



# District 1260 Governor's Newsletter

October 2005

Please circulate to all members

## Issue No. 3

### New Generations Month

To quote Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar (RI President) 'September is New Generations Month and we could just as well call it the month of our future because investing in our youth is our future.'

It is a cause of great regret to me that we have no Interact Clubs in the District and very few Rotaract Clubs. My first contact with District was when I became District Interact Chairman. In those days we had six clubs in the District and they were regular attendees at conference. I am still hoping that we will see the rebirth of Interact and a regeneration of Rotaract. All it needs is a few dedicated Rotarians to set the ball rolling!

The old Rotary slogan 'Every Rotarian an example to youth' is as relevant today as it was more than fifty years ago. To further quote our president 'Rotarians can help young people reach their full potential. We can instil our motto of service above self at a young age and let it continue to guide Rotary through the next century.'

The first two presidents of Hertfordshires Rotary Club were a Rotaractor and past Interactor which proves something!

### Group Study Exchange

Early on Saturday Sept. 24th I said farewell to our team at Heathrow's Terminal 4. Reports from Canada suggest that they are taking the place by storm and are clearly having a wonderful time in every respect. They are certainly proving worthy ambassadors and have just attended the District 7070 Conference.

### New Rotarians

On your behalf I extend a very warm welcome to the following who have joined us since I last wrote:

Cherry Lincoln – Hitchin Tilehouse

Richard Horn, Brian Williams, Derek Wood, Ian Gazely and Martin Isles - Luton

Rod Wendleken – Berkhamsted Bulbourne

Michael Langley – Hertford

Colin Collins – Watford

Lindsay Garfitt & Zack Lockwood – Luton Someries

Dave Plaster and Ian Stephens – Leighton Linlade

Raj Pandya – Bushey and Oxhey

Peter Brown – Dunstable

Jason Downing – St Albans Priory

Please let me have details of any others who have joined us recently so that I can welcome them.

### In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of two distinguished St Albans Rotarians.

David Bowden (St Albans Priory) died in late August and John Pattison (St Albans Verulamium) passed away suddenly last week. Both worked tirelessly for Rotary and they will be greatly missed.

John's Memorial Service was held in St Albans Abbey on October 23rd at 2.30 p.m.

### District Bowls Competition

On Tuesday September 13th the District Bowls Competition was hosted by Bushey and Oxhey Rotary Club. The organisation was in the capable hands of members Neville Brant and Dennis Hussey.

I spent a very pleasant afternoon watching grown men throwing a little white ball from one end of the green to the other and then throwing bigger black balls after it. To complicate matters there appeared to be a flaw in the manufacture of the black balls because they refused to follow a direct path when thrown. Very strange! Some clubs even entered several teams in the hope of winning.

Seriously, I thoroughly enjoyed myself and was delighted to present the trophies at the end of the competition to some very skilful bowlers who clearly spend a great deal of time practising, especially Amersham the winners and Hatfield who contested the final. My congratulations to all the competitors and in particular to Neville and Dennis.

### Youth Activites

On your behalf I would like to congratulate Judy Green and her committee for organising an excellent half-yearly meeting on September 24th.

Those who attended found the sessions informative and stimulating. A little over half the clubs in the district attended which in my view was disappointing because those who were absent missed a very good opportunity of seeing the variety of activities on offer.

### DG's Diary

To date I have visited 26 clubs and have been overwhelmed by the welcome and generosity shown to me and Jasmine. She has enjoyed her visits to several clubs many of which sponsored her during the recent walk in aid of Mercy Ships. If your club sponsored her and would like to present her with the money she would be delighted to accept it personally.

My diary for this month is as follows: October

3rd. Bletchley

4th. St Albans Verulamium

5th. Watford

6th. Ambassadorial Scholar selection

7th. Hoddesdon Charter Anniversary

10th. Buckingham

10th. Watford and the Langleys

11th. Dunstable

11th. Ambassadorial Scholar selection

12th. St Albans Priory

13th. Milton Keynes Grand Union

14th-16th	District 1040 Conference
17th.	Watford Clarendon
18th.	Winslow
19th.	Ware
19th.	Watford North
20th.	District Executive
21st-23rd	District 1130 Conference
24th-25th	General Council - Alcester
26th.	Tring and District
28th.	Great Missenden 21st birthday
31st.	Luton Chiltern.

