

Rotary

OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2022

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1926-2022

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Contact us

Editor: Dave King
editor@rotarygbi.org

Publisher: Contently Limited
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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



OVER the summer, I binge-watched the Netflix series 'The Crown', which portrays the reign of Queen Elizabeth - from her reluctant accession to the throne in 1952, following the death of her father King George VI, before tracing that journey through the ensuing decades.

Now for 'The Crown' to be regarded as a reliable and authentic account of the inner workings of the Royal Family is fanciful in the extreme.

However, what was evident throughout the Netflix series, and which is borne out by her actions over 70 glorious years, was the Queen's commitment to her country and her absolute dedication to service. It was unremitting, carried out without complaint.

If ever there was a role model to the notion of 'service above self', then surely that is the rich legacy of our beloved monarch who died on September 8th.

Maybe that is why her passing was so keenly felt across the United Kingdom and the world over. The glowing tributes from world leaders of all political persuasions demonstrates the affection and esteem in which she was held, as well as the influence she exerted.

For 70 years, Queen Elizabeth was the rock, the figurehead who provided stability in a turbulent world.

For 70 years, she carried herself with dignity and grace, devoted to our country, to the Commonwealth, to her family, and to a life of unstinting service.

So, in this issue of Rotary magazine, we pay tribute to Queen Elizabeth II for her amazing life of service which touched people's lives in an unprecedented way.

At the same time, we also herald the dawn of a new era with the reign of King Charles III - himself an honorary Rotarian - continuing a commitment to the organisation through his father,

Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, and the Princess Royal, Princess Anne.

It has meant a late reshuffling of pages, as we also focus on polio to coincide with World Polio Day on October 25th.

There are spotlights on Afghanistan and Pakistan, two countries which have endured turbulent times, most notably with the devastating floods which swept Pakistan during August.

It is also 12 months since the Taliban surged to power in Kabul, and so we speak with Aidan O'Leary from the World Health Organization to understand the challenges which lie ahead with tackling polio in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and further afield.

The recent polio discoveries in London and New York have once again highlighted how the disease is just a plane ride away, and why Rotarians need to finish the job of providing for a polio-free world.

The consequences of failing to do so are clear for all to understand.

To succeed, Rotarians will need commitment and dedication for a battle which we have been fighting for decades..

Maybe, as we steel ourselves for renewed battle, we should reflect on the 'service above self' qualities of Her Majesty, and consider the dogged determination she displayed spanning almost twice the number of years which Rotary has been engaged in the End Polio Now campaign.

Surely now is time to reflect on the promise Rotarians made to the world with the launch of the PoloPlus campaign in 1985 and then becoming a founder member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988 - and making sure we honour it.

Dave King
Editor, *Rotary Magazine*

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Grief is the price we pay for love

The death of Queen Elizabeth II heralded the end of a remarkable reign and the dawn of a new age with King Charles III. However, what is unlikely to change is the Royal Family's long-standing and close association with Rotary.

| STORY BY **DAVE KING** |

FOLLOWING the 9/11 attacks in 2001, Her Majesty The Queen wrote in a message of condolence to the American people: "Grief is the price we pay for love".

Those words ring true for the unprecedented outpouring of love the world over towards Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest reigning monarch, who died on September 8th.

It was broadcaster Huw Edwards, a good friend of Rotary and an honorary member of Pembrey & Burry Port Rotary in Pembrokeshire, who broke the news on the BBC at just after 6.30pm. News to break a nation's hearts.

Tributes followed from world leaders and the public during 10 days of public mourning ahead of her funeral at Westminster Abbey on September 19th.

For sure, there were some anti-monarchist voices to be heard reflecting on Great Britain's colonial past and what they believed The Queen represented. But theirs was a distant hum compared to the near universal warmth for a woman whose reign offered much-needed stability and reassurance in a world now much changed since her Coronation 70 years ago.

This was reflected by the hundreds of thousands of people who filed past the Queen's coffin as it lay in state at

Westminster Hall, some queuing for more than 12 hours in a line stretching seven miles along the banks of the River Thames.

As Daniel Henninger observed in the *Wall Street Journal*, how in a society which now tends to be built on self-promotion and self-gratification, the late Queen Elizabeth II represented so many traditional values; reserve, self-containment, duty, responsibility, modest of demeanour, graciousness, civility, prudence and fortitude.

In a joint statement from Garth Arnold, Chair of the Board for Rotary Great Britain & Ireland, Nicki Scott, Rotary International Vice President and Amanda Watkin, General Secretary of Rotary GB&I wrote: "The Queen demonstrated extraordinary dedication and commitment to duty throughout her reign and did so with a graceful strength and admirable determination.

"She ruled throughout decades of change, from the dark post-war years, through to the new horizons of the 21st century, providing essential continuity for the nation.

"This is a period of public grief, when people who do not know each other come together to mourn a national figure who has been consistent throughout our lives and for whom we have collective affection despite not knowing her personally.

"We share our condolences to The

Royal Family and His Majesty, King Charles III at this sad time."

For Queen Elizabeth, her connections with Rotary were light. She was closely associated with the Women's Institute and also the Women's Royal Voluntary Service.

It was her husband, Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, who had a closer association with Rotary as an honorary member of the Rotary clubs of London, Edinburgh and King's Lynn, along with Windsor St. George and Windsor & Eton, where he would occasionally drop into their meetings.

In 2013, to mark the 60th anniversary of her Coronation, the Queen was presented with a Rotary International Award of Honour at Buckingham Palace to mark her support for Rotary's polio and humanitarian programmes.

Then, Her Majesty praised Rotary for its polio eradication programme and advocacy efforts. She said: "I am pleased that Commonwealth governments are playing their part in tackling disease and improving health for all. Polio for example, used to cast its shadow across many countries and today, thanks to concerted international action, just a handful still need to eliminate polio."

Judith Diment, who is Rotary's Representative to the Commonwealth, attended that presentation. "Her Majesty



Queen Elizabeth has been a steadfast, inspirational presence throughout my entire life,” she said.

“In 2013, I was appointed Rotary Representative to the Commonwealth and every year since on Commonwealth Day have been privileged to attend the Commonwealth Day Reception attended by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and, in recent years, by Prince Charles.”

Among the many tributes, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative praised The late Queen by stating: “Her leadership, steadfastness and commitment to service was exemplary throughout her life, and made her a globally-respected moral voice for some of the most marginalised people in our world.”

The organisation pointed out how the Royal Family has been ‘a proud and important supporter to the global eradication effort’.

The statement added: “While still HRH Prince of Wales, Charles III engaged personally in this effort, adding

his voice and commitment to ensuring children around the world are fully protected from lifelong polio paralysis.

In October 2003 in India, Prince Charles participated in Polio National Immunisation Days, observing the vaccination of children in villages on the outskirts of New Delhi.

In 2013, during another visit to India, he acknowledged Rotary’s tremendous efforts in eradicating polio in India, as he accepted and posed with a Rotary ‘End Polio Now’ scarf for the world’s media.


Later, in 2018 at the Commonwealth Leaders’ Summit, he highlighted the polio programme as an example of successful, joint action against disease, noting that hundreds of millions of children have benefitted from polio vaccination thanks to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Then in June this year, Prince Charles had a private audience with Rotary International President, Shekhar

Mehta, at the Commonwealth Summit in Kigali, Rwanda. There, Shekhar presented His Royal Highness with the Rotary Award of Honour, expressing his appreciation for his dedication towards sustainability and biodiversity. He also noted Rotary’s shared commitment with Prince Charles towards protecting the environment.

During COP26, the United Nations climate summit held in Glasgow last November, the then Prince Charles encouraged environmentalists to seek nature-based solutions to global warming.

“After billions of years of evolution, nature is our best teacher,” he said. “In this regard, restoring natural capital, accelerating nature-based solutions and leveraging the circular bio-economy will be vital to our efforts.”

At COP26, Shekhar Mehta, emphasised the critical role which mangroves play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. “Since then, 



Rotary is now working on mangrove projects in more than 20 countries supported by Rotary global grants in excess of \$600,000. This work is of great interest to King Charles,” added Judith.

Like his father, and also his sister, Princess Anne, who is an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Elgin, Scotland, King Charles III shares an interest in Rotary and has been seen wearing a Rotary pin on the lapel of his jacket as an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Banchory-Ternan in Scotland.

Alan Lilley, who is President of the Aberdeenshire club, said that the new King had been a member since 1992. This followed an invitation after he had opened Scolty Tower, a prominent landmark overlooking the town which was restored by the Rotary club.

They are currently fund-raising towards a further refurbishment of the tower which was erected in 1839 in memory of General William Burnett of Banchory Lodge.

“We have perhaps been remiss with inviting the King to visit our Rotary club. He spends a lot of time at Birkhall which is nearby. We hope this restoration project will be completed next year when we would love to invite King Charles to mark the occasion,” said Alan.

In 2003, the then Prince Charles spoke at the Rotary GB&I conference in Blackpool giving a talk on behalf of the

charity WaterAid.

Rotary has also been a keen supporter of The Prince’s Trust, founded in 1976 by Prince Charles to make a practical difference to young people who lack opportunities. It is aimed at those aged between 13 and 30-years-old who are in care, facing issues such as homelessness, or suffering from mental health problems, or who have been in trouble with the law.

Rotary International President, Jennifer Jones, was in Uganda showcasing some of Rotary’s humanitarian projects and had just met with the Makerere University Peace Centre fellows when she heard the news of The Queen’s death.

She said: “I felt deep sadness for her passing. Queen Elizabeth II was an inspiration to many Rotary members around the globe—especially those in Commonwealth countries.

“She was dedicated to numerous humanitarian causes that align with Rotary’s work around the world, including polio eradication.”

As a Canadian citizen, the Rotary International President said that most Canadians had a warm feeling for Her Majesty. Jennifer recalled as a young girl lining the streets of Windsor, Ontario, where The Queen visited.

“The streets were lined by thousands of people hoping to see a glimpse of Her Majesty passing by,” she reflected.

“It brought joy to so many, and The Queen had a tremendous impact on Canada.

“One reason why I admired Queen Elizabeth is that she shared the same guiding principles of unselfish volunteer service and acting ethically towards others as Rotary members – and her actions were in line with Rotary’s motto of ‘service above self’ and our Four-Way Test.”

The Royal Family has always been supportive of Rotary. The RI President noted Princess Anne’s address to the 2018 Rotary International Convention in Toronto which brought global awareness to Rotary’s work and inspired attendees. And she hopes that the dawn of a new era with the reign of King Charles III will strengthen those bonds.

She added: “I do hope that King Charles III will continue supporting humanitarian causes that both he and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II have historically advanced.

“Given that King Charles III has long been an advocate for environmental causes, we anticipate Rotary’s work to support the environment might align with his, and we’d be honoured to have his support.

“Rotary has already allocated millions to environment-related projects in recent years, and we expect to expand our work—and funding—in this arena.” ●

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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** |

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| JENNIFER JONES IN PAKISTAN

RI President Jennifer Jones was recently in Pakistan to observe the work of front-line female health workers who are vital in the campaign to eradicate polio. She spoke to Rotary's official WHO partner, Dr Hamid Jafari, and you can watch their conversation on Rotary International's Twitter.

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| ROTARY EVENT ON ITV LONDON

Over in Bromley, Rotary volunteers marked Ukraine Independence Day by hosting a picnic for Ukrainian families. There were games, entertainment, fundraising and the event even got covered by ITV News London! See more from the event on Bromley Rotary's Facebook page.

 [TWITTER](#) | [FACEBOOK](#) | [YOUTUBE](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#)



| SHOEBOX CAMPAIGN UPDATE FROM MOLDOVA

After dispatching over 11,000 shoeboxes full of gifts to Moldova, the Rotary Shoebox Scheme received a heart-warming message from the Rotary Club of Chisinau about how the shoeboxes have been distributed to vulnerable children and Ukrainian refugees that you can read on the Rotary Shoebox Scheme's Instagram.

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| ROTARY GENERAL SECRETARY PAYS TRIBUTE

Speaking with Rotary International Vice President Nicki Scott at the Rotary Convention in Houston, General Secretary John Hewko paid tribute to Rotary GB&I's Ukraine response. You can see John's tribute to Rotarians everywhere for the outstanding amounts raised for Ukrainians on the Rotary GB&I YouTube channel.

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| MARY'S MEALS LAUNCH NEW APPEAL

In August, Mary's Meals launched their Global Hunger Crisis Appeal as they look to honour their commitment to ending child hunger. They have been sharing facts that show the scale of the global hunger crisis as well as ways which people can help the organisation on their Twitter page.

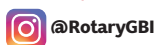
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| UKRAINE DAY THANK YOU

In order to honour Ukraine Independence Day, Rotary GB&I wanted to celebrate the £4 million raised for victims of the Ukraine conflict by Rotarians in Great Britain & Ireland, as well as highlighting the efforts of individual clubs. You can watch the short video on Rotary GB&I's Instagram.

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A HELPING HAND FROM THE NORTH EAST

Twelve months on from the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, Rotarians are helping women struggling for survival, faced with food shortages and financial deprivation.

| STORY BY **SUE CAMPBELL** |

AZIZA is separated from her abusive husband, but she managed to earn a good living working as an aviation officer at Afghanistan's Kabul airport, supporting herself and her two young daughters.

All that changed with the resurgence of the Taliban in August last year. Like many women in responsible jobs, she was stripped of her position and now has no income.

Fatima works at Kabul University as a cleaner. Her son and husband were killed by the Taliban, and she is trying to raise and house her other five children, with all that entails. When the Taliban came to power, they decreed no government worker could receive a salary. She has descended into poverty.

Zeba's husband was killed in the Afghan wars four years ago. She has young daughters, and is jobless, apart from washing other people's clothes to make a little money. Her life has become

one long struggle.

These are just a few pen portraits of women who have been forced into poverty and near starvation by their sudden change of fortune under the crushing reforms of the newly resurgent Taliban. It's a regime which has largely removed the rights of women to earn a living or even to go out alone in the streets.

