



SERVICE Above Self

DG Club Speech

Nov.2005

Fellow Rotarians, friends

First of all my thanks for letting me join you for your [joint] Club meeting today. May I start by bringing [both] Clubs greetings from the President and members of Golders Green. Not that I see them very much at the moment.

We are now in to the first year of the Second Century of Rotary and as people do ask me, today I'd like to share with you some of the ways that I see Rotary developing during this year and beyond. However, let me first pass on a thought for those affected by the many tragedies around the world during this Rotary year and just recently the earthquake in Kashmir. It is at times like this that the internationality of Rotary comes through. My predecessor Colin Bryant is recently back from the affected area of Pakistan with Shelterbox and two TV crews. Watch this space.

I've been in Rotary for 19 years now and have in that time met people of many professions. For instance,

- A psychologist is a man who watches everyone else when a beautiful girl enters the room.
- An accountant is someone who solves a problem you didn't know you had in a way you don't understand.
- A schoolteacher is a disillusioned woman who used to think she liked children.
- A consultant is someone who takes the watch off your wrist and tells you the time.

- A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you will look forward to the trip.

And then there was the doctor who was a new Rotary member and regularly found other members come up to him for medical advice. He wasn't sure about how to handle this, so went and asked a long standing member who was a lawyer. "If a Club member asks me for medical advice and I give him an opinion is it acceptable to charge them for that advice?" The lawyer thought for a moment and then proffered that charging for the doctor's professional advice was indeed a reasonable thing to do. The following day in the post the doctor received a letter from the lawyer confirming their discussion and with it a £100 bill for his professional advice.

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So, what are my Rotary plans and emphases for the year and beyond? The last Rotary year saw us celebrating 100 years of the organisation, where we did indeed raise the Public Image of Rotary. Something that we need to continue and develop this year. This is not just about high profile events, such as the float we had in the recent Lord Mayor's Show or the forthcoming New Year Days Parade, where we will have a float again this year. It is also about using what I term our corporate name and positive promotional material wherever we are; perhaps in the form of a pull-up Rotary display or the use of a Club website of your own. [Check for Club site]. At the very least ensure that the Rotary wheel is on display whenever and wherever your Club is out in public.

London will be more on the map than usual in the coming months and years, with the Olympics being held here. This will be good for us all and should be a great opportunity for Rotary. On behalf of Rotary generally, we are already pursuing several tie-up ideas with both the London Olympic Committee and the Sports Aid charity that sponsors young sportsmen and women. After all it is the 17 year olds that Sports Aid sponsors now that we hope to represent us in those Games in 7 years time.

As we enter the second century of Rotary, I feel that to be a part of this great organisation is a privilege. I am proud to be your District Governor, in an organisation that stands for integrity and high ethical standards in business and professional life; as we together write the first Chapter of the new book of Rotary's second hundred years.

Our new Rotary International President, Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammer, has brought us back to our roots by making our motto of Service Above Self our theme and guide for the start of this second century. *Hand over BANNER*. Carl-Wilhelm has also asked us to continue an emphasis on the issues of Literacy, Water Management and Youth.

You may well be aware of the millions of people in developing countries that cannot read and write, simply because their families cannot afford the cost of basic school equipment. Well, it is also a shocking statistic that in our own country more than 1 in 7 of the young adult prison population also cannot read or write. Rotary Clubs can assist the latter situation by, say, offering basic learning skills assistance either in a local school or at a centre for those young adults who missed out the first time.

The various Rotary Youth competitions, such as Youth Speaks and Young Chef are well established within London. However, our own involvement in Youth Exchange and in Youth Leadership is currently not so good. During this year perhaps you can consider sending a young person on a short-term exchange or a camp. Or consider a Rotary Youth Leadership Award; a RYLA course, consisting of a few days of outward bound experiences and an emphasis on Rotary ethics. We will be running one of these courses together with another District, to gain experience of these opportunities for young people.

The RI president will also continue to push us forward toward the end of the Polio Plus campaign; we are so near to its eradication, but success of the campaign can be no less than total eradication of polio worldwide. We must continue to support this. Not only would this be only the second disease that mankind has ever eradicated, Rotary would become the only non-Governmental body to ever have achieved that phenomenal success.

Sometimes we feel that Rotary doesn't get recognition for its work. Well Rotary was invited to the UN to present to them on 5 November and the person who represented the RI President at our Conference was one of the guest speakers. You can see more about that visit on the RI website.

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The start of our second century is a critical point in building for the future. We need to ensure that Rotary modernises in line with the ever

changing world. Modernise while maintaining the core values and ethics that Rotary represents. We must appeal to and be known by a wider cross-section of the community. Rotary needn't be about having a full meal every week or the wearing of ties. That's a matter of Club choice. Rotary should be about reflecting the dual-gender nature of the modern business community and its younger leaders. We need to recognise the needs of working Rotarians and adjust our expectations to reflect their commitments. Consider how many younger members and lady members your Club has brought in, in say the last 2 years.

