



District Governor's Newsletter

Humanity in Motion

**Please circulate to all members
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DG's Findings at the End of a Rotary Year

Well. The end of June is here and the Induction Dinner on June 29th saw a new District Governor take office for 2007/08. Brian Doggrell will set out on his years challenge to move Rotary forward just as I did a year ago armed with all the information picked up in San Diego. All the best Brian I wish you every success.

So where has this year gone? It really has flown by. My Governorship has been one of great enjoyment for me and I hope for all of you. We have had a number of successes and a very active participation from you all. In my visits to your clubs I have genuinely found a 'feel good' factor. There is a lot said about Rotary and how, as an organisation, it is not performing and behaving as it used to. That is in part true, but time changes, business is changing, attitudes are different and pressure on us all in the workplace and family life has cut down on spare time. What it cannot do is take away the 'good feel' that clubs in District 1260 have and you have all turned in into action in many areas of Rotary service this year. So congratulations for putting into action RI Presidents Bill Boyd's theme and 'leading the way' in your community and abroad.

Let's look at some of what has been achieved:

Membership

Our numbers are currently up, with a net 29 new members and I know there are still possibilities of a few more before the year end. Membership in the District is now 1,605.

We still need to work hard at retention. I don't know any more than you do, of those who may not renew their membership for the new Rotary year. Encouragement to stay with us is essential, plus we must look at forming new clubs. Extension is still the best way forward to increase membership in a meaningful way.

Charles Chaney, Immediate Past DG, at Salt Lake City, fondly embracing the effigy of our Founder.



Preferred Projects

You made your choices of who to support from: The Institute of Cancer Research, Impact Foundation, Barnardo's and The Wheelchair Foundation. A number have helped more than one, but without doubt the largest take up has been to contribute to The Wheelchair Foundation.

I'm pleased to say that following your contributions a cheque has now been sent with an order to The Wheelchair Foundation for a full container of wheelchairs. The container will be shipped to Kampala, Uganda District 9200, (which is the area of Africa that the majority of clubs asked for the chairs to be sent). International Chairman Roy Lester and myself have been in touch with the District Governor of 9200 to set up the receipt and distribution of the wheelchairs and although this will take a little time to organise correctly we have completed our promise in this Rotary year. There is still some money left and more to come, which will purchase further wheelchairs. Who knows, we might even manage a second container?

The preliminary figures have been received for your club donations to Foundation. If when the final checks are made, the figures stand, you have produced a record 'giving' total which is in excess of £70,000. This is truly a wonderful effort and a great credit to clubs. You have responded brilliantly to the Foundation team and my own requests, to give generously to Rotary's own charity.

It means of course that the District DDF will increase in three years time and allow many more to share from the benefits of Foundation. Matching grants GSE and ambassadorial scholars should be pursued vigorously. Keep an eye out for those special young people who may well be worthy of one of the scholarships and use your donations to the charity wisely .

Foundation Chairman Gary Eastman and the team have had a great year and those who went to Conference will remember Russell Abel, District 1260's outstanding example of an Ambassadorial Scholar.

District Conference

I perhaps took a risk when changing the time of conference this year. It was nearly 2 years ago when the choice was made, the view being it would be more conducive to visit Torquay in the early summer than at the tale end of winter (March). I needn't have worried we had a very good number come to the seaside and the pre-ordered weather was fine!

I sincerely hope that all delegates enjoyed the three days. It was important to promote Rotary with some knowledgeable and articulate speakers, but also to have an element of humour and a giggle or two. From your letters and reports I have received back we achieved just that.

The conference team under Janet Peirce's leadership had a busy time and came up trumps.

We were treated to excellent talks by Jill Johnston on Foundation, Richard Burnett on Rotaract and Clive Bennett for the Wheelchair Foundation.

How about the Curious Disappearance of Major Glen Miller? More to come watch for the follow up!

The RI President's Representative Jon Stillman did a great job. What a sincere and nice person he was.

Everybody participating and that includes the delegates were part and parcel of the event and there was a buzz in the Arena. The World of Rotary (House of Friendship) was very professionally set up by Amanda Watkin (Hitchin Tilehouse) and her team and featured a vast array of projects and charity stalls. I noticed there were many of you visiting every time I was in the room.

On behalf of Macmillan Cancer Support can I thank all those who contributed to the Sunday collection. A fantastic amount of £820.00 was given.