While the situation in Ukraine continues to dominate the news headlines and many of the humanitarian efforts of Rotary across the country, the desperation of ordinary people in Afghanistan since the return to power of the Taliban has not gone away.

And the crisis in this beleaguered corner of the world has prompted a north-east England Rotary club to reach out to help families affected by food shortages and financial deprivation.

One of the members of Blyth Rotary, Aziz Shah, has family he supports in Kabul – five sisters, a brother and his mother still live there. He came from Afghanistan to the UK in 1998 and lives with his wife and two daughters in this

coastal town near Newcastle upon Tyne, a far cry from the bustle and oppression of his home country.

Aziz said: "Since the Taliban came to power again there are many ordinary families who are starving.

"So much has changed for the worse and it's spiraling down all the time. Women have no rights – it's like going back to the Stone Age.


"And if it's bad in Kabul, it is much worse in other more rural parts of the country."

Aziz brought the issues to his Rotary colleagues, who responded in typical generous manner.

International chair for Blyth Rotary, Jim Schofield, said that Blyth Rotarians personally supported an appeal for help and immediately donated £1,800.

The money was sent via Aziz to his family, who have distributed it to local families in need – including Aziza, Fatima and Zeba (*whose names have been changed to protect them*).

Aziz said: "My family in Kabul was very happy to help distribute the fantastic



amount that Blyth Rotary raised in such a short time, and it made a big difference to them. But it all must be kept very quiet, so that the Taliban don't find out and take reprisals."

That initial contribution provided for a one-off payment to around 14 families. But plans are in place to try and put in place something more sustainable.

Jim said: "We tried to contact the Rotary Club of Kabul, but after one email, contact was lost and communication with Rotary International regarding their status was inconclusive.

"So we decided we are going it alone and, through Aziz's very obliging family, will help a small number of families on a monthly basis by sending a small allowance.

"We are also looking to help one primary school in Kabul which they have identified, with items such as pencils, books and paper, all of which are in very short supply."

Jim said all this had to be done without drawing attention.

"No great amounts of cash will change hands. So small amounts of goods, food and other items will be bought and passed on. We're aiming for the equivalent of £100 a month, which will buy a great deal in Kabul."

Blyth is already raising more money. The club has pledged £1,200 and fund-raising activities have already started – collections at various events, a car rally, a sponsored walk, an Afghan night at a local pub, a charity run, a coffee morning.

The aim is to have one fund-raising event each month to sustain the monthly donations to the families and school in Kabul.

While the spotlight is still rightly on the Ukraine and the terrible humanitarian crisis the Russian invasion has triggered, the situation in Afghanistan cannot be forgotten.

And in this typically generous part of the country, there is one Rotary club which is doing its very best in its own way to make sure that doesn't happen. ●

"WHILE THE SPOTLIGHT IS STILL RIGHTLY ON THE UKRAINE AND THE TERRIBLE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS THE RUSSIAN INVASION HAS TRIGGERED, THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN."



Pakistan
Flood Appeal
now open.

Rotary launches Pakistan Flood Appeal.

Pakistan has been hit by the heaviest recorded summer rainfall for over a decade, with one third of the country said to be underwater.

The Rotary Disaster Recovery Trust has launched a Pakistan Flood Appeal. The Trust is focused on the long-term recovery of areas affected by disasters, and uses donations to make grants to Rotary projects to rebuild communities.



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**Not in conjunction with any other offer.

The choice to eradicate is in our hands

The past 12 months have been busy for Aidan O’Leary, Director for Polio Eradication at the World Health Organization - the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, high-profile detections of polio in London and New York, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and wild polio detections in Malawi and Mozambique. Here, Aidan discusses those challenges.

ANY time you find poliovirus in a previously polio-free area it is of course a concern and, more than anything, it is tragic for the individuals affected and their families.

But programmatically, in terms of achieving a polio-free world such events, more than anything, are a warning of what would happen if we do not eradicate polio. We would see global resurgence of the disease.

Think of what is happening in London, New York, Israel and Ukraine, but remember how far we have progressed from the start of this journey when we recorded 1,000 cases per day.

From a pure programmatic perspective, our priorities remain eradicating wild poliovirus in Pakistan and Afghanistan and interrupting transmission in the primary sources of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses in northern Nigeria, eastern Democratic

Republic of Congo, south-central Somalia and northern Yemen.

And here, the news is extremely encouraging. Both countries in fact are treated as a single epidemiological block.

Pakistan remains from a purely technical point of view the greater challenge, simply by virtue of the fact that it is the larger of the two countries based on population-size - poliovirus is a virus which thrives in larger populations.

Afghanistan had previously already eradicated its wild poliovirus and, to a certain degree, its fate will always be closely tied to Pakistan’s efforts.

In both countries, wild poliovirus transmission has for the past 12 to 24 months been at extremely low levels.

It is, perhaps, the lowest levels we have ever seen.

Pakistan is this year seeing an increase in new cases, but this outbreak is geographically restricted.

And the country, led by the highest political leadership, is intensifying efforts to urgently stop this outbreak, while ring-

fencing it in to prevent it from spreading to other areas.

Malawi and Mozambique are continuing to participate in multi-country outbreak response across south-east Africa, significant progress has been made in Nigeria and Somalia, an intensive outbreak is underway in DRC and we are pushing hard for access to protect unvaccinated children in northern Yemen.

The reality remains that we now have perhaps the best opportunity ever to finish the job of polio eradication. Or, at the very minimum, to firmly cement the ground-stone to secure lasting success.

We are – for all the Londons, New Yorks, Israels and Ukraines - probably in the best-ever possible situation. We have a unique window of opportunity – but we must use it, because it will not remain open forever.

There is no question that polio can be eradicated.

To achieve success remains a matter of political and societal will: to ensure that the proven eradication strategies are fully



implemented, and fully resourced.

If those two things come together, success will follow.

It is our 'choice' whether we choose to eradicate polio, or not. And there is nothing more equitable, and sustainable, than the eradication of a disease.

Ali Maalin was the last human smallpox case in the world, in 1977 in Somalia. Three years later, the world was certified as free of smallpox, in 1980.

In the 77 years preceding Ali Maalin, just in the 20th century alone, smallpox caused over 500 million deaths.

Those are more deaths than were caused by all wars fought throughout human history – including the two Great Wars. But thanks to the smallpox eradication effort, there has never been again after Ali another person infected - or died - as a result of smallpox.

It is an incredible achievement, and one we are working to ensure will happen with polio: that no child will ever again be paralysed anywhere by any poliovirus.

There are many challenges in the

world, many diseases, including of course COVID. But we have the perhaps once-in-our lifetime opportunity to give the world one less infectious disease to worry about once and for all.

And it is our choice whether we achieve this or not. Let us make the right choice.

Over the next 12 months, the overriding priority is to find and vaccinate all remaining zero-dose children in Pakistan and Afghanistan, to eradicate all remaining endemic strains of wild poliovirus transmission.

This will set the ground-stone for all other successes.

At the same time, we must continue our efforts to interrupt transmission in the primary sources of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses in northern Nigeria, eastern DRC, south-central Somalia and northern Yemen and continue to manage the events described earlier in London, New York, Israel, Ukraine and elsewhere.

That is, in a nutshell, the overriding priority programmatically.

This is then coupled with our financial priority: Rotary and Rotarians are incredibly active and engaged and generous. It is critical that the public sector follows your lead.

We urge all countries to come to Berlin to the global pledging moment, and together recommit to ensuring the necessary resources to achieving success are mobilised. ●

| Information |

Read the full interview with Aidan O'Leary online at rotarygbi.org/news



LIVING LIFE AS A **POLIO** SURVIVOR

As Rotarians across the globe mark World Polio Day on October 24th, two members of Winchester Rotary Club in Hampshire tell their stories as polio survivors.

RETIRED Civil Servant and Past President, Gill Russell, and Dr Kordo Saeed, a consultant microbiologist and honorary associate professor at the University of Southampton, both had polio as children.

GILL'S STORY

I was 18-months-old in 1954 when I caught polio. I remember nothing of

the illness, but learnt later that I was in hospital for weeks. My parents had initially thought it was a mild infection.

I was left with a paralysed left arm and a shorter, weakened left leg. This was two years before the vaccine became widely available when children in the UK were routinely protected. I was lucky.

Many children were left unable to walk or breathe unaided. Once I reached 11, the point it was deemed I had

stopped growing, my leg was surgically lengthened. I no longer needed the heavy caliper.

The operation took place at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford where the technique was developed.

I remember a nurse told me the technique had been developed by a Spanish surgeon who had repaired the broken limbs of bullfighters!

Once I was back at school, I got

used to hiding my disability as much as possible and hated sympathy – I still do, I’m afraid!

On leaving school, I studied modern languages and eventually joined the Civil Service, becoming a senior policy manager in the Department of Health, before retiring in 2011.

In the later stages of my working life, I was able to use my language skills more often – and travelled to meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg.

I had been a member of Rotaract in my late twenties, when my husband Paul and I moved to Winchester.

Whereas he joined Winchester Rotary almost immediately after reaching 30, I joined in 2009 – when women in Rotary were becoming accepted.

It was the End Polio Now initiative which immediately became a focus. During my year as President, a record sum was raised for polio eradication.

I was keen to take part in a vaccination day. In 2018, Paul and I were part of a Rotary GB&I group assisting with vaccinations in Delhi. We were fascinated to see a similar technique to my own childhood leg-lengthening used by Dr Mathew Varghese, at St Stephen’s Hospital - India’s last polio ward.

The following year I went to India again, when Kordo and I, along with two other Winchester Rotarians, joined a similar India NID group.

As happens to many polio survivors in later life, I now have problems with back pain and rheumatoid arthritis – due to the weakness on my left side and overuse on the stronger right.

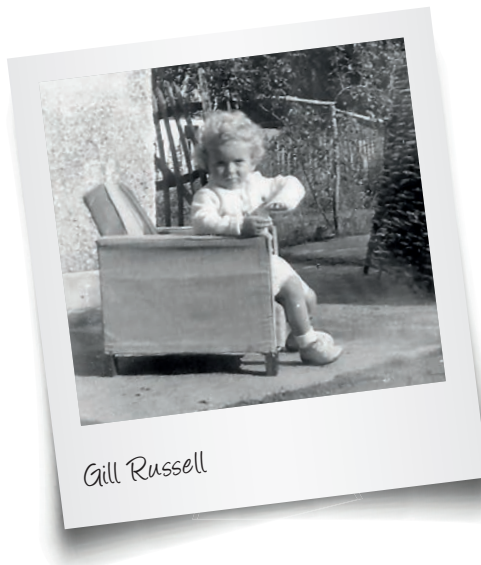
The recent discovery of the poliovirus in the London sewage system is a stark warning that polio is only a plane trip away.

KORDO’S STORY

I got polio when I was 10-months-old in 1974. My parents told me I had missed my vaccination as they had to flee to the mountains in the Kurdish region of North Iraq to flee fighting. I was taken by my grandmother to a doctor who diagnosed me with poliomyelitis, resulting in complete paralysis of my left leg.

As far as I could remember, I have always walked with a caliper. Walking for me wasn’t - and still isn’t - easy.

My affected leg didn’t grow as fast



Gill Russell

as my other leg and eventually ended up 8cm shorter, causing an imbalance when walking with a raised shoe and the caliper.

This imbalance eventually impacted my backbone, which has resulted in scoliosis in my spine.

I also have weakness of my other “goodish” leg with polio affecting the calf muscles.

Over the last 20 years I have been living with arthritic changes in my joints and post-polio syndrome.

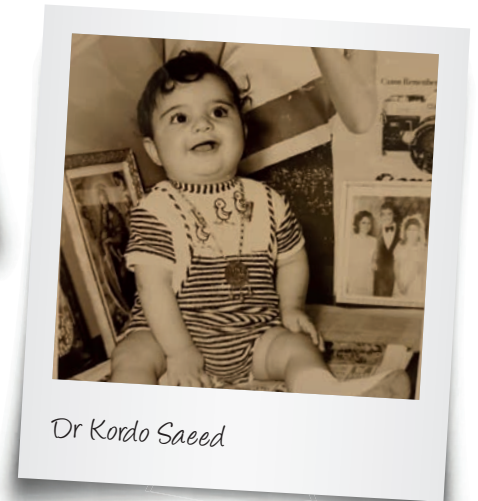
I feel I am lucky as the virus didn’t affect my respiratory muscles and I didn’t end up on an iron lung.

I was also lucky that Baghdad had one of the best centres for caliper-making and rehabilitation, which looked after me from my childhood until I fled Iraq.

I have a very supportive family and was not treated differently from my brothers, sent to the same school as them, receiving the same encouragement and support. I loved school, sciences and went to medical school, graduating as a doctor from Sulaimani University in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq.

I came to the UK in 2000 as a refugee when I had to restart my life, and requalified to be able to practise medicine in the UK, beginning as a consultant in medical microbiology and virology with the NHS in 2009. This year I also became an honorary associate professor at the University of Southampton.

I joined Winchester Rotary in



Dr Kordo Saeed

2005 through Gill and retired colleague, John Wilkinson. Although part of the international committee, the End Polio Now programme was one of the main reasons I joined to support fund-raising for polio eradication through giving live talks to other Rotary clubs.

Travelling to India for an NID in 2019 with two other Winchester Rotarians as well as Gill and more recently during the lockdowns, Gill and I did a number of joint talks around polio and End Polio Now.

The initiative has been extremely successful and, as a result of this, polio is on the verge of eradication which is down to vaccinations.

Despite the challenges vaccinators and Rotarians face in some areas, we are determined to rid the world of this virus. ●

Rotary profile

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

Profile:

Name: Colin Powell MBE

Rotary Club: Radlett, Hertfordshire

Occupation: Chartered Certified Accountant and Justice of the Peace

Q | WHEN DID YOU JOIN ROTARY AND WHY?