### District Conference Programme

You will shortly receive this under separate cover. If you have not registered yet please do so soon and if you have recently inducted new Rotarians please encourage them to attend. I hope that we'll meet at Cardiff and have a great time!

### Coast-to-Coast Walk

Trevor Bluck, President of Buckingham Rotary Club recently completed the 195 mile Coast to Coast walk, backpacking in 8 days. What made the achievement more remarkable was the fact that Trevor did it alone. Starting at St Bees on the Cumbrian coast the route took him through the Lake District and the North Yorkshire Moors finishing in Robin Hood's Bay.

The walk was not without incident – he faced torrential rain, got lost on top of a mountain and even pitched his tent in someone's garden by mistake because he didn't fancy sharing a field with cows.

He raised £316 for his charities and I'm sure you'd want to join me in offering him our heartiest congratulations. Well done, Trevor.

### The Asian Earthquake

Many clubs have asked me how they should respond to this latest tragedy. The advice from RIBI is for clubs to support the Shelter Box, Aqua Box and Emergency Box schemes. If you want to shake tins please do so and use the money to support the above or the two Emergency Rescue Services already on the scene. Any spare money can be kept back to help with longer term projects such as rebuilding homes, schools and hospitals. As further advice becomes available I will share it with you.

### Club events

As I've mentioned previously, if you have a project to which you would like to invite me please do so. I would be happy to attend if my diary is free.

And finally, Meirion's **Pause for Thought**:

'A leader takes people where they want to go;  
A great leader takes people where they don't  
necessarily want to go, but ought to be.'

David French, Luton North President, quotes Anon:  
"Keep your temper. Do not quarrel with an angry person, but give him a soft answer. It is commanded by Holy Writ and, furthermore, it makes him madder than anything else you could do."

District Directory shows an incorrect email address for David which should read: david.french2@virgin.net

### NEW COLOURS AT WESTONBIRT

Westonbirt – the National Arboretum, is already world famous for its spectacular autumn colour and this year will be better than ever thanks to the launch of the spectacular new 'Rotary Glade'.

Trees within the Rotary Glade, part of the National Japanese Maple Collection at Westonbirt, have been carefully sourced from around the world, with the help of world Maple expert Peter Gregory. This recent expansion will help Westonbirt to create the best collection of Maples in the world.

John Weir, Director of the Arboretum says: "Autumn colour is so popular that we have now spread the collection throughout the arboretum. Silk Wood now houses the Rotary Glade and this will allow visitors to experience our famous autumn colour in a more relaxing environment."

'Rotary Glade' follows a meandering route between Oak Avenue and Broad Drive, creating a stunning swathe of foliage, which changes colour dramatically as the seasons change, climaxing in a crescendo of hot fuchsias, oranges, yellows and reds in October and November.

Simon Toomer, Curator, said: "The new glade is internationally significant as the first step towards creating the world's best collection of maples. Over the next decade we will continue with our expansion program working with partners and gardens internationally to reach our goal."

The creation of the new collection is the result of a joint initiative between Westonbirt Arboretum and The Rotary Club of South Cotswolds, whose territory includes Westonbirt. A large proportion of the new collection, 100 trees, were donated by Rotary Clubs throughout Great Britain and Ireland to mark the centenary of the Rotary movement in 2005, a lasting and colourful celebration of the first 100 years of Rotary.

Peter Gregory, world maple expert and former superintendent at Westonbirt Arboretum, selected trees from around the world that were needed to complete the existing collection. Says Peter: "We chose cultivars that weren't already part of Westonbirt's collection in order to form what is intended by the Forestry Commission to become the foremost collection of maples in the world."