It remains for me to thank you all for a wonderful year. Presidents - you all worked hard as did your club members. You achieved a lot and hopefully all enjoyed a great year of Rotary. You now need to go forward and support DG Brian in 2007/08 and move Rotary on further. Add new clubs and new members and do all you can for those less fortunate than ourselves. Enjoy a productive and happy year ahead.

Charles Chaney



Imm PDG Charles snapped at Torquay with PDG Robert Browning in the company of PDG Janet Pierce.



PDG Robert Browning in full dress uniform for his role as a Devonian Sergeant-at-Arms.

International Fellowship through Rotary

A Special Trip

If ever there was a case proving the power of international fellowship, this story must come close.

Steve Potter of St Albans Verulamium was enjoying a typical spring Sunday afternoon when he received the phone call.

Ten days previously his daughter Lucy had left on a round the world trip. The first leg was to Australia and New Zealand to visit old university friends.

The Accident

The call was from her friends in New Zealand. Lucy had been visiting 90-Mile Beach on North Island, and had crashed a quad bike, hitting a rainwater gully on the beach. She had been airlifted to the nearest hospital in Whangarei and was in intensive care. She had fractured a thoracic vertebra, broken ribs, badly fractured a wrist, double pneumothorax, bruised heart and was breathing through a ventilator!

After lengthy calls to the hospital it was clear that, although the injuries were serious a full recovery could be expected. Steve mentioned the accident to his club, and several club members came up with helpful contacts in New Zealand, but none in Whangarei.

President Nick Emsley decided to approach Rotary in Whangarei, which has 3 clubs.

Support Across the World

Within hours, the president of Whangarei South RC, Mike Williams, had visited the hospital and was able to give Steve a personal update.

Club secretary Rosemary Meyer was next to visit, and also offered accommodation, if necessary. Regular visits followed during the crucial first week.

Once Lucy was out of the ICU it was decided that it would be better for her if she were to be moved to Auckland, closer to the couple she had been visiting.

By this time it seemed to Steve and Jean that New Zealand Rotary had adopted their daughter. After the transfer to North Shore Hospital in Auckland, Marilyn Glover of Takapuna RC offered her local club support. When Jean Potter arrived, Gordon Lamont met Jean at the airport, and settled her into a motel opposite the hospital. Takapuna RC generously paid for the first five days of her stay, so that she could find her feet, visit Lucy and not worry. This support from Takapuna RC was heart warming and unequivocal.

On the Mend

Lucy is now out of hospital. She is recovering well, but cannot travel home yet, as a back brace for her spinal injury prevents her from flying for the time being. Jean will be returning to the UK soon, but through the Rotarian friends in New Zealand she is confident that Lucy will receive excellent support when she leaves, -

Rotary International to the rescue!



Waitemata
District Health Board

Te Wai Awhina



Auckland Harbour



The Auckland Skyline



Lucy ~ damsel in distress

Diaries of a Knicker Lady

Unusual among Conference entertainers, we were introduced to the Knicker Lady whose web site includes the following "patter" which makes plain the style of her performance.



Brass makes me think of top brass, chains of office and Rotarians on a spree. I have had some really jolly times with Rotarians.

Their district and international conferences are mind-boggling feats of organisation - and endurance. Collectively, Rotarians, bless them, like a 'bit of a do' - weekends away with their fellow Rots, keynote speakers, slightly rude comics, slides about worthwhile projects in other Rot-conquered countries - and big bands. Rotarians like bands a lot. They like seashores a lot too, because they usually have places large enough to stronghold hordes of invading Rotarians; and the wives and girlfriends can shop and get their hair done.

Rotarians like lists, clip-boards, coaches, walkie-talkies, podiums, presentations, boaters, blazers, badges, banners - and chains. Oh, boy do they love chains! Large, gilt, shoulder crunching ones with ladders of enamelled names, medium sized ones with less names but possibly more chic, smaller, frailer, newer ones which tremble when their wearer gets up to say a few words. All in all, everyone who goes to these annual events or who is asked to entertain (happily, I am; Rotarians love knickers - with or without chains) has a wonderful time.

The Vicar and I have been shown generous,

enthusiastic hospitality at these friendly occasions. What never ceases to amaze me is that no sooner have they pulled the plug on one mammoth RotFest than they are busy planning the next. Friendship and Fun. Welcome! There is always room for another banner.