Around 2008, I started to plan my semi-retirement after running my full-time accountancy practice for over 35 years. Having decided that even that I had lived with a handicap of one, I would not be able to excel on the golf course and being aware that Rotary was focussing on 'End Polio Now' I was extremely eager to participate in this project. I decided

to investigate further. By pure chance I attended an event regarding a recruitment drive for Police Authority members when someone asked a question. I knew his name but not the person who over lunch I approached and enquired "Are you anything to do with the Radlett Rotary Club?" By the time that I arrived home my email box was inundated with information including an invitation to attend a luncheon meeting. And there started my journey into Rotary.

Q | WHAT IS YOUR POLIO STORY?

I was born in 1949 and when just six months old was unwell. The doctor told mother I was teething, but she noticed that I couldn't lift my legs off the cot mattress. The next day polio was diagnosed. I was admitted to a long-stay hospital where I remained for the next four years. The impact of polio was high levels of paralysis, spinal curvatures and respiratory limitations. I had a multitude



“WHEN THE AWARD ENVELOPE ARRIVED, I THOUGHT IT WAS ANOTHER PARKING TICKET AND UPON OPENING IT, I JUST BURST INTO TEARS”



of surgical procedures culminating in removing half my left ribcage that was implanted in my spine for support. I lost my childhood, separated from my parents during my formative years, denied access to any education until I was 11-years-old. I left school with one ‘O’ level and struggled on a correspondence course to qualify as a chartered certified accountant. Discrimination in the City left me no alternative other than to set up my own accountancy practice from scratch.

Q | WHAT HAVE YOU ACHIEVED AS A POLIO AMBASSADOR ?

When I gave my initial talk to my Rotary club, it appeared that not a single fellow had met a polio survivor. Subsequently, I was in demand to speak at District Conferences, Foundation and Paul Harris events. Since being appointed an ambassador, I’ve spoken to hundreds of Rotary clubs, both live and more recently via Zoom, to remotivate Rotarians to continue the campaign to globally eradicate polio. By delivering my talk entitled “Polio is more than a word” they are left knowing that I do not wish any child ever to be born today and suffer the life that I endured solely because the polio vaccine was not available to me when I was a baby. The UK media recently focussed on polio and it was us “Purple

for Polio” Ambassadors that were ready, willing and able to explain Rotary’s End Polio Now objective.

Q | HOW SURPRISED AND HONOURED WERE YOU TO RECEIVE AN MBE?

I had absolutely no idea whatsoever that an honour of this magnitude would ever be awarded to me. I’ve never sought recognition for what I wish to give back to society. I believe that life is like a barrel of apples, and if all we do is just take, the barrel will be empty for those who follow. When the award envelope arrived, I thought it was another parking ticket and upon opening it, I just burst into tears. A mixture of disbelief and the natural emotions of joy and happiness which Royal recognition would have given to my late parents and dear wife, Anne, who I lost in 2017 to cancer. It was extremely hard to respect and comply with the enforced five-week embargo not to discuss the award with anybody until 10.30pm on New Year’s Eve.

Q | HOW OPTIMISTIC ARE YOU THAT POLIO WILL BE FULLY ERADICATED?

I’ve enormous pride and respect for all that Rotary has done to achieve such a phenomenal reduction in the number of children getting polio. Since being actively involved in this campaign, who could

have ever foreseen the impact of adverse polio vaccine objections spread via social media or the impact of such inhumane military peacetime aggression. I can’t stop thinking about new-born babies in Ukraine prevented from being given preventive vaccines including polio, plus all those families forced to leave their homeland and now dispersed throughout the world with little or zero opportunity to access full polio vaccinations. Medical science is continually making daily breakthroughs, so maybe the development of a polio drug-based cure for those who miss the polio vaccine is the potential solution to complete the circle. That’s the legacy I wish to leave for all those that will follow my journey in Rotary. ●

| Information |

Colin can be contacted by emailing: talkpolio@powellnet.co.uk

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



THE SECRET MA RATHON

Running a marathon is tough. Running those 26 miles as a woman in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan is tougher. This is one Rotarian's story of how he made the incredible happen with some brave Afghan women.

| STORY BY **DAVE KING** |



MEET marathon runner and Rotarian Martin Parnell. Martin grew up in Newton Abbot in Devon, studied mining engineering in Camborne, Cornwall, before emigrating to Alberta, Canada, where he has just finished a term as District Governor for District 5360. Martin is an 11-year member of the Rotary Club of Cochrane.

His back story is one of determination, motivation and inspiration.

In 2010, following a 25-year mining career, Martin started his "Quests for Kids" initiative. Over the next five years he completed 10 quests.

These included running 250 marathons in one year, setting five Guinness World Records in endurance events and summiting Mount Kilimanjaro in 21 hours.

By the end of 2014, he had raised over \$1.3 million for the humanitarian organisation 'Right To Play', providing 27,000 children with the gift of hope.

Seven years ago, Martin was diagnosed with a blood clot on the brain and was close to death. He survived and has come back with a vengeance.

He read about the first Afghan woman to run a marathon and the verbal and physical abuse she endured while training, so he decided to help.

Film maker Kate Mackenzie and Martin took a film crew to make

a documentary about a marathon organised in Afghanistan. The release of 'The Secret Marathon' was delayed for many months because of death threats to one of the female runners featured.

The film was brilliantly recut and has now been released.

Since then, Martin and Kate have organised 'The Secret 3K' with participants around the world raising funds and awareness.

'The Secret Marathon' is a heart-warming story of the first women to run a marathon in Afghanistan and their fight for equality and freedom, and can be seen on Vimeo.

MARTIN'S STORY

In February 2015, I received some devastating news, I was diagnosed with Cerebral Venous Sinus Thrombosis, a massive clot on the brain.

At the time I was in Winnipeg, Canada, to give a keynote presentation at a conference.

The night before, I had a terrible migraine and the event organiser took me to the local hospital. A CAT scan revealed the clot and I was immediately put in an induced coma.

Up to this point in time I had been very active, running marathons and fund-raising for the humanitarian organisation 'Right To Play'.

Now my world turned upside down and I needed help to walk the 20 feet from my hospital bed to the washroom.

I returned to Cochrane in Alberta, where I live, and for the next six months I was in recovery. One morning in mid-October, my wife Sue showed me an article in the *Guardian* newspaper. It was about the very first Marathon of Afghanistan.

What caught my attention wasn't so much the race as one of the participants.

Her name was Zainab and she was the first Afghan women to run a marathon. That by itself was a tremendous achievement, but what really kept me reading was the challenges she faced when she went out training.

The challenges I face on the road or trail include cramp, de-hydration, blisters and the weather. For Zainab the challenges were verbal and physical abuse as she trained.

Men and children would call her a prostitute and throw stones at her. But that didn't stop her. She would go into her walled garden and run around and around for hours to get her training done.

When I read this it was like a switch had been thrown in my head. I said to Sue: "If I can run again, and if I can run a marathon then I am going to run the 2016 Marathon of Afghanistan in support of the women and girls."

One year later I was on a plane to Kabul with film Director, Kate Mackenzie, and a film crew. We wanted to share the story of the women and girls who run for freedom and equality. ▶



Zainab could not travel to the marathon. However, two days before the race, I met Kubra, a student from Kabul.

Kubra wanted to run the marathon but had stopped training four months earlier after a friend of hers was killed in a terrorist attack.

We decided that we would run the marathon together and try and complete it before the seven-hour security cut off.

On November 4th, 2016, Kubra and I were at the start line. The race started at 8am and our plan was to run nine minutes then walk for one minute.

Things went well for 14 km but then Kubra started to get stomach cramps.

We reached half-way at the 21.1 km turn in at around 3 hours 36 minutes.

At this rate, we would not make the cut off. Kubra started to run, but after 10 km the cramps she was having were too much and we started walking.

Time was running out and with 1 km to go Kubra started to run. We crossed the line in 6 hours 52 minutes 27 seconds, only seven-and-a-half minutes inside the seven-hour security cut-off.

After a brief celebration Kubra left the race finish and I headed back to the hotel. Next morning I was on a plane out

of Kabul and back to Canada.

Time moved on and I stayed in touch with Zainab and Kubra. Work continued on 'The Secret Marathon' film and, in March 2017, the first 'Secret 3K run/walk' took place.

In 2018, I travelled back to Afghanistan to run with the women and girls. In 2015 there had been one woman, Zainab. In 2016, there were six, and in 2018 there were 22 women and girls running in the marathon.

In August 2021 Afghanistan's world turned upside down. The Taliban took control of the country and on August 17th I received this email from one of the Afghan women.

"Thanks for reaching out, we are okay and stay home in Kabul now.

"These three days were the most horrific days of my life. I was on my duty at the office when they entered the city and we ran a long distance to our houses.

"When the gunshots started, I ran down on the street.

"The tanks were coming everywhere. I sent all my docs and information to see if there is any chance to get out of the country. We are safe now and will be updating you, love you both so much and

will never forget you!"

A number of the women did get out and they are now in Canada, USA, UK and Italy. They are starting new lives with their families but they face many challenges. One day I will meet them in person. There will be tears of joy and sorrow but also tears of hope.

In September 2018, The Secret Marathon book was published and on February 21st, 2022 The Secret Marathon film was released to the world for anyone to see. Looking to the future, the sixth 'Secret 3K run/walk' will held on March 8th, 2023 on International Women's Day. ●

Information

Secret Marathon book:
amzn.to/2qPgu1J

Secret Marathon film:
vimeo.com/theseecretmarathon

Secret 3K run/walk:
secret3k.com

secretmarathon.com
martinparnell.com/home



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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. Recently we spoke to Scot Brian Stewart, committed Rotarian, brilliant Book Club member and published author (*find his crime thrillers by searching for BRM Stewart*), to find out about his experience of the ShelterBox Book Club, here's what he had to say:

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR LOVE OF BOOKS FROM?

It really stems from my childhood. We didn't travel much as a family – certainly no foreign holidays. As a result, the only way to experience exotic places was through reading. Equally, I was basically a coward – still am – so the only way to experience adventure was through books!

DO YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR GENRE THAT YOU ENJOY READING – IS IT THE SAME AS YOUR WRITING?

I write crime fiction and I read a lot of that, of course. It's my go-to comfort reading genre, and probably started away back with Agatha Christie and John Creasey.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE SHELTERBOX BOOK CLUB?

I found out about it through a Rotary email, I think. At the time I was beginning to broaden my reading habits, and the ShelterBox Book Club did this in a very big way. I could immediately see that these were books that I would never ever have picked up by myself. They were by writers from all across the world and set in places well outside any tourist destination. There was also the bonus that I was supporting ShelterBox, of course.

At the same time as I joined the ShelterBox Book Club, Broughty Ferry

Rotary, which is based near Dundee, formed a book club, and it also is expanding my reading. Recently we read Shuggie Bain, and currently we're on Grey Bees (which just missed out on being a ShelterBox pick).

BROUGHTY FERRY ROTARY HAS DONATED TO SHELTERBOX FOR A FEW YEARS. HOW ARE YOU INVOLVED IN YOUR CLUB'S FUNDRAISING AND DOES IT CROSS-OVER WITH YOUR BOOK CLUB MEMBERSHIP?

I'm involved in almost all of our fundraising in Broughty Ferry Rotary. Certainly, when we have a collection for an international disaster, including Ukraine, I'll be there! The concept of ShelterBox – and the image of the box itself, even though actual support is more flexible than that – gives a clear focus to people when we're asking for money. Like most clubs, we've moved towards giving direct support in the community rather than writing cheques, though supporting ShelterBox and Foundation will always be a high priority.

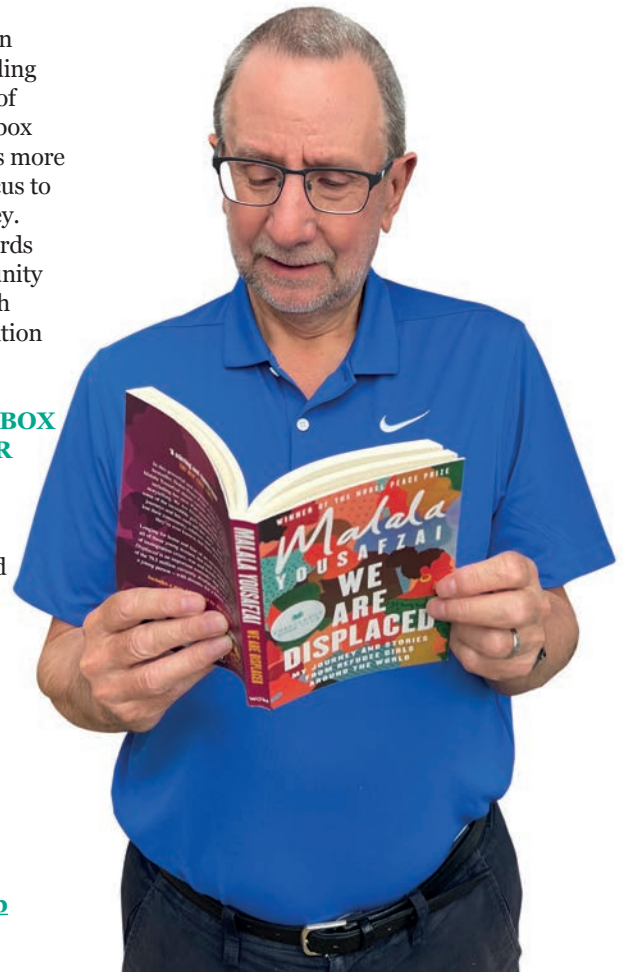
CAN YOU SEE THE SHELTERBOX BOOK CLUB BEING POPULAR WITH ROTARIANS IN THE FUTURE AND WHY?

Rotarians are concerned with what is happening around the world, and love the international sense of community that Rotary brings. In

that sense Rotarians who haven't encountered the ShelterBox Book Club yet would find it very appealing. After all, it's an interesting book every few weeks and a painless donation to ShelterBox and the amazing work it does.

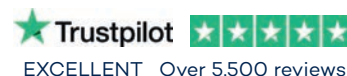
YOU CAN GIFT A BOOK CLUB MEMBERSHIP? DO YOU THINK IT WOULD MAKE A GOOD PRESENT FOR ROTARIANS?

Yes indeed – great idea! I know in my family we try to give experiences rather than 'things', and ShelterBox Book Club counts highly in those terms.