Our capacity for service should not be confined to our chequebooks. Particularly in today's world, when the need for direct assistance to communities and to the young is needed more than ever. Providing service to the community differentiates Rotary from other voluntary organisations and it is this, which appeals to many prospective members.

Likewise, well organised Clubs tend to be more successful, more enticing to members and thus lead to better retention of members. Members often leave because their Rotary Club is not providing them with enough opportunities to maintain their interest and to be involved in the community. Clubs need a good balance of projects and an interesting programme of activities; with full participation by the members. It is no coincidence that most of the more successful Clubs are also those that are well run and have a lively programme.

[Club specifics]

In recognition of Clubs with a good and a varied programme, the RI President has set a challenge, in the form of a Citation. This certificate will be awarded for showing involvement in several aspects of Rotary service, so please complete the RI President's Citation and return it to me later in the year. One important aspect of the challenge set by Carl-Wilhelm is for your Club to increase its net membership by one person during the year. Just one member net increase. Do remember that good retention is as important to that success as is getting of new members.

Last year saw the successful formation of two new Rotary Clubs, who recently celebrated their Charter Nights and first social and fund raising events. Also, there is another at Enfield Chase hopefully close to a formal Inauguration and two other potential Club locations are being worked on. It is important for the future vitality of the District that this trend of forming vibrant new Clubs continue, and that existing Clubs look around their own territory at areas that are not currently being served by Rotary.

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There are so many good causes for Rotary Clubs to support that RIBI produces a book of suggested projects that it has vetted. One of the RIBI Preferred Projects for us to consider and support this year is **Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.** (*prop*) For those who cannot rely on hearing, a trained dog is invaluable to register the door bell or the alarm

clock. A spaniel jumping up on the bed to wake its owner in the morning is one thing, but the mind shudders at the idea of a St. Bernard doing the same thing. Funds for our first dog were presented at the D Conference and he was recently named Guy in a draw. We now have the funds for our second dog and thanks to so many Clubs we are on-route to number three.

Mercy Ships is the other of this year's RIBI Preferred Projects. (*prop*) Mercy Ships are hospital ships providing life saving and life changing operations to those poorest regions of the world; where normal medical care as we know it doesn't or just can't reach. Rotary intends to support them through sponsoring equipment to fit out of one of the operating theatres on their new ship Africa Mercy. She is being fitted out in the North-east now and will be berthed in the Port of London next April. We hope to be able to arrange a tour while she is in London.

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Rotary is also about partnerships, with other Clubs and with outside organisations; while the Family of Rotary includes the partners as much as it does Rotaract or Interact. Look to include both of these excellent Rotary sponsored Clubs in your programme and likewise to remember that for those ladies associated with Rotary, but not wishing to commit to Rotary membership, Inner Wheel is always pleased to welcome them along.

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We must not lose sight of Rotary's own Foundation charity. Amongst other things this promotes World peace and understanding through its Ambassadorial Scholars and Group Study Exchanges. This year we will be holding a two way exchange with District 3040, which primarily covers Madrah Pradesh in Central India. We recently selected an excellent team for this unique experience and trust that Clubs will support them and the incoming team next February and March.

The Every Rotarian Every Year campaign for the Rotary Foundation need not be just about Rotarians putting a hand in your own pocket. However, it is about us providing funds that allow Matching Grants and scholarships to take place. Consider adding a fund raising event to your programme, such as a tea party (using the Foundation tea caddies of course). Or give a tea caddy to your speakers during this year.

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Tonight I have talked about Rotary Clubs and although I am still very much a Club Rotarian, I am here as your District Governor and head of a District organisation. That team is very much there to support each and every Rotary Club, to provide information and to assist by bringing Clubs together for those larger projects that are beyond a single Club to manage. [Reference D team within the club]

Let me conclude with a quote that encapsulates my thoughts about Rotary's development. A quote from Past RI President Bhichai Rattakul; who some of you may well know was also Deputy Prime Minister in Thailand. He said:

“I firmly believe that the way to strengthen our Club’s is to go back to basics and adhere to the timeless principles upon which Rotary was built, the Four Avenues of Service, which have guided us so well for many decades. Going back to basics means that we must listen intently to the heartbeat of Rotary, which is Club Service. Rotary’s health, indeed Rotary’s survival, depends on this heartbeat.

Active club service leads to vital clubs with dedicated members. And active Club Service thrives in an atmosphere committed to upholding Rotary’s philosophy and the timeless principles that have made our fellowship strong. Strong clubs are essential to Rotary’s overall health.”

So, continue to enjoy your Rotary this year, get out in the Community and ‘Make A Difference’ and above all each of you be a positive part of Developing Rotary in its Second Century of Service.

Thank you for listening.