



2018 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN TORONTO

What You Missed and What We Learned



Convention Overview



WHAT IS A ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The annual Rotary International Convention is Rotary's biggest event of the year. It attracts Rotarians from all around the world to come together to celebrate our common purpose: doing good in the world. It's a place to renew friendships, find inspiration, and immerse yourself in many different cultures. It is held in a different international city every year since the first one in Chicago in 1910.

Past & Future

- 2014: Sydney, Australia
- 2015: Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2016: Seoul, Korea
- 2017: Atlanta, USA
- 2018: Toronto, Canada
- 2019: Hamburg, Germany
- 2020: Honolulu, USA
- 2021: Taipei, Taiwan
- 2022: Houston, USA

ROTARY CONVENTION
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA
23-27 JUNE 2018



2018 CONVENTION IN TORONTO

This year's convention had over 25,000 Rotarians from 175 countries and geographical regions around the world in attendance! This was the fifth time the convention has been in Toronto, second only to Chicago in number hosted.

Toronto and Canada were complimented on many occasions throughout the convention. The 2017-18 Rotary International President said the following in his opening speech:

“One has only to spend a few hours strolling about the city to see why Rotarians have returned to Toronto again and again. Not only is it clean, beautiful, welcoming, and amazingly diverse, it is full of some of the nicest people you'll find anywhere. Canadian niceness is legendary, and the reputation is well deserved.”

Attendees from Midland

- Mora Austin
- Joyce Campbell
- Britt McKerrow
- Bill Richardson
- Suzanne Richardson
- Jason Wilson



Fellowship



EVENINGS

Our Midland representatives bonded in the evenings by eating and drinking together. And on the last night, Joyce and Jason attended our District's social event.



HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP

On the bottom floor of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre was a very large room called the House of Friendship. It housed many many booths for Rotary Fellowships, Rotary Action Groups, and vendors, along with other displays, presentations, and a cafeteria. This was open each day of the convention to be browsed between sessions.

This is was a great place to make international connections.

And a great place to observe the diversity of the attendees, admire beautiful foreign dress, and listen for the plethora of different languages being spoken.



Convention Details



CONVENTION SCHEDULE

World-renowned speakers, informative programs, and spectacular entertainment.

Friday, June 22 & Saturday, June 23

- Rotaract Preconvention

Sunday, June 24

- Opening Ceremony – First Seating: 10:30-13:00 (Air Canada Centre)
- Opening Ceremony – Second Seating: 15:30-18:00 (Air Canada Centre)

Monday, June 25 – Wednesday, June 27

- General Session: 10:00-12:00 (Air Canada Centre)
- Breakout Sessions: 13:00-17:00 (Metro Toronto Convention Centre)

Wednesday, June 27

- Closing Ceremony: 17:00-19:00 (Air Canada Centre)



ROTARACT PRECONVENTION

The North Simcoe Rotaract Club's four board members went down for the Saturday and Sunday but missed out on the Preconvention. They did however make some contacts, they watched the Pride Parade, and they enjoyed bonding.



Opening Ceremony



CHIEF R. STACEY LAFORME

Seeing that the Air Canada Centre actually sits on indigenous land, the Convention Organizing Committee felt it appropriate to have Stacey, the leader of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, welcome us.

Stacey is also a poet and recited two of his poems that were very poignant. The most impactful being one written as Mother Earth in the first person, that we need to change our ways before its too late. <https://vimeopro.com/rotary/toronto-convention/video/276783560> Start 5:50

He also noted that Rotary is known as an international organization that supports those in need around the world. “Honestly from my heart, I tell you the Indigenous Peoples of this land and the rest of the world are in need. Stand with us, work with us, and walk with us.”