Sign up today using the reference code **ROTARY-OCTOBER** and get a free copy of one of our previous books when you join. shelterbox.org/book-club

Often feel fatigued? Try **magnesium**.



Feeling tired and don't know why? You're not alone. According to a recent study, less than half of us consume our recommended daily amount of magnesium, a mineral that helps turn the food we eat into energy.

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Deficiency can cause mood swings, migraines, eye twitches and muscle cramps.

If you have low magnesium levels, you are also less likely to get a good night's sleep.

“Within two weeks I was a different woman, with energy to spare”

Magnesium is present in foods such as black beans, bananas and pumpkin seeds, but to get the benefits we need to absorb it into our bodies.

One way to ensure we consume a consistent level of magnesium is by taking a daily supplement – but not all

supplements are equal.

Your body's ability to absorb the magnesium depends on the way that the supplement is made.

'Most supplements use magnesium oxide – it is the most common form, as it has a high concentration of magnesium but it's not easily released into the body,' explains Dr Miriam Ferrer PhD, head of product development at FutureYou Cambridge.

'Taking more magnesium to try and make up for the problem isn't the best approach, as too much can cause an upset stomach so we created Magnesium+ using magnesium lactate which is twice as absorbable as a standard magnesium oxide supplement. This means you need much less per capsule to deliver the same amount.'

Nicole, 57, says: 'I genuinely started to feel different within a couple of weeks.

I started to feel much more perky – that's the best word to describe it... I've taken them religiously ever since.'

Another happy customer, Anne, 74 says: 'I had no energy at all. I put it down to my age, but it was really impacting on my life. Within two weeks of trying it I was a different woman, with energy to spare.'

Now FutureYou Cambridge is offering you the opportunity to try a 28 day supply of Magnesium+ for free.*

'We're happy to offer people their first pack for free so they can experience it for themselves,' says Adam Cleevly, CEO of FutureYou Cambridge.

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MGF246

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*Magnesium contributes to: a reduction of tiredness and fatigue, a normal energy-yielding metabolism, normal functioning of the nervous system, normal muscle function and normal psychological function. Introductory offer valid for new UK customers only. Offer expires 31st December 2022. See FutureYouHealth.com/MGF246 for full terms and conditions.



Your New Members Area. Get more out of Rotary.

This section of the website, available only to members, is full of resources, information, materials and more to help you and your club make the most of your Rotary experience.



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SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON POLIO

IN August, I was proud to visit Pakistan and highlight Rotary's top goal, eradicating polio. It was also a tremendous opportunity to spotlight women health workers who are playing a critical role in protecting children from this vaccine-preventable disease.

This month, as we celebrate World Polio Day, we are shining a spotlight on our more than 30-year effort to lead the first global polio eradication campaign and our success in forming partnerships capable of completing this massive goal.

We all know that this is one of the most ambitious global health initiatives in history and that we've reduced polio cases by more than 99.9% worldwide.

Pakistan remains one of only two countries in the world with circulating wild poliovirus. The other is neighbouring Afghanistan. I was able to witness and take part in vaccination campaigns in Pakistan, and soon after I left, a monumental nationwide immunisation campaign took place, focused on 43 million children under the age of five.

I saw the incredible work of Rotary members on the ground. More than 60 percent of vaccinators in Pakistan are women, and they are doing a remarkable job building trust and convincing mothers to vaccinate their children.

Seeing it all firsthand, I know that the will exists across the Rotary world to end polio, and I'm confident that we have the strategy. The Pakistani media has been very supportive of our efforts as well, and this is making a difference.

This month, a new global pledging moment at the World Health Summit in Berlin promises to pull together more resources to fund these time-sensitive eradication efforts. Now it is up to us to do our part and raise \$50 million this year to earn the full two-for-one match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

There's great cause for optimism on the polio front — but also some staggering new events that further raise the stakes.

Over the past few months, new polio outbreaks have occurred in Israel, the United Kingdom and, most recently, in the New York City area of the United States. These stories are frightening, but in every case, the response is clear — vaccines work, and if polio is spreading, we need to make sure the most at-risk people have kept their vaccinations up to date.

Most importantly, we need to eradicate this virus now. If polio exists anywhere, it can spread everywhere.

What I saw in Pakistan convinced me that we can and must finish the job, but it will only happen if we remain committed to a strategy that's working and back it with all necessary resources.

Through our commitment, generosity, and sheer determination, we will **#EndPolio**. ●

JEN JONES

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT 2022/23



Why Aquabox?

Aquabox is a true Rotary charity – founded by a Rotary club, supported by Rotary clubs worldwide, and 30 years on from its launch, still at the heart of the Rotary community.

Aquabox volunteers assemble simple, robust hand-pumped water filters and send them to disaster zones, conflict areas and refugee camps around the world, so that people living in extreme deprivation can at least have access to clean, safe water for drinking, for cooking and for washing.

One Aquabox family filter can transform up to half a million litres of polluted water into clean, safe water – at a cost of less than £40. And the Aquabox filter gives effective protection against common water-borne diseases like cholera, typhoid and polio.

Aquabox is run almost entirely by volunteers – virtually all of the money you donate is spent on assembling filters, packing them with other humanitarian aid, and shipping them to people in desperate need.

Over the past 30 years, Aquabox has helped to save untold thousands of lives. And with your support, we can help to save untold thousands more!



Could your club run an Aquabox Walk for Water?
Email kevin.barclay@aquabox.org to find out more.



Go to aquabox.org to find out more about our work, and to book an Aquabox speaker for your club.



NICKI SCOTT
RI DIRECTOR 2021-23

THE END IS IN SIGHT

OUR August/September magazine carried the headline “Poliovirus in the UK” with a long feature article on how much of a shock this was the world over.

Shortly after a case of paralytic polio in an unvaccinated individual caused by vaccine derived virus was detected in Rockland County, New York, United States.

These two incidences in countries where polio was thought to be a “thing of the past” have really helped to raise public awareness again.

We all know any form of poliovirus anywhere is a threat to children everywhere. We have worked so hard for so long to try and eradicate this dreadful disease which is fully preventable.

Today nearly all the world’s people live in polio-free countries and some 20 million people are walking who would have been paralysed had it not been for the efforts of Rotary in collaboration with our partners.

The end is in sight, but crossing the finish line is the hardest especially given that the polio eradication programme works in the world’s most challenging areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic, continuing armed conflict in Yemen, Ukraine and countries of central Africa, and now the floods in Pakistan have disrupted health systems, including essential immunisation activities.

The coming five years may provide the last opportunity to eradicate polio.

So what can we in Rotary GB&I actually do to help?

1. We can personally and collectively advocate for the safety and necessity of vaccinations.
2. We can help raise awareness and fundraise in our communities so we can keep running the marathon to the very end - World Polio Day on October 24th is geared towards helping with this.
3. We can all personally sign up to the **PolioPlus Society** - just \$100 per year per Rotarian will make a huge contribution towards meeting our Gates Foundation match commitment of \$50 million globally.

For more information on joining the **PolioPlus Society** please contact our Polio Specialists Keith Paver: keithpaver.rotary@gmail.com or Derek Rothwell: derek@drothwell.uk The World Polio Day toolkit is now available for download at: endpolio.org/world-polio-day Please strongly consider your role as a Rotarian in helping us achieve our global goal and get across the finish line.



IAN RISELEY
FOUNDATION TRUSTEE CHAIR

FULFILLING OUR PROMISE

WHO are your Rotary heroes? One of mine was Clem Renouf, the 1978-79 Rotary International president.

I related to Sir Clem, who died in 2020, in many ways. We shared the same profession and Australian nationality and a passion for polio eradication.

It was Clem’s leadership that first put us on track to embrace the cause, mobilising what is today a global partnership that has led us to the cusp of eradicating a human disease for only the second time in history.

What Rotary and its partners have achieved is nothing short of remarkable. We have helped reduce polio cases by 99.9% worldwide, immunising more than two billion children in 122 countries.

Last year alone, more than 370 million children were vaccinated in 30 countries using more than one billion doses of oral polio vaccine.

As a result, we are seeing near historic lows in the number of cases. In August 2020, the WHO African region was certified free of wild poliovirus, an incredible achievement for Rotary members and a huge step on the road to eradication.

But remember that while polio exists anywhere, it is a threat to people everywhere, especially to young children. You may have heard about importations of the disease to Malawi and Mozambique, detection of poliovirus in sewage in the United Kingdom, and a recent case in the United States.

To stay agile, Rotary and its partners are deploying a new polio vaccine, novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2), to fight outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus, also known as variant poliovirus, which continues to threaten children in Africa, as well as several countries in Asia and the Middle East, including in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Rotary is as active as ever. We are calling on every member to take action and be part of this historic fight.

Take the fight to your clubs and communities on World Polio Day, 24 October.

Don’t forget that contributions towards the goal of \$50 million per year for polio eradication will be matched 2-to-1 by our generous partner, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Like Sir Clem, we can all be Rotary heroes, each playing a part in our organisation’s great legacy.

Through our giving, raising awareness and funds, and hands-on service, each of us brings Rotary a step closer to fulfilling our promise to the children of the world by eradicating polio for good. ●



AMANDA WATKIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
FOR ROTARY GB&I



GARTH ARNOLD
CHAIR OF THE BOARD
FOR ROTARY GB&I

A NEW VIEW FOR ROTARY

FOR 12 months we have been scoping, planning and developing a major update to the data management system (DMS), creating a brand-new product named Rotary View, designed to enhance and enrich your Rotary GB&I experience – not just as a club or district officer, but as an individual member.

With a strong focus on creating a “one-stop-shop”, reducing the need to switch back and forth between multiple systems, Rotary View will provide all the tools needed to maintain your Rotary information – whether that be specific membership details, contact information for your club or district, or reports on membership and much more.

Work behind the scenes of Rotary View ensures its data is constantly kept in check with the Rotary International database meaning no differences between the two sets of data, moving the product from a synchronisation system to a feature-rich system our membership will have reason to use.

Current functions and tools will be of a higher standard and new features have been introduced such as member-to-member communication, via a messaging service and video/non-video call capabilities; new search systems are designed for members to step beyond the district boundaries and facilitate communications across Rotary GB&I.

Rotary View also includes an events system allowing the increased recording of information for club and district events, and the ability for members to register or record their attendance.

The Rotary Template System has long served clubs and districts as a centrally maintained standardised template for club and district websites, offering a professional ‘on brand’ look to the outside world.

As part of the Rotary View development, we will remove administration functions from within the Template System and include them within Rotary View.

The Template System will then be entirely focussed for clubs and districts to use as it was originally intended – as a website platform to increase engagement from outside of Rotary, ultimately increasing publicity for club activities and membership development.

Going forwards this will allow us to build on and enhance the functions of the Template providing website tools that allow for more flexibility and design for clubs.

Rotary View is on its way to you now so please look out for email communications over the coming weeks and I hope you enjoy this new member service, it’s been designed for you! ●

MY ROTARY FOUNDATIONS

WHILE being interviewed for our *Rotary* magazine, I had the fun challenge of remembering my own Rotary story as I prepare to create a new chapter for Rotary GB&I.

My journey with Rotary began back in late 1993.

I was working at the Northern Bank in Newtownards, County Down when one of the customers came in and asked me at the counter if I would be interested in joining a new Rotary club which was forming nearby in my hometown of Donaghadee.

I decided to go along and the rest is history as the club chartered in February 1994.

My interest in volunteering links back to my time in cubs, scouts and venture scouts - some of you may remember ‘Bob-a-Job Week’.

I also remember over 45 years ago being present at The New University of Ulster, Coleraine, as a youth representative to meet Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, as a newly invested Queen’s Scout.

Looking back, this time laid the foundation for me to further my keen interest in volunteering and giving something back.

We’re a modest club in size, but extremely active in the local community, notably with our blood pressure testing campaigns as an example.

I’m incredibly proud of everything I do with my club and, as Chair of the Board, I want to create more discussion and interaction between the Board of Rotary GB&I and individual clubs.

One of my favourite moments during my time at Rotary so far is taking 26 young leaders to the European Parliament in Strasbourg for an annual event called Euroscolar.

Within the district we run an annual Youth Leadership programme which, at its peak, had maybe 2000 students coming forward for interviews and we whittled all that down through regional heats, to a strong group of people.

The students are given questions by the EU office to debate, including topics such as the environment and cyber-security, in the arena filled with a panel of European Parliament members and your peers; it’s brilliant for leadership and presentation skills and personal development.

Now, in my new position as Chair of the Board, I’m looking forward to helping create a stronger Rotary and you can hear how we are planning on achieving that in my full interview on the Rotary GB&I website. ●

Rotary, one century later

Rotary magazine looks back 100 years at how, in the wake of the Great War, Rotary experienced one of its greatest periods of growth.

| STORY BY **GEORGE BICKNELL** |

THE years directly after World War One marked a time of rapid expansion for Rotary, both in Great Britain and Ireland and across the globe.

Rotary had struck these shores from America in 1912 with the Rotary Club of London chartering – the first Rotary club in Europe.

Rotary grew to have eight clubs in Glasgow (1913), Belfast (1913), Dublin (1913), Edinburgh (1913), Manchester (1913), Liverpool (1913) and Birmingham (1914) leading to the creation of the British Association of Rotary Clubs.

However, the year 1922 proved to be a pivotal year of progress for Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland.

It was decided at the 1922 Rotary Convention in Los Angeles that national or territorial units could operate as administrative units of Rotary International, allowing the clubs of Great Britain and Ireland to officially unite under the name Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland.

This was one year after Rotary Great Britain and Ireland hosted the Rotary Convention for the first time in Edinburgh, an event which received the recognition of the British Government and King George V.

At the 1922 Annual Conference of Rotary Clubs of Great Britain and Ireland in Brighton, there was further good news to be heard about Rotary’s growth in the Isles.

According to the 1922 edition of the national magazine, *The Rotary Wheel*, in his address to the conference, Rotary GB&I President William A. McConnell OBE reported: “Eleven months ago the Association consisted of 42 member clubs, following upon a total of 28 when we met at Harrogate.