The intensity and duration of autumn colour is dependent upon weather. A dry summer, as we have experienced this year, followed by early autumn rain has historically given us the most vibrant colours. This was last seen in 2003 and the early indications for 2005, will be a repeat of that fantastic year.

Westonbirt Arboretum possesses one of the finest collections of trees and shrubs in the country. First planted in the mid-nineteenth century by wealthy aristocrat Robert Staynor Holford, it was further developed and cared for by his son Sir George Holford until his death in 1926. Both men combined their love of plants with an eye for design and it was their skill in planting that resulted in the superb landscapes that visitors enjoy today. Of particular renown are the Japanese maples that provide the backbone to one of the finest displays of autumn colour to be seen.

Holford selected Japanese Maples purely on autumn colour when he first planted them and did so repeatedly by collecting seeds from the most striking specimens and then planting out the best ones in the arboretum. The plants in the Maple Glade have been grown from seeds collected in the Old Arboretum, again selected for their autumn colour.

Since 1956 the arboretum has been owned and managed by The Forestry Commission, giving public access to the grounds for the first time as well as providing the benefits of education, recreation and conservation. The year 2006 is a double celebration for Westonbirt marking both 50 years of Forestry Commission management and the 21st anniversary of The Friends, the registered charity.

## **NINETEENTH RIBI ROTARY CLUB GOLF COMPETITION**

The finals of this competition were held on a fine day at The Notts Golf Club, Hollinwell on 5th September. District 1260 was represented by the Hemel Hempstead Club, who very much enjoyed the fellowship of their playing partners from Huddersfield and Northern Ireland. Stuart Bremner and John Rowlands had earlier won the District knockout stage of this competition for the Hemel Hempstead club, in so doing winning the right to join at Hollinwell the District winners from all other Districts within RIBI.

On a testing course in excellent condition, the quality of our team's golf was rather disappointing. With the two best stableford scores from three players to count, our total of 54 points was some way behind the winners Consett, who scored a very commendable 72 points.

The Hemel Hempstead Club team on the day was Stuart Bremner, Gavin Rody and Stuart Wesley.

## **Shoobox Scheme**

Leslie Robertson reports that Luton North are encouraged to have a request for 50 boxes to be filled after Christmas. This wonderful scheme provides toys, household and teenage items to deprived people in many countries, wherever the need is greatest and there is little that we need to do to ensure its success – pay for the boxes, ensure they get filled and deliver the full boxes to the RIBI collection warehouse in Preston, Lancs. "Let's hope we can provide even more support next year".

## **Tripartite Meeting in Cologne**

Each club reported in turn, with full translations into the appropriate languages.

Wolfsburg RC reported that they were now 57 members, with one new member this year and 4 potentials in the pipeline. The average age is still high, though, and there are no lady members. There had been an unsuccessful attempt during the year to found a new club in Wolfsburg. They had created three new Paul Harris Fellows, and their relationship with Halberstadt RC continued. At home the club strongly supported the church in a "Steps Against Violence" project, and abroad had supported a clean water project involving borewells in Brazil. They had Student Exchanges with Canada, Brazil and Japan. Their website was up and running, with "prarex" as the password.

Metz Rive Gauche had inducted 5 new members, bringing them to 55 in all. They had 4 lady members (including the current President). A sixth club in Metz was being chartered while we were meeting in Cologne. They were helping to fund an orphanage building so that children need not be separated and could live with adoptive parents. Fundraising included a Trade Show, and a project selling furniture, plus an annual Golf Tournament. There had been Student Exchanges with Australia, USA and Brazil; they gave auditions for college recruitment tests (aka mock interviews). They had given a Service Award to a gardener from the city who used his gardening skills to help disadvantaged children. A new project aimed to support French doctors in Cabo Verde set up a children's ward to avoid the need for travel abroad for operations.

Even with the translations it was not easy to get the full details, as the information given varied from language to language. David asked me to speak on

behalf of Luton North, talking about the Youth Trust, the Rotary Clock and our aims for the year, and it appeared that everyone could understand enough without translation! At least there was only one version that way!