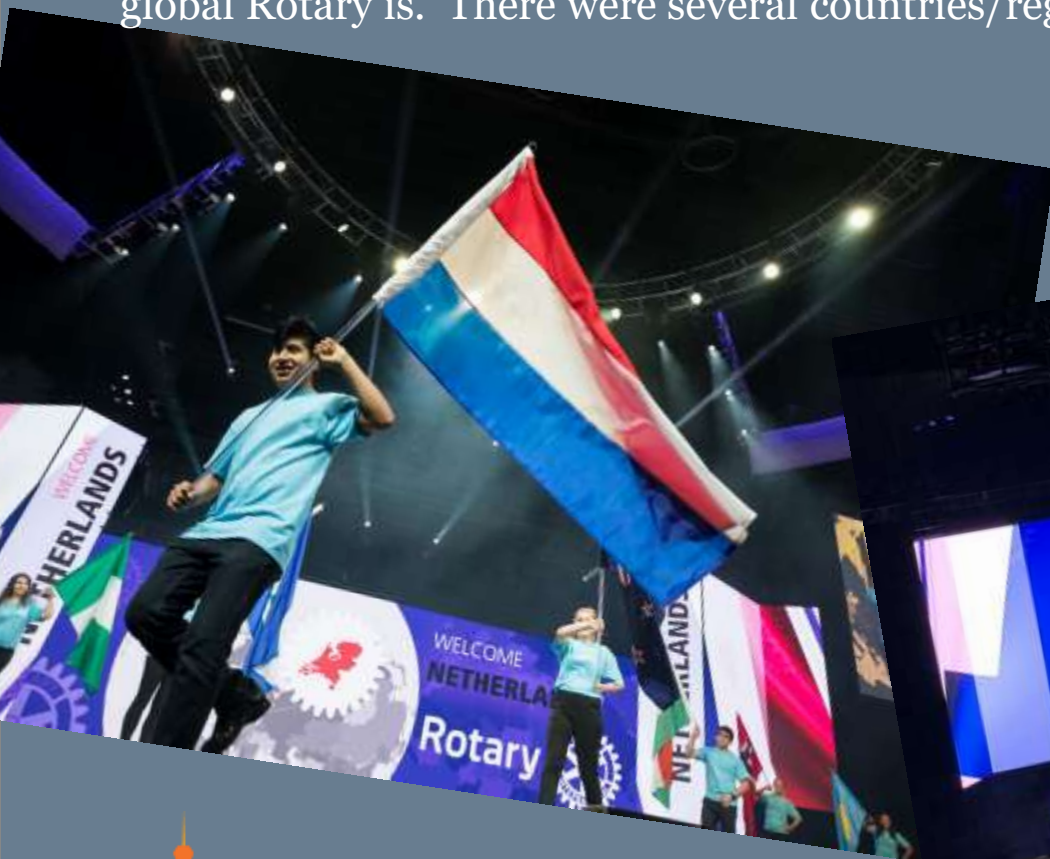
2017-18 RI PRESIDENT IAN H.S. RISELY

Ian spoke many times throughout the convention. Very good speaker and a great advocate for Rotary. He's from Australia, so lots of G'Days and Down Under was his intro music.