“Today we have in actual membership 75 clubs, while, in addition, there are 18 clubs fully established whose affiliation will shortly take place, and 8 clubs in formation, making a complete total of 101 clubs in Great Britain and Ireland. The enrolled membership of our clubs is approximately 6,000.”

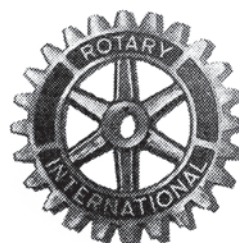
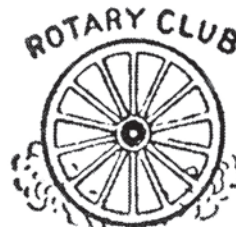
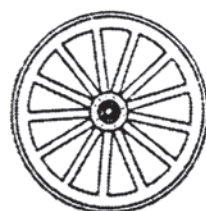
Throughout this issue of *Rotary*

Wheel, which is the Rotary’s oldest region magazine, there are excited reports of new clubs being formed in Colchester, Bristol, Canterbury and Barnsley amongst dozens of others.

When looking for the driving force behind this rapid extension of Rotary’s reach in the 1920s, there are a number of reasons.

In the Annual Report of the Executive Council 1921-1922, it explains a primary reason for the high increase in Rotary clubs during this time was that “the Headquarters of the Association have been placed upon a permanent footing in its own offices.

“The efforts of the District Councils,





“THE DESIRED RESULT CAN BE ACHIEVED ONLY BY PUTTING ASIDE NATIONAL DIFFERENCES AND CULTIVATING A CHARITABLE DISPOSITION TOWARDS CIVILIZATIONS ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM OUR OWN”

to which has been delegated the preliminary work of forming new clubs, have received from the Headquarters active support, which has enabled them nearly to double the number of clubs in this county.”

There was clearly a focus on establishing grounds for international collaboration within Rotary following World War One. It was an opportunity for Rotary clubs to help society rebuild after the horrors of the conflict in Europe and for many of those who fought to become part of the Rotary movement.

In a message read out at the 1922 Los Angeles Convention, Rotary Founder Paul Harris expressed his desire for Rotary’s impact to be felt around the world, saying: “Let us make the utmost of our opportunities to cultivate personal friendship with men of other nations.

“The desired result can be achieved only by putting aside national differences and cultivating a charitable disposition towards civilizations essentially different from our own.”

This sentiment was echoed back in Britain at the Brighton Annual Rotary Conference 1922 where Rotarian W. T. Elliot questioned why British Rotary had not reached out to nations who weren’t on our side during World War One.

He said: “It ought to be one of the immediate objects of Rotary to get moving in ex-enemy countries, and it ought not to be beyond the moral power of Rotarians to rise to the height of their opportunity in this respect.”

Moreover though, from British and Irish Rotary point of view, this surge in clubs forming could be framed

as communities banding together in response to difficult times.

In the aftermath of World War One, Britain lost its place as the world’s leading economic power as unemployment and national debt drastically increased, leading to a great amount of tension amongst the working population and multiple strikes across the country.

Referencing the current economic climate in his address at the 1922 conference, William A. McConnell said: “Rotary and its membership provide increased opportunity for service, and it is in service we shall require to demonstrate that our ideals are right.

“We hear much of taxation interfering with business, but is relief in taxation as likely to bring prosperity as the goodwill to serve?”

“Peace and prosperity cannot return to a distracted world until all classes of the community unite in a true spirit of constructive co-operation. The war was won by Unity, Sacrifice and Service.”

He added: “The mission of Rotary is world-wide, and it knows no barriers of race, creed or colour.

“Wherever there is a community of civilized men, there may be a Rotary club uniting, in the spirit of service, all sorts and conditions of men.”

These statements from Rotary President McConnell already paint Rotary as a force which could unite all communities in the face of great hardship.

It would, therefore, be appropriate to draw comparisons between this period of Rotary’s history and Rotary’s more recent activity in response to the Covid pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine where Rotary clubs have been inspiring communities to come together for donations and events.

Through all the talk about Rotary’s relevance in the modern world, it is evident the organisation’s impact to unite people across the world with acts of service has always persisted.

The question is whether Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland can replicate its growth a century ago in the face of adversity, by promoting itself as a focal point for community-minded citizens who want to take part in an act of service. ●

Letters to the editor

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

Mixed feelings for tabards

GET rid of the ubiquitous tabard was the rallying cry of Dave King in the August/September issue of *Rotary* magazine.

Although written in a tongue in cheek fashion, and perhaps easily dismissed as the rantings of someone who has lost the plot, with comments such as 'call the fashion police' and arrest the wearers for 'visual pollution in a public place', maybe the subject is worthy of some consideration and an evaluation of the various pros and cons.

As a member of a road cycling club with a full range of clothing for all weathers and all carrying the club logo, I know that it's an expensive business.

The cheapest item is the short-sleeved summer top costing around £60, so add to that a couple of summer shorts, a couple of winter longs, a winter top, a mid-season top and a waterproof top, a fashion-conscious club member is potentially looking at a cost of well over £500, and all to create a corporate look.

So taking my cycling experience as a yardstick, how much would it cost the Rotary members to kit themselves out in the fashionable and smart clothing that Mr King seeks to promote?

We operate in many locations both indoors and outdoors and in all seasons.

We operate in daylight and in the dark. Such activities can range from the collection of clothing to provide winter warmth for those less fortunate and conducted within vacant retail premises to the annual Santa collection undertaken in the dark and in all weathers.

Certainly, the indoor operation can be done without resorting to the tabards, provided that there is some signage to

promote the Rotary activity and those engaged could wear a single item with the Rotary logo and that would be sufficient.

In stark contrast, those engaged in outdoor activities should be able to wear clothing that suits the weather and the activity without having to go to the expense of purchasing a range of Rotary branded clothing, so it strikes me that the perfect answer for this type of activity is to allow the volunteer to choose what they wish to wear and then top it off with the tabard.

This reduces the expense, but provides a high-visibility corporate look that, in some circumstances, addresses a health and safety consideration and at the same time promotes and advertises the work of Rotary.

Let's not rush to throw out the baby with the bath water but take a measured approach to allow the tabard to be used when it is needed, but some other Rotary item, baseball cap, jumper or fleece when the circumstances allow.

John Spencer
Clitheroe Rotary, Lancashire



The time is right

YOUR "GROT" piece in August's *Rotary* magazine is a campaign just waiting to happen. If you can make people laugh you can sell them anything.

The campaign, albeit tongue in cheek, is perfectly timed for now.

So, what is the answer; it just needs a lightweight microfibre gilet in blue (preferably Rotary blue), which is embroidered in white on the left breast with ROTARY and the Rotary roundel in gold on the right breast in the new Rotary style. For font size, see the new Rotary cap.

Rotary is big enough to embrace Mrs Tabard from Bideford, as variety is the spice of life. Meantime, well done that man, it was a great article.

David Acton
Rochdale Rotary, Lancashire

Great PR

I CAN only hope that your article 'Let's get rid of tabards' in your splendid August/September edition was written to goad Rotarians into defence of tabards. You have succeeded!

In my opinion it's not about 'smartening up'. Surely the main idea of tabards is that they confer authority and identity on the wearers, and enable others to easily recognise organisers of, in our case, Rotary events.

The best tabards are reflective at night, and offer great PR for Rotary when emblazoned with the club's name. What's not to like?

Richard Ward
Kew Gardens Rotary, Surrey

Tabards are a positive feature

I COMPLETELY disagree, keep the use of tabards. I have read, and reread, your big article in *Rotary* magazine. Since then, I have spoken to many friends in my club, and many in several other local clubs, and I have yet to find anyone who supports your view.

Personally, I think it would be a completely retrograde step to get rid of tabards. Having taken part in more events than I can remember over the last 30 years, the wearing of tabards has been a continuing simple, but positive feature of the involvement of Rotarians to make it clear to the general public of our efforts.

Certainly, I acknowledge that Rotary must move forward and make full use of all the modern social media methods of PR as well, but surely there is no possible reason for that to be at the exclusion of wearing tabards. When we are doing street collections, marshalling at carnivals, etc., the simple, but positive wearing of a tabard is an instant, and convincing connection with the general public, and helps bring very positive results.

| Lance Slater

Marlow Rotary, Buckinghamshire

Mistaken for ASBOs

THANK heavens for your GROTs campaign.

I recently drove past a school in a nearby town and saw what I thought were children gathering to go on a nature ramble. Then I realised that they were too tall for that and assumed that they were ASBO sufferers doing community service.

But no, they were Rotarians wearing slip-over the head tabards while planting trees. The overall effect was simply silly: your campaign may have been tongue-in-cheek, but I do hope that it finds some momentum.

| Bill Wyllie

Wallasey Rotary, Merseyside



Absolute cobblers

WHAT a load of absolute cobblers with 'And Finally' and the editorial Get Rid of Tabards (*Rotary*, August) - that's the polite version of my reaction too!

We wear tabards when we do public work so that the public can see that it's Rotary which is doing good in their community. It has nothing to do with Elf & Safety - it's to do with publicity.

Having read my way through this month's otherwise excellent Rotary edition, I am really disappointed that you should be so misdirected at the very end - you should be ashamed of yourself!

| Colin Jeynes

Doncaster Rotary, South Yorkshire

Community Service

INTERESTING article in *Rotary* magazine about tabards (*Rotary*, August). It begs the question of an alternative apparel when engaged on Rotary projects. I'll get my thinking hat on.

A couple of years ago my club cleaned our village war memorial.

We all wore high vis jackets as we were standing in the road with our power washer, and at one point we held up the traffic.

Two middle-aged ladies in a car asked me who we were and what we were doing. I said we were on community service. They thought we were offenders and sped off instantly before I could explain we were Rotarians from the village Rotary club! Perhaps tabards mean different things to different people.

| Bill Casey

Bransgore & District Rotary, Hampshire

f t i in YouTube Social chatter

Phil Dyer: The August/September issue of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland magazine dropped through the door yesterday and a great read it is too well done to Rotary Editor and the Support Centre in Alcester

I particularly like the 'And Finally' back page story and the use / non-use of tabards... a real bone of contention for me.

We all know Rotarians who love a tabard reaching for them at every opportunity. Collecting inside Tesco on Saturday 'I must wear my tabard' is a crazy notion when a Rotary sweatshirt would be the best idea with a little club branding!

There is a time and place of course, but let's think before we reach for the dreaded tabard and hi-vis vest!

So I salute you Dave King a great story "GET RID OF TABARDS".

David Ellis:

I have been advocating the use of other forms of identification for years. I had Rotarians who agreed and others who needed them surgically removed.

Herbert Chatters:

Fully agree. Rotarians look like an offshoot of the local council waste disposal team in those yellow perils. Purple versions on high-vis occasions are much more the part.

Christopher Hill:

I hate tabards...have never and will never wear one. Much prefer my branded shirt / polo / hoody. I'm not a 90s dinner lady.

Brian Portway:

Just get rid of tabards with the old branding please.

Christopher Sumner:

Tabards are totally outdated. Much prefer a branded polo shirt. Yellow if you really need to be hi viz such as car parking.

Jill Eddie:

I do agree wholeheartedly about tabards. Hate them!



Well crafted

AS an octogenarian, a Rotarian for 44 years, a businessman, a journalist and a Minister of State in the Isle of Man for over 12 years, among many other activities, you have caused me to write my first letter to the Editor!

‘The Polio Bombshell’ (*Rotary*, August) is a masterpiece and I should like to congratulate you in crafting it so well.

The way you have told the story should arouse the combined interest of virtually all editors of any consequence, particularly as it is topical and in spite of the fact that they all know what it is all about!

May I wish you every success with your excellent publication.

David North,
Douglas (City) Rotary, Isle of Man

Linking with the Lions

IN reply to Jim Schofield’s letter where the Rotary Club of Blyth was finding difficulty in finding a home for used spectacles for recycling (*Rotary*, June).

Our experience of recycling spectacles at Lichfield has been very positive. Once we had established that the Vision Express scheme had closed, we simply sought another partner.

Since last October, we have dispatched over 1,000 pairs of spectacles to various overseas locations via our new partner, the Lichfield Lions. Our spectacles are continuing to arrive from collecting points in various local churches.

Trevor James
Lichfield St Chad Rotary,
Staffordshire



Poliovirus in London

I AM writing in connection with the article in the latest *Rotary* magazine (August) concerning the discovery of poliovirus at a London sewage treatment works.

The tone of the article strikes me as unreasonably sensationalist - the opening words “When the bombshell landed...” seem more worthy of the Daily Mail than of the journal of an association of professional people.

Whilst the article does go on to quote Dr Vanessa Saliba who says that the risk to the public overall is extremely low, the initial message is of spreading alarm.

Vaccination against polio is both a high priority for Rotary globally, and also a resounding success.

In developing countries, where the sewage and water supply infrastructure may be poor, vaccination is a vital first

line of defence.

But in our society, we are able - or should be able - to rely on a secure system of sewage treatment to minimise the escape of poliovirus into the wild.

This is undermined by the many failures of water companies, who are regularly responsible for discharges of raw sewage into rivers and the sea.

By all means highlight the impressive work that Rotarians worldwide have done in reducing polio’s spread to a few places, and continue to impress on us that continued vigilance is necessary.

But, as a group of community leaders, Rotary must do this in a measured, thoughtful manner that avoids the excesses of the tabloid press, and also emphasises a holistic view.

Geoff Cusick
Rotary in Gravesham & Ebbsfleet, Kent

Spectacle source

IN reply to the letter about ‘Finding a home for spectacles’ (*Rotary*, June), I send any spectacles I collect to the Lions Club in Chichester. Your readers may like to know about this link to their website: www.chilions.org.uk/specs.htm

Liz Martin
Bass Rock Community Group
(Global Hub)

Any questions?

ALAN Hawkes, after referring to the views of Aristotle, asks: “What are the purposes of Rotary?” (*Rotary*, August). I am reminded of that sage’s maxim: “Those who wish to succeed must ask the right preliminary questions.” The problem is, what are those questions?