After the reports there was some discussion about future Tripartite meetings. It was felt unanimously that the present formula of annual meetings was very successful, and should continue. Accordingly, an invitation was issued to meet "somewhere in the UK" on the 6 - 8 October 2006.

One comment only: there was an entirely understandable tendency for people to polarise into three language groups, which unfortunately reduces the level of inter-club and inter-national fellowship.

Any ideas on how we can tackle this in 2006?

Christine Sinfield

### **VISIT TO USA BY BOB SHAH**

On the spot: the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, written at the end of September.

I just returned from a week in America, having visited Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama. I have a business interest in a motel in Douglasville, which is about 20 miles from Atlanta airport. Hurricane Katrina was the hot news as I landed at Atlanta on September 17th, and as soon as I got to the motel my partner informed me that all 50 rooms were occupied by people who had fled from New Orleans during or after the disaster.

There was no dispute that the US Government had been very slow to react. A fair number of people, mainly middle class, had left the area of their own accord to find accommodation with relatives or in motels, which they paid for themselves. Most of the people who were left behind were from the poorer class, who valued their possessions more than their lives. They could not afford to move out.

A large family group of 25 had called in at the motel and asked for 8 rooms for 2 nights. They didn't have enough money, but my partner was generous and accepted this crowd for the two days and also directed them to the local Chamber of Commerce the following morning, which flexed its muscles and was quick to act by requesting all the local churches and non-government organisations to help these people. The local press was involved, and from there the momentum began.

Before we knew anything, the whole motel was fully occupied by people who had fled from New Orleans. Local Church organisations, the Chamber of Commerce and other NGOs all started coming to the motel asking what help they could give. A lot of food, rations, clothes and household items were brought to the hotel. In the meantime the Government started to act by, initially, giving a \$2000 voucher to each occupant. This was deemed too generous and soon stopped, replaced by a means-tested one-off payment to all who had fled the disaster area. The Government also pledged motel owners that they would pay for the lodging costs for the first 14 days of such a stay.

After our motel, other motellers followed as more people started to come into the Douglasville area, and I was informed by church leaders that around 2,500 people had

come to this one small town from New Orleans and nearby towns. It was very pleasing to see that the churches were very active in social work. They brought hot lunches and evening meals to our motel every day. Individuals brought clothes and made cash donations. Local schools contacted us and soon took on the young children to avoid disrupting their education, and some of the men and women quickly found local jobs.

It appeared that when the Government got started, it acted very quickly, but to some extent it did not know what it was doing.

There was a learning exercise in Hurricane Katrina, which also has applied to Hurricane Rita.

Many of the people at the motel used their \$2000 allowance very wisely, but some did not. One person went out and bought a second hand car and, as it was not clean enough for him, paid another \$45 at the local Car Valet. Another man went to the local mall and bought a heavy \$300 neck chain. Others bought designer clothes, but most were spending only what was necessary. Many who were given the allowance had difficulties getting the cash as they had no bank account or ID records, and my partner took many of them personally to the local bank to help them cash their vouchers. I understand that food and spending vouchers were also given to some.

A fair number of the people who were put up in motels were from the poor class, and were mostly black. My partner was lucky in that there was not much damage or rough usage at our motel, this was not the case at other motels, as I was told by other owners. The proprietor of a motel near Six Flats, Atlanta, said he had let two floors of his three-floor motel to such people that he had not dared to go to those floors as they were full of filth and rubbish, and had advised them not to come to the lobby or first floor at all if they were to stay there. I heard that at another motel there had been so many fights between individuals that he had to ask the people to leave. Many of the people were very poor and had no experience of staying in motels, so problems were to be expected. An old lady at our motel said that she really appreciated all that was being done for her by Government and NGOs, but although she was comfortable she still said that home atmosphere is home atmosphere.