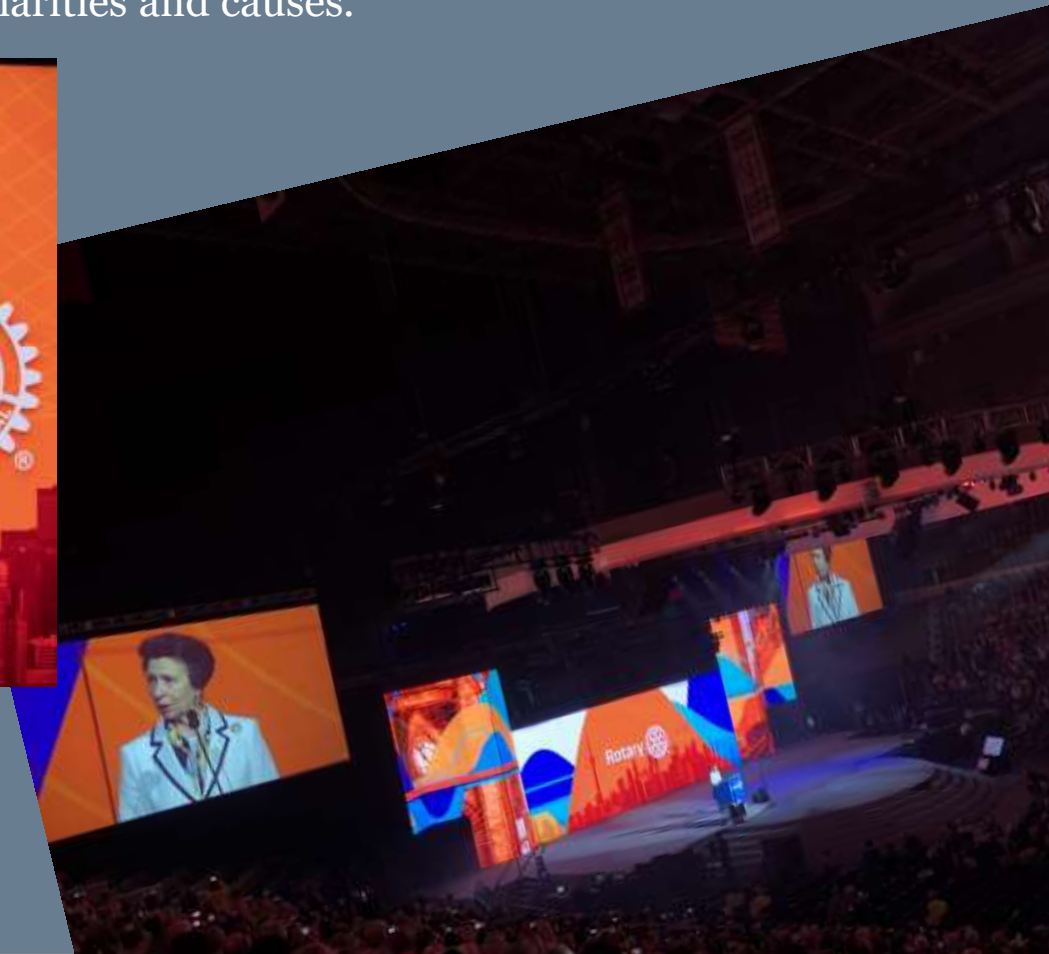
FLAG CEREMONY

Students paraded out every flag of the many countries and geographical regions that have Rotary involvement. It's a long procession, but really opens your eyes to how incredibly global Rotary is. There were several countries/regions that we hadn't even heard of!



THE PRINCESS ROYAL, PRINCESS ANNE

The second child and only daughter of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Princess Royal is president of Save the Children UK, an international nongovernmental organization that focuses on health, education, protection, and disaster relief for children. So she's a strong advocate for children's rights, she travels the world in support of Save the Children and other charities and causes.



ENTERTAINMENT



General Sessions



DAY 2: ROTARACT PANEL PRESENTATION



50 Years of Rotaract!

Main benefits of Rotaract:

- Opportunity for hands on projects and feeling good about yourself
- Employment and business opportunities through fellow Rotaractors and partnering Rotary Clubs

Only 5% of Rotaractors carry on to Rotary. They discussed the barriers and potential solutions:

- **TIME:** People will make time for what they value. We need to better communicate the value of Rotary. Rotaract is no longer a program. It's a Partnership. We need to be involved with them and figure out how Rotary can be of value to them individually.
- **MONEY:** Some of the costs of Rotary aren't what actually make Rotary work like Meals, which could be minimized. But Rotary can also be seen as an investment given the potential employment and business connection outcomes.

Benefits of Dual Membership (since 2016):

- Even closer connection to Rotary members
- Report back to Rotaract Club and encourage other joint memberships
- Creates clearer stepping stone once ready to leave Rotaract
- Helps minimize the average age of the Rotary Club to be more appealing to younger recruits.



DAY 2: ROTARY'S 6 AREAS OF FOCUS & UN's SDGs

Presentations through the 3 General Sessions went through 2 Rotary Areas of Focus per day.



Also lots of talk in relation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were set out in 2015 in an effort to achieve by 2030.



DAY 2: DISEASE PREVENTION & TREATMENT, MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Pretty decent first day of presenters. The Rotaract Panel plus the following presenters. A first glimpse at Rotary's impact on the world.

Presenters

- Dr. Tedros Adhanom, director-general of the World Health Organization
Praised Rotary's work in eradicating polio worldwide.
- Caryl M. Stern, President and CEO of UNICEF USA
Shared her story of being a child refugee. Her family was forced from their home in Austria when she was six years old.
- Dr. Ann Gloag, founder of the Ann Gloag Foundation and Freedom From Fistula Foundation.
- Brittany Arthur, of the Rotaract Club of Berlin, Germany, was the master of ceremonies during the General Sessions.



DAY 3: WATER & SANITATION, BASIC EDUCATION & LITERACY

An amazing and inspirational day of presenters. Water, Sanitation & Literacy were subjects that struck most of our hearts and understanding. We came out of this day inspired to participate in international water, sanitation, and/or literacy projects.

Presenters

- Laura Bush, First Lady of the USA (2001-2009)
An entertaining presentation about her life with George W., and her work with education, children, women's rights and health.
- James Marggraff, Inventor & Entrepreneur, Inventor of LeapFrog LeapPad
Talking about all of his work with inventions that apply technology to advance literacy, learning and thinking and how influential literacy is to advancing peace around the world. In every project, we need to define our Problem To Solve, acquire facts and data, pre-define success with measurable metrics, then measure your outcomes.
He also mentioned that everyone should read Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World and Why Things Are Better Than You Think.



DAY 3: WATER & SANITATION, BASIC EDUCATION & LITERACY

Presenters

- Dr. Isis Mejias, Water & Sanitation Rotarian Action Group Ambassador

Three things essential to your health: Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) WASH is essentially for living a life in dignity and upholding human rights. Half of humanity do not have these rights. Only 3% of the world's water is fresh water. And most of that is locked away in glaciers and under the Earth. Only .3% is available for human consumption, and it is threatened the most by natural and manmade contaminants.

- Dr. Jack Guy Lafontant, Prime Minister of Haiti
Pre-recorded video conference, spoken in French, subtitle in English. He is a Rotarian and is of course concerned about his country's issues with clean water, sanitation, hygiene and education. They have gone down the road of a partnership with Rotary through the HANWASH initiative (Haiti National Clean Water, Sanitation and Health)
- Jeremy Hurst, Chair of HANWASH



DAY 4: PEACE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A few speakers today spoke about being part of Rotary-sponsored programs at an early age that brought them out of hard times and into positions where they now advocate peace and understanding in their communities and around the world.