John Oakey
St Albans Rotary, Hertfordshire

A new Four Way Test



THE reasons for my contention that The Object of Rotary and Four Way Test were outdated (*Rotary*, February) are:

The Object of Rotary

1. The wording perpetuates the old-fashioned image of Rotary, presumably having been written some 100 years ago, and does not reflect modern Rotary.
2. The emphasis on business, professions and occupations was relevant then but not so today when many members are retired and business networking less involved.
3. The Object includes subjectives such as worthy enterprise, high ethical

standards, useful occupations, which have little meaning and what does service mean anyway?

So, I've rewritten the Object, and termed it The Purpose of Rotary:

The purpose of Rotary is to make friends, enjoy fellowship, assist others, improve communities and promote peace and understanding worldwide.

The Four Way Test

1. Again more subjectivity: is it fair, better friendships, benefit to all.
2. The test is narrow by modern standards with no reference to criteria such as environmental impact, sustainability and social norms.
3. If we feel the need to apply the test, then we've failed as have those who sponsored our membership.

If scrutiny is thought to be useful then I suggest the following considerations are made:

1. Is it the best use of our and others' resources.
2. Will it promote Rotary and enhance its reputation.
3. Has it the potential to attract new members.
4. Are we achieving the Purpose of Rotary.

If we live in the past, we will be by-passed.

Alan Hawkes

Saffron Walden Rotary, Essex

Advertisers know the score

IT SEEMS the advertisers in *Rotary* magazine are far more realistic about Rotary than are the members.

Flicking through the August/September issue there are advertisements for retirement villages, hearing health checks, walk-in showers, retirement living, will writing, travel insurance with no age limits, living care homes, life-saving wristbands and how to increase your circulation, the latter of which does not refer to more readers of the magazine.

Therein lies the problem. It is not just the perception that Rotary is an

organisation for older people, it is the reality.

With membership as the top priority for the last ten years I see no improvement at all and I think the underlying reason is relevance as picked up by Rotary International CEO, John Hewko, in his list of Rotary matters that urgently need addressing.

Without a drastic change of direction I fear for the future of Rotary.

Stan Keller

Dunmow Rotary, Essex

Classic car Fellowship?

I WAS very interested to read the feature in the August/September issue about the International Yachting Fellowship of Rotarians. That prompted me to look up the other Rotary Fellowships which number almost 100 and many and varied they are too!

However, to my surprise, there wasn't a fellowship for what I know to be a large and expanding interest group, namely classic car enthusiasts. I noticed there is a 4X4 Fellowship, but surely there must be any number of classic car (and other vehicle) buffs out there in the world of Rotary?

Hugh McCrea

Bridge of Allan & Dunblane Rotary

Read and pass it on

IT'S not a new idea but may I suggest that your excellent publication, having been read by our members, is passed to a non Rotarian.

If every member would do this, it would provide a huge amount of free advertising.

It would appear that the Rotary magazine maybe a much unused and under valued recruiting tool. Very Best Wishes,

Robert Wadd

Chesterfield Rotary, Derbyshire

Readers' letters | CONTACT US

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

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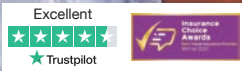
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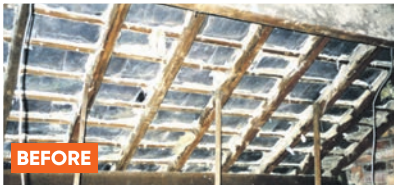
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RIDING ON THE CREST OF A WAVE

Sarah Colquhoun from Torrington Rotary in Devon describes The Wave Project which is helping young people's mental health.

FOR young people struggling with all that life is throwing at them, The Wave Project provides the perfect environment for them to prove: I can do it!

I've been working as the project co-ordinator for The Wave Project in Bude, Cornwall.

The Wave Project is a young people's mental health charity which was started by our CEO Joe Taylor in September 2010 when a group of 20 young people sat on the beach at Watergate Bay, Cornwall, for a surfing lesson.

They had all been diagnosed with mental health disorders, ranging from mild to severe. Some participants had been self-harming, others experienced severe anxiety, low mood, or depression.

One participant was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Yet to watch them on the

beach, none of this was visible.

This was the start of The Wave Project – the world's first 'surf therapy' course funded by a government health service as a pilot scheme, with a view to providing further funding if found to be effective.

Following on from these humble beginnings, The Wave Project was formed as a community interest company in January 2011.

Our early mission statement, then as now, was to enable young people who are struggling to prove to themselves that "I can do it!"

The Wave Project model expanded from Cornwall across the South West of England to North Yorkshire, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London, where we continue to try to support children by changing lives through surfing.

In total, we now operate from 32 beach locations across the United Kingdom.

The Wave Project provides an evidence-backed six-week surf therapy course for young people aged between eight and 18-years-old who are referred to us by professionals such as GPs, social workers, and schoolteachers.

These young people are referred due to a range of different challenges in their lives from bullying, depression, or grief, to physical or learning disabilities.

At The Wave Project our sessions allow them to experience the joy of the coastal environment and the waves, in a way that is safe and supported.

Our young people report feeling more confident, having made new friends, and having new skills by the end of a six-week course with us.



One aspect which sets us apart from a lot of mental health support services is that once the young people have completed a course, they can join a Wave Project surf club. This ensures continued support and positive development long-term.

A lot of our surf club members go onto becoming volunteer surf mentors to help other young people.

One of the main reasons that The Wave Project works so well for young people is that we work with volunteer surf mentors. We offer training to volunteers, which means that they can work one-to-one within a group setting under the guidance of surf instructors, to support young people in the sea.

In Bude, we have outstanding volunteer engagement, allowing us to deliver a great number of sessions regardless of the weather, the surf conditions, even the time of year.

The volunteers continue to bring warm smiles and positive vibes to make every session a huge success.

The children are taught to surf by fully qualified surf instructors who see

children who are experiencing conditions including selective mutism, severe autism, major confidence issues, to individuals with cerebral palsy and mobility issues.

Surf Instructor Mike Greig said: “To witness such amazing changes in personalities when they enter the water simply reaffirms that this is a project we love to be involved with.

“The pure joy that emanates from these young people when they catch a wave, regardless of if they are standing, sitting, or lying down, is what brings us back every week.”

The young people on the sessions give us great comments on the feedback forms, including this quote from a young person who completed a recent course in Bude.

They wrote: “I was amazed to find out I had been accepted onto The Wave Project. I was excited and it gave me something to look forward to. However, I found it challenging to get out of bed and into the right mindset to participate.

“My greatest achievement was when I managed to stand up on the surfboard and this has given me some confidence to

keep trying.

“I am really grateful for the opportunity to come along and be amongst some lovely people and I will remember this experience for the rest of my life, I felt like I had nothing to worry about during the sessions and that was a massive escape from my day-to-day life.”

The Wave Project is always on the look-out for new volunteers. You can sign up on by visiting:

waveproject.co.uk/volunteer-sign-up
You don't need to be able to surf to help.

We also welcome volunteers who would like to volunteer their time for activities such as fund-raising, office duties, website design, or to help in one of our retail shops; we always have lots of volunteer roles to fill across the country.

If you are aged 14 years plus, enjoy working with children and having fun we'd love to hear from you! ●

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Welcome to the all new Rotary Marketplace, which offers the opportunity to sell to over 40,000 members and purchase from fellow Rotarians within this community.



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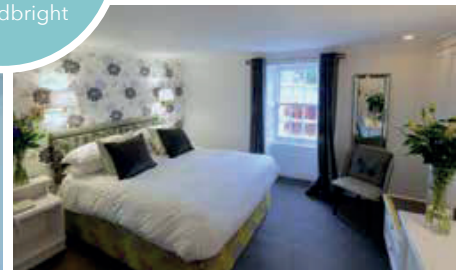
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ROTARIANS ON THE RUN

Rachel Cole from Summerville Evening Rotary Club in South Carolina, USA, describes the joy of marathon running and the International Marathon Fellowship of Rotarians.

It is said that less than 1% of the world's population completes a marathon. The International Marathon Fellowship of Rotarians (IMFR) aims to have members be a part of that small portion of the world while bringing together members from all over the world.

Once a year, members of the fellowship come together somewhere around the world to complete a marathon together.

The IMFR began gathering in 2005 at the Paris Marathon. Since then, members have gathered for marathons in Amsterdam, New Zealand, Iceland, Australia, Italy, the USA, and France, just to name a few places.

The goal is for Rotarians to come together to not only run but also for friendship and fellowship while running and raising funds for PolioPlus.

Each year a contribution has been made to help End Polio.

Currently the fellowship has over 200 members representing 30 countries, with seven from Great Britain & Ireland.

This diverse membership coming together annually is something that must be experienced first-hand to truly grasp the wonderful ways Rotary unites members around the world.

During marathon weekend, members typically gather for meals before and after the marathon, complete pre-marathon runs together, and explore the local area.

Depending on the location of the marathon there have also been tours offered before the marathon where members tour around together for a week or so to explore the country they are running in, which leads to many adventures and countless memories!

I can recall my first trip with the fellowship back in 2015.

At that time, I had only been a member of Rotary for about five years and was considered a young Rotarian at 32 years old. A fellow club member had shared about fellowships and was encouraging members to begin joining at least one fellowship.

In 2013, I had completed the New York City Marathon and was beginning to find my way as a marathon runner.

The idea of joining a group that combined my love of travel along with the hobby of running sounded like the perfect

fit. After a little consideration I decided to jump in and join the fellowship and participate in the Paris Marathon.

When I arrived in Paris I had no idea what to expect. I had had little communication with other members of the fellowship at this point and had no real connection to anyone there, or so I thought.

I was the only American active in the fellowship and had never been to France before, not to mention the barrier of the language and not knowing if anyone would be able to communicate.



However, in the true spirit of Rotary, each member greeted me warmly and made me feel as if I had been a part of the fellowship for years. The language barrier between members was quickly set aside and we all found ways to communicate through our various languages.

During our time in Paris we fellowshiped, enjoyed meals together, explored the city, and completed a marathon. You can't ask for a much better of combination of activities than that!

Rotarians exchanged banners and pins, shared about their home clubs, and, most importantly, made lasting friendships that would develop strong ties regardless of the miles between us all.

Although there may be a year or two between when we see one another due to individual situations, the members of the fellowship pick right back up where we left off the year prior with our friendships.

When we gather, we catch up on family happenings, career paths, and all things in our lives. Many members travel with their spouses and we keep up with each other through our times apart.

The marathons offer each of us an opportunity to visit other countries we may have never dreamed of seeing and what better way to see a new city than running through the streets!

Though the past few years have not been as travel friendly as we may like, we are excited to be planning the next gathering of the IMFR. The board has been working to keep members involved through virtual runs but is excitedly working to plan a gathering in 2023.

Although a location and marathon have not been announced yet, the hope is to have an announcement very soon about the 2023 plans.

If you have a desire to be part of the small percentage who complete a marathon, or if you're already a marathon runner, we encourage you to consider joining the fellowship.

Currently there's a one-time, lifetime membership fee to join the membership. If you're interested in joining the fellowship or just want to learn more, you are encouraged to visit the website at rotarianrun.org. Also, be sure to follow the Rotarian Run Facebook page to stay up to date about upcoming gatherings. ●

"ONCE A YEAR, MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP COME TOGETHER SOMEWHERE AROUND THE WORLD TO COMPLETE A MARATHON TOGETHER."

Everyone's a winner

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, one of Britain's greatest Paralympians, was on hand to support a Rotary sports event in north-east England.

| STORY BY **SUE CAMPBELL** |

THERE'S a shout of triumph from a young man in the sports centre darts area. Quiet concentration emanates from the participants in the carpet bowls contest. Excited cries echo from the sit-down volleyball court.

Outside, the battle of the mixed five-a-side footballers rages, the club throwing is in full swing and a girl throws her arms up in triumph as her flight hits the marks in the archery competition.

It's noisy, compelling and exhilarating – but most of all it's huge fun.

This is the Rotary North East All Ability Games. Its Patron is Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson of Eaglescliffe, who arrives at Middlesbrough Sports Village for the opening ceremony, stays for the entire day and presents the awards.

Nearly 300 differently abled people took part in this, the 28th annual games – with the inevitable Covid-caused gap – and the joy at being there is evident on the competitors' faces.

Baroness Grey-Thompson isn't new to Rotary competitions of this kind – she took part in similar games when she was very young – but this is the first time she's put her name to an event.

"I was very pleased to be asked - it's a wonderful event," she said.

She talks about her own start in sport: "I was very lucky to have been encouraged to try everything in sport when I started out. I was rubbish at most



things, then, when I found my forte – wheelchair racing – I just tried to be the best I could be."

She of course went on to win 16 Paralympic medals, including 11 golds. But, she said, it's not all about being a Paralympian.

"It's okay not to be good at sport – not everyone can excel. But it is important to be active, and everyone needs the opportunity to be just that, in events like these games."

Baroness Grey-Thompson recognises that local authorities have tough choices to make when it comes to funding events of this kind. Volunteer organisations like Rotary can make a huge difference, she

says.

"As well as the joy of it, sport and activities of all kinds gets people out and together and can mean that instead of people living with frailty for 40 years, they can be more active and fitter in later life."

Baroness Grey-Thompson visits the various indoor and outdoor sites at the games – with activities such as shot-putting, frisbee, curling, table tennis, javelin – and is stopped about every five yards by a participant, parent or carer. She talks to them all.

Over at the bowls, Hartlepool Rotary is marshalling the competitors. Member Jane Tilly says: "It's wonderful how all the competitors get to know each other and,

despite the differences in their abilities, they make friends and laugh and joke with each other.”

Richard Dyke is a member at Teesside West Rotary, which organises the darts.

They constructed specially made boards for the event. “It’s great fun and they can all have a go. We had one young man in a wheelchair who was determined to take part, so we managed to get him at an angle to throw. And he hit the board. Think it made his day – and his dad’s.”

