I think not.

Tabards are about as fashionable and modern as Worzel Gummidge. Let's be smart with our public image and let's get smarter.

There are right and very proper reasons for wearing high-visibility garb, particularly with matters of safety, but surely there are better ways of presenting Rotary in less hazardous situations without resorting to luminous yellow. ●



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Bookings for individuals as well as groups are accepted. *Some elements are not commissionable - for full details on the affinity offer, please visit rivieratravel.co.uk/affinity. Please remember to mention your Rotary Club at the time of booking. Riviera Travel retain the right to withdraw this offer at any time.