A TV channel had been allocated to Hurricane Katrina (and later to Rita) which gave up-to-date news 24 hours a day. From radio and TV it would appear that when most people had left New Orleans and the other affected areas there was a lot of looting, not only by individuals but also involving some police. I was disappointed to see a 15-minute item in a programme on TV which stated that 8 policemen had put themselves up on the top floor of a motel and went out on looting sprees on a regular basis. Their loot included electrical items, jewellery and watches, including Rolex. Not only were the motel owner and his staff witnesses, but other residents who had stayed on elsewhere in the city also saw looting by the police.

It was pleasing to note that the local churches are very strong and well organised. Their help to the victims was

immense. not only with food and clothes, but also with a lot of advice. One church organisation even arranged a musical evening for victims who had ended up in Douglasville and arranged transport for our motel residents to and from the venue. Local Red Cross has been an agent between the recipients and the Government. They registered victims and passed details to the Government who then provided lodging allowances, etc. They also had several centres for help of all kinds, now closing. When I went to Alabama I was told that a disused army base at Anniston, which could take 1000+ people, was being cleaned up urgently so that it could be used by New Orleans disaster victims.

I was told that victims from New Orleans had spread about quite a bit, and those arriving in Houston were being re-routed before Hurricane Rita arrived.

There were many sad stories about victims dying and equally some happy reunions of separated families. I came across one case of a woman who worked for a bank in New Orleans. As she had to leave, her employers generously paid her salary to 31 December 2005 and gave her a rental car for two months. This employee, who is ambitious, found a job in another bank in Douglasville, but as she could not work for two banks at the same time she took a job in another business instead. One of the victims is making good progress as a receptionist at our motel.

One of the Walmart branches in New Orleans, when the floods came, offered their employees whatever they could take from their store for their needs.

The Government quickly learned lessons from Katrina. It was more organised with Rita, and was less generous with the allowances to those leaving Texas. The people also will have learned a lot. Many who had to leave their homes are insured, many are not. But those who are insured will have to fight the insurance companies who are trying to wriggle out of their commitments by saying that the event was a "wind orientated flood", which is excluded from the policies. Local people are grouping together to sue the companies which, in their defence, say that they would be bankrupt if all claims were met, and that they will need Government help if they have to meet them.

The Government offered no financial or other assistance to people leaving their homes in anticipation of the damage to be done by Hurricane Rita. A queue of cars stretched 100 miles on the main highway leaving Texas. Many collapsed in the 100°+ temperatures, cars overheated and many ran out of fuel. A bus leaving the area, carrying 24 patients from a hospital, caught fire and I believe 16 died. It will take a long time for New Orleans to be put back to its original state - the clearing of the water, repairing damaged levees and properties - so that those who fled can return. I got the impression that some who left will never go back, new lives began in the places they reached, something which would seem to be much easier there than it would be in England. To sort out the financial situation - and the blame - is also going to be time consuming. But in the meantime the affected people would appear, at long last, to be well looked after.

- Bob Shah



### **YOUTH ACTIVITIES HALF-YEARLY MEETING**

The District Youth Activities Team got together with clubs on Saturday 24 October for a practical session on working with young people. The venue was the classroom at Apsley Paper Trail - followed by a short tour of the historic working papermill, where the first commercial papermaking machine in the world was invented. Only 20 clubs were represented - the rest of you missed a really helpful session!

### **ROTARY TECHNOLOGY TOURNAMENT**

A highlight of the morning was an example solution to the Rotary Technology Tournament task for this Rotary year. Seeing the 'gadget' and testing rig in action was really helpful to clubs running local Tournaments. No further details or photos will be revealed in this article, in order to keep the task secret until the day itself for participants. Full details of the task, and new revised guidance, was given to clubs attending the meeting. Others can obtain copies by e-mail or on CD from John Sharp ([anneiohn.sharp@btinternet.com](mailto:anneiohn.sharp@btinternet.com)) or Judy Green ([iudy@judygreen.co.uk](mailto:iudy@judygreen.co.uk))