Mike Hall is a member at Darlington Rotary, which brought sit-down volleyball to the games about four years ago. “It’s noisy and uneven and competitive, but the participants love it and keep coming back for more.”

All around, participants are moving from one event to another. Tony is a veteran competitor. As well as having a go at many events, he does card tricks,

amazing the registration team at the kurling with a series of magical sleights of hand.

Two young sisters, Tanya and Anne-Marie, throw themselves into everything. Anne-Marie rushes up to her sister at the archery area and declares with evident elation: “I hit something!”

Simon throws his fist into the air and laughs with delight as he rolls over backwards, after getting the ball over the net in the volleyball.

The All Ability Games were set up by Middlesbrough Erimus Rotary, but others joined as the games expanded, in particular Teesside West Rotary. About 25 North East clubs help with planning, organisation and financial support.

Chairing the multi-club organising group is Mike Overy from Middlesbrough Erimus. He said the idea came to them from Coventry in 1994, where they ran

something similar.

‘We adopted the idea and it just really grew from there. It’s wonderful to be back after all this time and to see how much people are enjoying themselves.’

The then North East District Governor, Alan Cartwright, said: “These games are an excellent example of Rotary clubs working together, providing opportunities to members of our local community, often overlooked.”

The awards ceremony is a noisy affair, watched by carers, families, friends and 70 Rotary volunteers from a number of North East clubs, everyone applauding the triumph of each competitor.

Baroness Grey-Thompson hands each one a medal to hang around their necks. But really, everyone is a winner at these games. ●



LONELINESS IS A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

Rotarians in Chichester, West Sussex are successfully providing a haven for people suffering from loneliness.



THE Bridging Generations project was conceived by Mike Harvey, a Past President of the Rotary Club of Chichester Priory, to alleviate loneliness amongst the elderly residents of Chichester.

The project works by bringing lonely elderly residents together with the students at Chichester College for a conversation over coffee and cake.

Bridging Generations was the result of research done by community workers and caring organisations which consistently pointed to a widespread problem of isolation amongst elderly residents of Chichester.

It was evident that a hands-on project was needed to address this issue and Mike was set on making the project a success once he received the green light from Chichester College.

Mike consulted organisations such as Meals on Wheels and Age Concern, as well as local sheltered housing groups, to find residents who would benefit from the

project.

Speaking to the *Chichester Observer*, Mike recalls: “The project started with a small group but has now grown to about 20 elders and 30 students meeting every two weeks in term time.

“They sit at mixed tables, moving around after a quarter of an hour – a topic for conversation is usually suggested and this leads to a friendly chat.”

While the club provides transport for residents taking part, the college provides refreshments and the all-important space for Bridging Generations to operate.

As well as being highly beneficial for the elderly residents, the project has become an important part of improving the students’ communication skills, especially those studying Health and Social Care.

The college went as far as to make the project part of their ‘social skills’ training and to include the project in its Ofsted Report.

The relationship with the college

has allowed Chichester Priory Rotary to promote its programme of youth projects, such as camps, tours and exchanges, to the students.

The success of the project has been immense, with a steady flow of returning participants and jubilant feedback from both the elderly and the students.

One of the elders, Vera Cranmer, said of the project: “Sometimes I’m not sure if I want to go out, but when I come back I feel I’ve had a good morning.

“Now my mobility isn’t so good, I go on the Monday Club transport, which is brilliant – I couldn’t manage it without that.”

Other clubs have been in contact with Chichester Priory Rotary looking to replicate the project for their local areas, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project is always looking for new people to take part and aims to keep alive the art of conversation for those who need it the most. ●

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RECURRING GENEROSITY

STORY BY MIKE HODGE, BARNET ROTARY

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HOW WILL MY MEMBERSHIP BE RECOGNISED?
Rotary districts are encouraged to recognise the members of the society by presenting them a certificate and a Paul Harris Society chevron lapel pin at a district or club event, or at another special occasion (because the society is a district-led program), leaders celebrate their local Paul Harris Society members generously around the world.

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Updated August 2022

most Paul Harris Society members give to the Annual Fund.

In 2020-21, nearly 18% of Annual Fund contributions - \$24.8 million - came from just over 20,000 Paul Harris Society members, who make up less than 2% of total Rotary membership.

Society members can and do also give to PolioPlus, Disaster Response or an approved Global Grant.

Because the society is a district-led programme, everyone celebrates their Paul Harris Society members differently. Many districts present a certificate and Paul Harris Society chevron pin at a district or club event.

I became a Charter member of the Paul Harris Society in District 1130 (Rotary in London) in 2014. I wear my pin so people can ask me what it means. I say I've made a commitment to funding the Foundation and how proud I am of the work which the Foundation does.

When an individual Rotarian starts to make personal contributions to The Rotary Foundation (RFUK), they develop a personal interest in the type of projects which are undertaken and can feel pride in what the Foundation is achieving.

Increased awareness of the activities of Foundation increases individuals' enthusiasm for supporting and advocating for The Rotary Foundation.

Your contributions can do more good work through your clubs when you give to the Annual Fund. 47.5% of your donation becomes District Designated Funds which can be directed by District Leaders to pay for Foundation, Club and District projects. Another 27.5% is directed to the world fund to be spent where the need is greatest.

Carol Hallewell, from Cowbridge Rotary in South Wales, says: "I am proud to be a Rotarian, to see what can be achieved through The Rotary Foundation, our own charity. I give to the Paul Harris Society to help others and to make a difference in the world." ●

Below is an extract from the Rotary GB&I Paul Harris Society leaflet

THE Paul Harris Society recognises donors from around the world who notify The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International of their intention to contribute \$1,000 or more every year to the Annual Fund, PolioPlus Fund, or approved global grants. You have an entire year to fulfil your intent. Payments can be made on an ad-hoc basis or by regular payments.

The Rotary Foundation is fundamental to supporting the Rotary clubs and districts to undertake a myriad of projects large and small within their local communities, within the district and around the world.

The Rotary Foundation is one of the most efficient charities in the world, with a high proportion of the money received going to fund projects and not administration, noted for excellent stewardship.

Among the key characteristics of The Rotary Foundation are:

- The administration costs are very low
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- Rotarians decide where projects are situated
- Members of the Cadre that audit projects are Rotarians
- Donations can go to the fund of your choice

A significant proportion of contributions come from Rotary clubs, but increasingly personal donations are being made directly by Rotarians to The Rotary Foundation and in Rotary Great Britain & Ireland to The Rotary Foundation UK.

Jamie Revord, Rotary International's senior manager for the Foundation's Annual Fund and Leadership Giving says that

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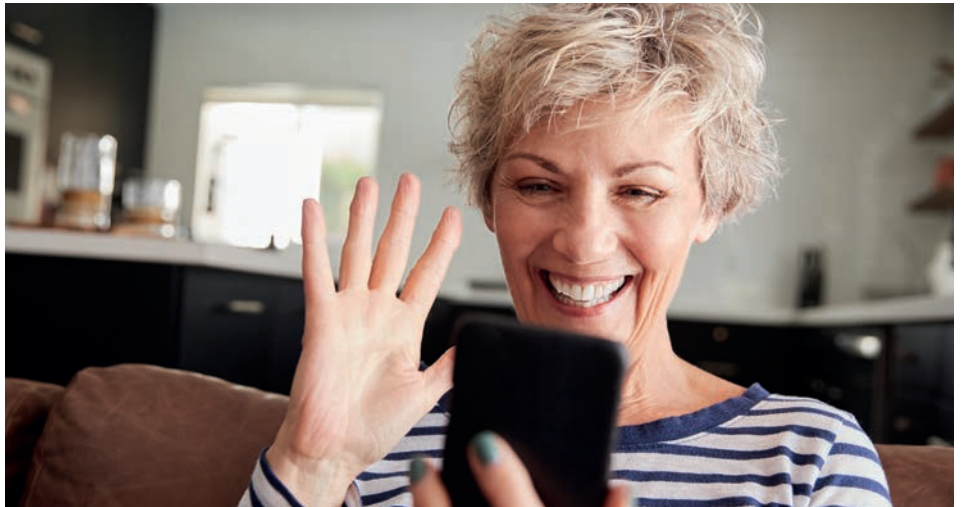
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- See updates, photos and video clips from friends & family, as soon as they "post" them.
- Make it easier to read the screen.
- Browse the web at home or out and about.
- Choosing and downloading apps.



These helpful books mean there's nothing to fear about using smartphones - from sending a quick email to video calling your family and friends.

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LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

THE ROTARY SHOEBOX SCHEME AIDS UKRAINE

WITH Christmas just two months away, the time of giving is slowly creeping up as we turn our thoughts to victims of the Ukrainian war.

The Rotary Shoebox Scheme has been hard at work over the last months, providing children in Ukraine with items

to help bring happiness back into their lives.

As a result, clubs all around Great Britain and Ireland are being called upon to help and collaborate with their communities to bring some Christmas joy to more families.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, there have been many enquiries regarding sending boxes to those impacted by the war.

All involved in the scheme have a mutual aim to help refugees, as well as disadvantaged children and families that need support and aid.

As a result, in January 11,000 boxes have been sent to Odessa, Ukraine, a further 11,000 boxes to Rotary in Chisinau, Moldova and in July another 8,000 sent to Romania.

There are five groups that the boxes are distributed to: children, teenagers, mothers, babies, and households each containing different items.

Dimitri, who is a member of Rotary in Chisinau, explained where the boxes are distributed to and the lives that they impact.

He said: "The gifts went to local orphanages, Ukrainian refugees, and socially vulnerable families, and we are still in the process of distribution.

"We thank you once

again and hug you. The reception process was one of many unknowns, but we succeeded."

The need for the boxes becomes even higher during Christmas, especially this year with the war in Ukraine and its implications many families are left with the bare minimum.

This is a fantastic opportunity to contact your local schools, scouts, churches, and other local organisations to get involved with Rotary and form new connections.

The Rotary Shoebox Scheme welcomes all schools, groups and organisations that wish to support its mission and help spread a little happiness to those less fortunate in Eastern Europe.

Each box costs £2, however quantity discounts are available. This price covers sending out the boxes, collection once filled and then dispatch.

The box's content will depend on who it is aimed at, but most will hold items such as toys, art and writing supplies, books, as well as personal care items.

The Rotary Shoebox Scheme has been operating for over 25 years and delivered over one million boxes together with their partners across the world. ●



Information |

www.rotaryshoobox.org

ABBIE BREAKWELL BECOMES A ROTARY AMBASSADOR



ONE of Great Britain's most promising tennis stars, Abbie Breakwell, has accepted the role of Rotary GB&I Ambassador.

Abbie has experienced a meteoric rise since she started her sporting journey, having only taken up wheelchair tennis in 2016 and now finding herself ranked 34th in the women's world rankings.

Preceding her journey in wheelchair tennis is her relationship with Rotary, joining Long Eaton Interact Club back in 2014.

Despite her increasingly busy schedule of both training and studying, Abbie has always found time to give

back to Rotary, taking part in the Rotary Empowering Girls seminar last February.

On her reasons for accepting the role, Abbie states: "The key issue I want to get my voice behind is equality - to make sure that everybody has the same opportunities no matter if they're disabled, if they're not disabled, their gender identity, religion or whatever it might be.

"One of the things I'm trying to help set up to get disability sports more to disabled people is to allow wheelchair tennis to be at the universities like here [Loughborough] and to be able to give people the opportunity to play." ●

IRISH AID FOR UKRAINE

CLONMEL Rotary has been playing a crucial role in helping Ukrainians fleeing the war to settle into a new life in Ireland.

The club's members are the key facilitators at a temporary rest centre in the County Tipperary town in Ireland.

The Ukrainians spend between five and seven days in the facility a converted football clubhouse before moving on to permanent accommodation elsewhere in the country.

The centre is just one of a handful in the country and caters for a maximum of 60 people at a time.

Clonmel Rotary was asked by the council to take charge of the rest centre and provide aid.

The service provides three meals a day to the refugees, as well as helping with registration, the provision of clothing and footwear, security and sourcing medical help.

Club President and Project Manager, Michael O'Malley, stated the club is privileged to help such a major undertaking. He said: "We are honoured to be able to offer Clonmel hospitality to all those arriving in the centre and to make them feel safe and secure." ●

KEEPING OUR COASTS CLEAN



THANET residents in Kent are enjoying a cleaner beach thanks to 12 new recycling stations which have been placed along the coast.

The project was a collaboration between Thanet's five Rotary clubs, Thanet District Council, Southern Water and schoolchildren, whose designs feature prominently on the recycling stations.

The project's aim was to encourage visitors not to litter on the beaches, with the schoolchildren's art highlighting the dangers of plastic waste.

Three schools held competitions with the winning designs used for the recycling stations.

The pro-recycling art covers all stations, which all contain a 360-litre wheelie bin. The project's logo 'It's your beach - love it don't leave it' also features, along with Rotary branding.

Eight-year-olds Holly and Lillie, whose artwork was featured on the first two recycling stations unveiled, launched the project by placing the first two bottles in the recycling stations.

Caroline Winzer of Thanet Sunrise Rotary, and Beverley Aitken of Margate Rotary, joint leaders of the project, said: "Rotary works for the benefit of local communities across the UK and we are especially pleased at this opportunity to combine all five clubs in Thanet in this one initiative." ●

TILA'S TIGER IS A WINNER

DORSET youngster Tila Burghart has won the Rotary Young Artist competition.

Vince Banks, President of Christchurch Rotary Club, presented certificates and a trophy to five pupils from Twynham School and The Grange School who had achieved significant success in the 2022 National Youth Competitions organised by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland.

These competitions cover a wide range of subjects, starting with heats at local level, with the winners going on to a district-level competition, and - if success continues - to regional and finally national level.

Vince offered huge congratulations to Tila from Twynham School, who had not only won the local heat of the Rotary Young Artist competition but had gone on to become the outright National winner with her superb full-face painting of a tiger.

Vince presented Tila with a certificate, an inscribed glass trophy, and a substantial gift voucher to mark her outstanding achievement. ●



BARRELS OF LAUGHS



LOCKERBIE and District Rotary Club in Scotland has been the driving force behind an unusual project to convert disused whisky barrels into playground toys.