The erection and dismantling team

Kids Out 2007

Wednesday 13th June was the date for Kids Out 2007. Weather was excellent, with glorious sunshine for most of the day. This year some 700 children, along with their 680 carers and Rotarian helpers, attended. A record for District 1260!

Our hosts, ZSL Whipsnade Zoo, as usual, made us very welcome. The various shows and displays were much enjoyed, and the Train seemed to do a brisk trade. As last year, mother and baby rhino made a valiant attempt to scare us off their land.

Our thanks go to several local companies, especially Buckingham Foods.

If as a Club you didn't participate this year, please give consideration to doing so next. Once you are involved, the benefit to the children you support will be very obvious and most rewarding.

Alan Tarsey - Dunstable RC, Kids Out organiser



The spectators had a great time ~ the animals?

GSE VISIT TO ARGENTINA 2007

The Challenge of Country and Language

What better time to go to Argentina than during the 25 year commemorations of the Falklands war? As you might imagine this required a little homework to be done to ensure we had been suitably briefed before engaging in conversations with the locals about an event which happened before most of the team had been born. And then there's the thought of winter in Argentina?..... that sounds cold; there again it is the sub-tropics we're talking about - so it could be ok. Mostly clear blue skies, and temperatures in the 20s and sometimes 30s but occasional days of full cloud cover.

My team of ladies included experts in the fields of caring, deafness, cattle breeding, and waste recycling, and as the weeks went by, they were given opportunities of improving their knowledge in all of these areas by talking with experts in our host country.

The experience doesn't stop there though, as we have been subjected to an intensive cultural experience whilst working towards our "continuing professional development" aims. We've had to communicate in Spanish for a start, and this includes all our presentations made to groups of local clubs throughout our tour, and, of course, engaging in idle chit chat over breakfast. I have to admit to a few silent moments following the request to pass the butter! Spanish may not be a hard language to master, they tell me, but how much do you think can be achieved in three weeks? That's the time that one member of the team had to learn the language, and I have to say that she coped admirably.

Cattle Country

District 4790 embraces the three provinces, some 500 miles north east of Buenos Aires, that share borders with Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay. It's flat cattle breeding country, and includes a massive aquifer in Corrientes province, with a world renowned supply of pure water. On the surface this can be seen as lakes, sometimes containing floating islands not shown on maps. Depending on the wind strength and direction, they could be over the other side of the lake tomorrow, sheltering their inhabitants of crocodile, marsh deer, capybara and a vast display of nature's birds.

The area is largely cattle country, with pastures less nourishing than our own. Nevertheless they have very similar challenges in breeding, feedstock, movement, abattoirs, artificial insemination and so on. This obviously provided an excellent education to one member of the team, and a broadening in outlook to the rest of us.

We toured around, staying in nine different towns during four and a half weeks, and met many Rotarians, each of us making very good friends with them.

District Conference in Resistencia

We attended D4790 conference, held at the same time as D1260's in Torquay. The conference was held in the University and attended by over 3000 delegates. We delivered our preliminary lessons learned to date to the audience in our very best Spanish. This was made slightly easier due to the help given to us by the wife of the Team Leader of the incoming Argentinean team, who was left behind at home while Eduardo was in the UK, thank goodness.

Well, it's not a holiday, in fact my best description is that

it's an experience, and one that no tourist could ever get. This was not tourist territory, other than the spectacular Iguacu Falls, which we were privileged to witness. There are no tourist hotels, or foreigners in the local towns.

GSE is a Jewel in the Rotary Crown

If it's education in life you're after, look no farther than a Group Study Exchange. It's memorable, it's view changing, it's exciting, it's educational and it's unforgettable, and what's more it won't stop for a long time yet. We are still communicating with our hosts, and those experts in each of our fields of work, and hope that this will last well into the future as we continue sharing views and exchanging of information. What's more, we have identified no fewer than 4 potential International projects within D4790.

One piece of unfinished business is delivery of our experiences to you, our supporters. Without you and your contributions to Foundation none of this would have been possible. Please contact me if you would like us to come and talk to you during the coming year. I am trying to be pro-active in fixing presentation dates over the next few months in each of the 5 areas visited by the Argentineans, and will make my plans known to you with time. Please feel free to contact me, or any of the area coordinators, to find out what's going on.

Gavin Plews
GSE 2007 Team Leader, Argentina



Iguassu Falls, just one of the dramatic examples of scenery observed by our GSE Team. Look out for the opportunity to see and hear their report at one of the forthcoming presentations near you!