### **YOUTH CAMP AND YOUTH EXCHANGE**

Ken Scott brought photos and feedback from the Youth Camp in June / July 05. He offered to come and talk to clubs about the wide range of Youth Exchange opportunities for young people, and explained plans for a Youth Study Exchange (now called New Generations Exchange) in summer 2006. Contact Ken on [kscott-4tax@aol.com](mailto:kscott-4tax@aol.com)

### **STORIES AND ESSAYS**

Clubs shared their experiences of working with schools, including Hatfield Club's 'Christmas Story Competition' (more details from Frank Taylor on [frank.taylor\(5\)ntlworld.com](mailto:frank.taylor(5)ntlworld.com)) Other clubs run Essay competitions, for one or more Primary Schools. Typically, the school judges the entries, selecting a shortlist for judging by Rotary. Prizes include featuring the winning entry in local newspapers, inviting the winner and family to a Rotary meeting, and presentation of the prize either at a Rotary meeting or school assembly. Essay competitions on 'what I want to do when I grow up' often bring the opportunity to see the job itself being done.

## SMOKE FREE SCHOOL

An exciting new project has just been launched to Hertfordshire Secondary Schools. The project is led by the Health Promotion Officers in the ten District Councils in Hertfordshire, supported by the Department of Health, and Primary Care Trusts. It is a competition for teams of students, who research issues around smoking, then devise a campaign against smoking. The first prize is £1,500 for the school, individual prizes for team members, and the winning project given wider implementation throughout the county. More info. and the application form for schools, see: [smokefreeherts.org.uk](http://smokefreeherts.org.uk)

District supports the project and DG Meirion told us that Rotary will continue to support the project if it goes nationwide, after the pilot project in Hertfordshire.

Alan Thomas of Ware Club will co-ordinate interest from clubs - he will be looking for Rotarians who could work with interested schools, and participate in judging. Rotary is NOT being asked for any financial support for the project. Please contact Alan direct on [withthomas@aol.com](mailto:withthomas@aol.com) or 01920 465552.

## SUPPORTING SPORT

Andy Wainwright encouraged clubs to support talented local youngsters - potential Olympians in 2012 - The Rotary partnership with SportsAid asks for a minimum donation of £250 - in return, SportsAid will link clubs with a local young person who needs support and help with publicity and promotion locally and nationally. This year's deadline for registering interest is 1 November 2005 [www.sportsaid.org.uk](http://www.sportsaid.org.uk) - you can find the Rotary partnership information under Sponsorship on the left hand side of each page.

Watford North have been sponsoring Matt Sawyer for years, after his meteoric rise from Go-Kart racing at age 16, through to Formula Ford (and hopefully Formula 1 in the future). This has been very rewarding for the club, as well as giving real support and encouragement (not just financial) to Matt - and keeping Rotary in the public eye, with the Rotary logo on Matt's car!

We have put a lot of hard work into creating publicity materials for clubs to use free of charge. We have written a Kickstart Guide for those clubs whose membership needs a boost as well as compiling an Extension Manual detailing just how to start a new Rotaract Club. These have been compiled using proven projects with a track record for success.

## WORKING TOWARDS INTERACT

Wolverton & Stony Stratford have been invited to work with a local secondary school. Jane Lynd described a school assembly where a DVD of the Ashowi project was shown. One of the teachers is coming to a Rotary meeting to discuss how to take this interest further. If the support and interest grows, Rotaract and Rotary may work together to help the school develop an Interact Club. This would be great for the District, as we currently have no Interact Clubs at all - although Hitchin Tilehouse are also trying to develop a club.

## ROTARY FISHING BOATS IN SRI LANKA

David Thomas, the Hoddesdon Treasurer, visited Sri Lanka, and saw for himself how the local economy rested on fishermen. That moved Hoddesdon to give £5,000 for two boats (and some ancilliary equipment). The boats have now been handed to their new owners and they carry names of club members, both of whom died recently: Gerry Butler, and one of the youngest members, following a brief illness, Frank Ciralo.