Towards the end of 2021, alpaca farmer and Club President, Bryan Woods, was presented with a source of redundant whisky barrels.

It was suggested they could be converted into children's play trains and presented to primary schools.

With the support of fellow Rotarians Stuart Martin and Alan Collins, former joiner and builder Bryan set about recycling the barrels, many of which were 100-years-old.

Additional support was secured

from club sponsors Muirhall Energy Ltd.

Each train consists of an engine and two carriages, which took 37 hours to complete.

Seven trains have been presented by Lockerbie and District Rotary Club to schools in the border towns and villages of Lockerbie, Lochmaben, Moffat, Beattock and Ecclefechan.

For the future, there are plans to construct an aeroplane and a tractor using the whisky barrels.

Adults have not been forgotten. Garden furniture consisting of tables and chairs, and even a "chummy bench" all of which originated from humble whisky barrels, have been constructed. ●

ROTARY AT SURREY PRIDE



MEMBERS of the Rotary Club of Surrey Heath, supported by fellow Rotarians from Farnborough, made a big impression at Surrey Pride in Camberley over the August Bank Holiday.

This year's Pride in Surrey was the biggest yet, with a parade through the town centre and multiple entertainment zones.

Surrey Heath Rotary got involved through sponsorship of Surrey Pride and ensuring it had a distinctive presence at the event.

"Surrey Heath was breaking new ground in a number of positive ways," said President, Bill Palmer.

"It gives us a superb opportunity to stand out in the community, to show who we are and what we stand for to showcase what we do and to challenge preconceptions about Rotary.

"Our strong and very visible presence - marching in the parade and with one of the largest and most active stands in the event - showed how serious we are both as a movement and as a club to support events such as Pride and to capitalise upon our involvement by recruiting new members, not just to our own club but to others within the area." ●

WOODLAND COVID TRIBUTE

DONCASTER'S three Rotary clubs have created a lasting tribute to those who lost their lives during Covid-19.

The Rotary clubs of Doncaster, Doncaster St Leger and Doncaster St George's have created a memorial wood near to Sandall Beat Wood and Doncaster Racecourse, with the support of Doncaster Borough Council.

It will also serve as a tribute to those who have suffered long term effects from Covid-19.

In November last year, Rotarians, together with young volunteers from the Club Doncaster Foundation and Doncaster College planted 1,500 young trees donated by The Conservation Volunteers.

A team from Doncaster Council prepared the land and will provide ongoing grass maintenance. The Rotary Foundation provided funding.

Mayor Ros Jones, Dame Rosie Winterton MP, Joe Coles from The Conservation Volunteers and Rotary members attended the official opening ceremony of the COVID Memorial Wood.

The wood contains three benches with commemorative plaques to provide a lasting place of peace for loved ones to remember those whom we have lost.

For Rotary clubs in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland which wish to plant trees this year, The Conservation Volunteers will supply free young trees (whips) of mixed species.

Contact: joe.coles@tcv.org.uk ●

COVID CLINIC FINALLY CLOSES

THE Rotary clubs of Furness, Furness Peninsula and Barrow-In-Furness, together with 120 volunteers, have just concluded two years helping Covid vaccinations in Cumbria.

The team has been helping to organise and steward the Covid vaccination programme at the Alfred Barrow Health Centre since December 2020. The final clinic was held in June.

The effort by the Barrow Rotarians is typical of the efforts of Rotarians across Great Britain and Ireland who have been at the forefront of volunteering at Covid clinics since vaccinations began in 2020.

Peter Garwood was the Rotary coordinator for the Barrow project. It is 18 months since the clinics started and, in that time, there have been 160 clinics and 98,250 jabs carried out.

There has been a total of 12,900 volunteer hours, including 1,200 by Peter.

Some £600 was also collected for Children in Need and the Ukraine Appeal.

The Rotary Club of Furness has contact with a Rotary club in Warsaw, Poland who are coordinating the supply of medical items to Ukraine, and the money collected has been sent to them.

The Rotary clubs were supported by local businesses and the community who provided food for the volunteers. ●



FOLKESTONE CHANNEL ROTARY RIDE

FOLKESTONE Channel Rotary, in South-East England has hosted its annual 100-mile Charity Bike Ride in Romney Marsh.

The event raised over £7,000 for charity and the funds will be distributed to those in hardship and throughout the local community.

Each participant chose to take a route of a length that suits them, whether that was 30, 50, 80 or the full 100 miles. Anyone could join in no matter their abilities.

One of the participants who completed the 50 mile route has in fact not completed such a route since her teens 50 years ago.

The feedback on the event included comments like “what a fabulous route”, “the signage was great”, “the marshals were so helpful”.

Together there were over 250 cyclists, including two penny farthings and two tandems. Everyone enjoyed the ride and shared their experiences post ride at the local inn. ●



A WARM WELSH WELCOME



THE Rotary Club of Maesteg has been instrumental in running a support group for Ukrainians who have sought refuge in the south Wales town from the war in their country.

The group was formed by local resident and sponsor Julie Mills. To start with, Rotarians attended the fortnightly Tea & Toast sessions for the Ukrainian families at the Salvation Army Citadel.

Now known as Safe Haven Maesteg, supporting displaced people in their community, Rotarians have taken a lead with running the group with support from the Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations.

Whilst the focus of this group is the Ukrainians, it does not preclude others who may in the future be forced to leave their homes through war, famine and other humanitarian crises.

Rotarian Steve Maddern explained: “The main reason that Maesteg is such a popular choice for displaced people is that the first hosts to welcome Ukrainian refugees to their homes were rewarded with gratitude and appreciation by their guests.

“As more people in the area

registered under the scheme, Ukrainian families were keen to recommend Maesteg as a destination where they would be welcomed and safe.

“The Ukrainian people we have encountered have been overwhelmingly friendly and warm, despite being desperately worried about their families, friends and homes.”

Some of the Ukrainian families have enjoyed short breaks at the Heritage Park in Pembrokeshire thanks to the Garnwen Trust which provides free holiday stays for disadvantaged people and those in need of respite or other circumstances.

Maesteg Rotary has been instrumental in transporting the Ukrainian families to Pembrokeshire and arranging provisions with donations from supermarkets. Separately, the Rotary club helped supply a laptop to a 10-year-old Ukrainian girl to help her complete her school work.

And in August, Maesteg Rotary Club and Safe Haven Maesteg put on an afternoon tea party for 60 people at a local park, rounded off by a powerful and emotional rendition of the Ukrainian national anthem. ●

WORKING TOGETHER FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

FOUR Rotary Clubs, Bilston and Wolverhampton West, Tettenhall, City of Wolverhampton and Wednesfield, have joined forces to secure £4000 from Rotary Foundation funds in order to help Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in Wolverhampton, with 119 refugees arriving in the city so far.

The Foundation has made 11 million US dollars available to Rotary clubs worldwide in an effort to respond to the Ukraine crisis.

Following a successful bid for

funding, the four clubs decided to channel their support through the Ukrainian Church, the Ukrainian Club and Community Centre and Razom Café to provide a focal point for families and individuals arriving from Ukraine.

The first of a series of presentations took place in the presence of the Mayor of Wolverhampton, Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE, who is a member of the Rotary Club of Bilston and Wolverhampton West.

Bob Stolz, representing the club,

handed over their club’s delivery of goods, comprising £1000 worth of educational, communication and language items.

Hryhorij Kowalczyk (‘Greg’) of the Community Centre said: “Words just cannot express our appreciation to all four Rotary clubs for their kindness and help to the new arrivals in Wolverhampton’s Ukrainian Community.” ●

AN OBE FOR JOYCE



KENT Rotarian, Joyce Fraser, has been honoured by the Queen for her promotion of black history and heritage.

Joyce, who is a member of Bromley Rotary Club, was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours List.

She is the founder and Chair of the Black Heroes Foundation, a charity which champions her visions of a world where black heroes are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated.

Joyce founded the Black Heroes Foundation in 2016 to preserve the legacy of her late husband, Peter Randolph Fraser, also known as 'Flip' Fraser, the first editor of The Voice newspaper, and the creator of the iconic show 'Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame'.

A passionate leader within the charity sector, Joyce is also a trustee for the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and the Directory of Social Change.

Joyce said: "I am delighted to be honoured in this way. The honour is not just for me, but also for the whole black community. It is a great way to honour the legacy of my late husband who was in the process of setting up the Black Heroes Foundation, when he became ill and sadly passed away in 2014.

"I am hoping the exposure which comes with being awarded an OBE will highlight the work we do developing talent and artistic initiatives in the community that focus on youth, education, training, social up-lifting and personal development." ●

ROTARIAN'S ROYAL REWARD



EAST Yorkshire Rotarian, Keith Twigg, has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

He was the local Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal organiser for 10 years, raising over £200,000. Keith also helped raise further funds for the installation of two commemorative benches in Hornsea Memorial Gardens to mark 100 years of the Royal British Legion.

For the last 17 years he has been

the chairman of the Hornsea Marie Curie fund-raising group helping the team of volunteers to raise almost £140,000 for the charity.

He has also been involved as a volunteer or trustee for the local foodbank, St Nicholas Church, Hornsea Youth Club and continues to be one of the editors at the Hornsea Talking Newspaper for the blind and partially sighted.

Keith is proud to have been on the steering group which helped save the Hornsea Floral Hall from closure and secured it as a community run asset. The hall continues to thrive because of the work of its hardworking volunteer committee and staff.

Keith said: "It is wonderful to receive this honour especially in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year. Although I am the recipient, I am just one of the many people who work to make Hornsea such a special town. It has a wonderful community spirit and I am proud to be part of it." ●

BOOKS TO ZIMBABWE

WHILE on a work trip to Kenya, Peter Ball from Rotary in Alloway, Scotland, was introduced to Dorothy Mutizwa-Mangiza from Rotary in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Peter learned of the extreme poverty and hardship in the area and the desperate need for reading material for children in rural primary schools near Harare. In one school, 45 children were sharing one textbook.

Rotary in Alloway adopted this project during the summer of 2020, contacting schools and liaising with South Ayrshire Council's Director of Education, Douglas Hutchison, who spread the word and soon 1,000 books were donated from several schools.

Rotary in Alloway President, Bill Grant, together with John Thomson and Peter Christy, collected, stored, sorted, and packed 22 boxes of books ready for shipping which weighed over half a ton.

The shipment was delayed by

Covid and a subsequent unexpected rise in shipping costs. In support, the Rotary Clubs of Thornbury and Chipping Sodbury from Gloucestershire offered financial support towards the shipment costs.

The books left the storage facility in Ayr in July and the journey will take 10 weeks by sea to Durban. Onward freight transport by road will see them arrive at the school near Harare in 12 weeks. ●



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and finally...

From Managing Editor Dave King
editor@rotarygbi.org

WE NEED TO CLEAN UP OUR ACT

COPYRIGHT is theft – pure and simple – and it is being practised by Rotary clubs across Great Britain & Ireland.

Let's be frank, we've all done it.

We've gone on to Google to find a stunning picture for a presentation, perhaps added it to a social media post or uploaded the visual to a website to enhance a story and then deftly right-clicked with our mouse 'save image as'.

It's simple, it's easy and, let's be honest who is possibly going to find out?

"YOU CANNOT UPLOAD ANYTHING ONTO YOUR CLUB'S WEBSITE, NOTABLY IMAGES, UNLESS YOU EITHER OWN THE IMAGE, OR HAVE THE OWNER'S PERMISSION."

And there's the rub as a number of Rotary clubs have discovered to their cost.

Photo agencies looking to protect their works are now using artificial intelligence, in the form of bots, which sweep the world wide web to detect their images. Any unlicensed photographs which are spotted will prompt the agency to track down the owners of the site and bill for damages.

Rotary has found itself caught in a number of legal battles in recent years over breaches of copyright in this manner.

In one instance, a Scottish Rotary club ended up with a bill of €5,000 for two breaches when it innocently uploaded a picture taken from Google to its website

to illustrate a story. It wasn't theirs.

The bottom line is this: you CANNOT upload anything to your club's website, notably images, unless you either own the image, or have the owner's permission. Adding a simple credit caption without even asking for permission is no defence.

Now for Rotary-templated websites, there is a dialogue box which checks the provenance of any image being uploaded. But that's not a foolproof system.

The law here is the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 which was enshrined in law before the age of the internet.

It gives those who create something, from a magazine or newspaper article, to a novel, a piece of music or a photograph, the power to protect their original work from being copied or used by other people.

The law states that others cannot copy or use original material which you have created as it was their own work, without your permission. Copyright is all about deterring and punishing plagiarism.

Now with the use of artificial intelligence, photographic agencies are protecting their intellectual property. More alarming, however, has been the emergence of third-parties acting on behalf of these agencies who are debt-collecting the web.

In a worrying incident this summer, one London-based business, acting on behalf of a photo agency, invoiced a Rotary club for £500 for sharing a picture on their Facebook page. The Rotary club had shared the post from a charity promoting its aid work

in Ukraine. However, in doing so, the charity had lifted an image of the war-torn country off the CNN site. Now, what happened to the charity for this copyright breach is a separate issue. What is more perturbing is that the Rotary club was still held liable for simply sharing.

Now this is an untested part of the law, but the strict liability is there, and though the fine was reduced to £100, the Rotary club still paid up. The signs are worrying.

I will be running a couple of webinars later this year on copyright. Full details will be published on the Rotary GB&I website and social media channels. If Districts would like me to speak to them about this issue, then please contact me..

The warning is loud and clear – you and your club need to be squeaky clean with all content published on your website, including the archives, and also on social media. That's why we need to clean up our act and we need to do it now! ●



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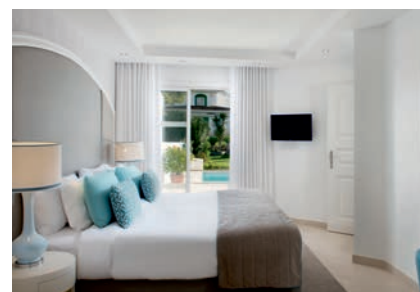
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