While our GSE team was in Argentina this group of three men and two young ladies, with their leader, Eduardo, were in the Three Counties. Here they are exchanging banners with John West at Hoddesdon. .

THE ST. ALBANS ROTARY CLUBS CHARITY CYCLE RIDE.

Despite the weather being a trifle unkind, the three Rotary Clubs of St Albans have notched up the fourteenth successful annual cycle ride in aid of local and international causes.

On Sunday 14th May, 1865 riders braved a showery day and waterlogged course to enjoy the fun and camaraderie of the St. Albans Rotary Clubs Charity Cycle Ride. They also raised money for Grove House Hospice Day Centre, The Wheelchair Foundation, Keech Cottage Hospice for Children, Open Door, Hope & Homes for Children, as well as other charities supported by Rotary.

A figure well in excess of £40,000 is anticipated. For the first time, this year the ride has qualified for Gift Aid, so a final pot in excess of £50,000 is expected.

The emphasis of the SARCCCR! is very much a family fun day out, there are no prizes for the fastest times round the routes, but awards are given to those teams and individuals who raise the most sponsorship money. Starting and finishing from the grounds of Oaklands College, there are four routes through the picturesque lanes of Hertfordshire to choose from; a leisurely 10 miles suitable for children and less able riders, through 20 and 30 miles, to a more demanding 40 miles for the super-fit.

From humble beginnings in 1994 when less than 500 riders took part, this event has grown to become one of the largest fundraisers of its type, attracting riders from all over the country and this year even a team from Belgium.

Organising the event is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge with regular meetings to plan the following year's ride taking place within a month or so of the presentation of the current year's charity cheques.

The ride would be impossible to undertake without the combined talents of St. Albans, St. Albans Verulamium and St. Albans Priory clubs; with much needed assistance on the day from Harpenden Village, Radlett and Hitchin Tilehouse clubs who provide the upwards of 140 stewards to man the course – a superb example of what inter-club co-operation can achieve.

Thanks must be given to the major corporate sponsors of the event; The Hert's Advertiser, who provide invaluable publicity over the three months prior to the event; to Nestlé who provide bottled water at the checkpoints, to Deloitte's and BUPA who sponsor the rider's T-shirts, to Paul Robson Coachworks who provide the many support vans and busses we use and to the many smaller sponsorships, both financial and professional, which help us cover the not-inconsiderable costs of running the event.

Next year's ride will take place on Sunday 18th May 2008 – if you are a cyclist you should be there!



*This is a really family event
- so don't miss it next year!*



MILE OF SMILES ~ UPDATE

Layout of the Smile

As we all know, it has rained a bit in the last month, and one of the causalities was the Luton International Carnival. Ever optimistic, the Mile of Smiles team started to lay out the Smile, but had to abandon their effort when the Carnival was cancelled due to the extreme weather conditions and flooding.

So fingers crossed, the Smile was finally laid out on the 4th of July on the Stockwood Park Athletics Track, as part of the Luton Primary Schools Sports Day. The Luton Herald and Post went along and took photos. Also some photos were taken from the air! More photos are promised soon and will be on the website.

“Didn’t we do well!”

The culmination of the Mile of Smiles campaign is a reception at London Luton Airport to disburse the funds to the charities, is planned for July 25th or 26th. The marketing team will be issuing a press statement thanking the contributors and detailing the allocation of funds to charities. Press coverage right to the end!

Not all the money is in yet, but the organising team expect to break the £20,000 barrier!!

Was it successful?

Here are the views of the organising team:

- As a collaborative venture - most definitely yes, Rotary can work together and enjoy it. The clubs have built a strong cooperative base for the future

- On a project level - most definitely yes – Miles of Smiles was a novel idea, it had an objective, it gathered the resources and planned an effective marketing campaign

- Financially – obviously yes, it will be huge boost to the charities that the clubs have chosen to support.

- Legacy - one of the hidden objectives was to raise the profile and awareness of Rotary within the community, and this has been achieved. There cannot be a better way of getting Rotary in the news, and hopefully, in the months to come, this will also aid local club membership recruitment.

Richard Giles, Luton North
Chairman, Mile of Smiles Organising Committee



Launch of a Mile of Smiles at Luton Airport

PHOTOGENIC MOMENTS AT THE TORQUAY DISTRICT CONFERENCE



**Conference Speakers . . .
Golfers . . .
Bowlers . . .
and The Stewards**