*Boats along the shore at Ulle, in Sri Lanka, about to be handed over to fishermen who lost everything in the tsunami. In the course of the next few years each fisherman is required to repay into a central fund the cost of the boat, so making it possible to run the freezer plant which is an integral part of the whole project, all supervised by the Rotary Club of Kandy.*

*The Rotary Rondel, the names of the club itself and names of two former members of Hoddesdon will be seen in Sri Lanka waters.*



Dedicated to the memory of Rtn Gerry Butler



Dedicated to the memory of Rtn Frank Ciralo

### Youth Speaks

Brian Billinghamurst is District lead - whhgs(5)aol.com or 01296 481860

Local competitions, preferably before 16 December, definitely before 20 January

District Semi-finals, 1 and 2 February 2006, Library Theatre, Luton, and two competitions in week commencing 9 February, venue to be arranged.

District Final - 1 or 2 March, hopefully at University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield.

Regional Final will be in Essex, date & venue tba

National Final - Manchester, Sunday 30 April

### Young Chef

Barry Collett is lead - barrvc@farmersweeklv.net. or 01582 881309

Local competitions should be by early February

District Semi-final: late February (to be arranged)

Regional Final: planned to be held in Essex

National Final: Lutterworth, Saturday 29 April

**Info from Judy Green: [judy@judygreen.co.uk](mailto:judy@judygreen.co.uk)**



LISA BURNETT whose red-hot enthusiasm for Rotaract comes through vividly in this article, challenging all Rotarians to play an active part in Rotary's **future** - which depends on young people like Lisa!

## ROTARACT'S on the MOVE

### - JOIN the ACTION!

Rotaract has been going from strength to strength in Great Britain & Ireland over the past two years. At the end of the 2004/05 year there was no net loss of clubs for the first time in 15 years, with 9 new clubs and 4 re-launching from zero membership.

At present we have 102 clubs and a list of 50 in the making, and this number is growing on a weekly basis. By the end of the year we aim for Rotaract to be present in all 29 Districts and a net increase of one club in every district, if not more! It couldn't be a more exciting time to get involved with Rotaract. We need to get our message out to the masses, explain to them what fun can be had and what opportunities are available to them, such as overseas projects, exchange trips, helping those who need it most and the professional development aspect.

The enthusiasm is astounding at present and it's here to stay, so why not let it rub off on your Rotary Club? Get involved with Rotaract either by supporting an existing club, or starting a new one. We have put a lot of hard work into creating publicity materials for clubs to use free of charge.

We have written a Kickstart Guide for those clubs whose membership needs a boost as well as compiling an Extension Manual detailing just how to start a new Rotaract Club. These have been compiled using proven projects with a track record for success.

We have a new website [www.rotaract.org.uk](http://www.rotaract.org.uk), which has all the latest news articles, an events calendar as well as a new development, the RGBI Project Library being launched during November 2005.

Ask Rotaract to help out with your events and offer your help and advice with theirs.

Get Rotaract to help with the District's RYLA Courses, Youth Exchange, Interact, Youth Speaks, Young Chef, Peace and Ambassadorial Scholars. Why not ask if Rotaractors want to be a member of a GSE Team? Get Rotaract to organise a social event for visiting and returning GSE Teams. All of these groups are potential Rotaractors and therefore future Rotarians! Get them into the Rotary Family now! No Rotary - No Rotaract ... without Rotaract; Rotary will not exist in the future....

I want to shout about Rotaract, what we do, its benefits to the community and members, but I can't do this alone. If we all shout, someone is going to hear us! Contact your District Rotaract Officer, Membership Services Chairman, Rotaract District Chairman or one of the names on page 93 of the District Directory.

**POLIOPLUS** - Address from Neville Hackett  
Rotary International is a Main Partner together with, WHO, US CDC. & UNICEF. To date the UK Government has donated \$513 Million, only exceeded by \$1.1 Billion from the US Government and \$619 Million from Rotary International, plus a further \$400 Million in Rotary volunteer hours, a staggering total of \$1.0 Billion. WHO and UNICEF have generously stated that without the aid of over 1 million Rotary volunteers, many of whom have served on numerous National Days of Immunisation, the programme could not have been undertaken.

Rotary started its campaign against Polio in 1979 when a pilot programme was undertaken in the Philippines. By July 1980, 90% of the Children in the Philippines were receiving the polio vaccine and by 1982 6.3 million children had been vaccinated at a cost of \$763,000 and the number of polio cases had decreased by 68%.

This pilot programme demonstrated that Rotary had the capacity to deliver vaccine to children.

In 1984, the President of RI Carlos Canseco formed a committee to pursue the dream of a polio free world. He invited the world famous Professor Albert Sabin to serve as a consultant.

The committee was called the Polio Plus Committee. However, the committee soon realised that, in the light of the experience gained in the Philippines, there were problems.

Without expertise in public health affairs, and uncomfortable with choosing between opposing viewpoints among global health specialists, Rotary set out to find a compromise strategy faithful to its own dream of Polio eradication yet supportive of broader immunisation goals. The conclusion was that, to be successful, three partners would have to join forces. The three partners being WHO, RI, and UNICEF, subsequently to be joined by US CDC.

It was estimated that the cost to immunise the children of the world would be in the region of \$120 million. A fund raising programme was commenced and at the 1988 Convention in Philadelphia it was announced that, worldwide, Rotarians had raised \$ 219 million, by the end of July in 1988 the campaign had achieved a staggering \$247 million. (Sadly, no one knew then that this figure would be nothing like enough to complete our Herculean task)

That is a very bald background to the Polio Plus story. During the last eighteen years, tremendous progress has been made and now there are only six countries in the world, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Niger and Nigeria with polio. Egypt has not had a case of polio for a year.

There are three types of the polio disease, type 1, type 2 and type 3. There has not been a case of type 2 since 1999. Until recently, trivalent vaccines were used, the advantage is that they covered all three types of the disease, the disadvantage being that the strength of vaccine was only a third that of the Monovalent OPV.

Monovalent OPV is now being used in Egypt, Yemen, Somalia, and in India and Pakistan where both Monovalent and Monoval3 are being used to very good effect.

In hostile areas, Rotarians and other health workers are at risk. At times serving as a volunteer on National days of Immunisation can be a very hazardous duty. Over 18 health workers have lost their lives during the course of the campaign.

Dr Bruce Aylward of WHO informed the IPPC meeting in June that the Taliban put a price on the heads of health workers in Afghanistan, from \$4000 to \$7000.

It is worth repeating that over 1 million Rotarians have served as volunteers on NIDS and, in many cases, more than once. Indeed some Rotarians have served on five or six NIDS.

Largely due to the recent outbreak in Nigeria and the subsequent exporting of cases to many countries, we have a shortfall of over \$200 million. Our job is three-fold, we have to encourage Rotarians to continue to support Polio Partners, to encourage support from the public, and to continue to work with and maintain a dialogue with our respective Governments.

One of Rotary's problems is a lack of publicity. Both the Media and Governments around the world seem to lack awareness of our tremendous input in both time and money.

Rotary must work harder to gain the respect of both these bodies and in so doing create a better working relationship with the Media and Governments.

The more the Media and Governments become familiar with our contributions to Polio eradication, the more the public will be aware of our campaign.

This in turn will have a direct effect on the financial support we receive from the public.

We cannot expect the public to respond to a programme they do not know very much about.

Regular meetings with the Media and Governments will not only help us work together in a more meaningful manner, but dramatically speed up the process of public awareness.

By doing this, we shall conquer polio very quickly, and help 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide to save future generations from the terrible threat of Polio.

Neville F Hackett

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Items of interest to Rotarians in District 1260 are welcomed for inclusion in future issues of the DG's Newsletter. Please send to Peter Lardi at the address indicated in the District Directory, page 23.

November issue will be published on the website. Requests for copies in printed format will be given prompt attention; please send £2 to cover costs if you would like printed copies; be sure to include your name and full postal address.