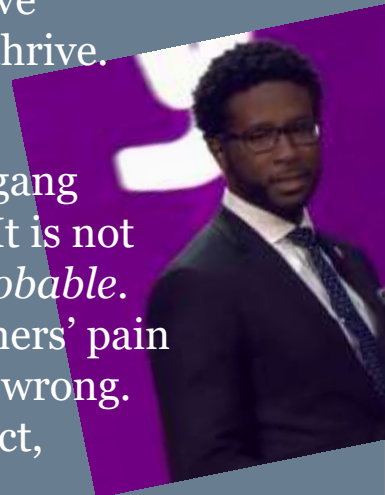
Presenters

- Helen Clark, Former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Former Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme

First female Prime Minister of NZ, current PM is a 37yo woman, just gave birth while being PM, and is not married to her partner! NZ is very progressive and a great example to the world for gender equality. Spoke about the UN Sustainable Goals that needs a wholistic approach, with Rotary having a large role, and gender equality being a prerequisite for achieving most of the goals. Education for women means that children live longer, marriage and children happen later at safer times, communities thrive.



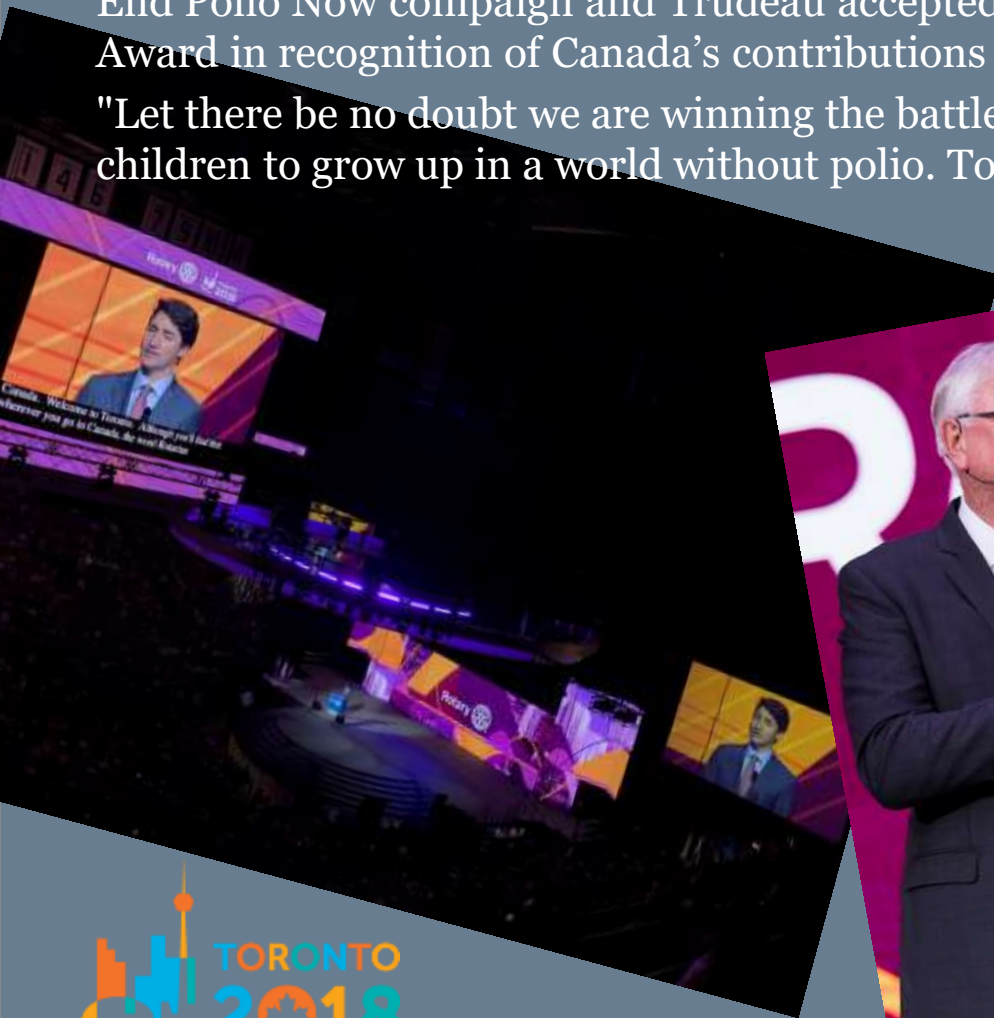
- Xavier Ramey, CEO of Justice Informed
From Chicago, grew up in intense poverty amongst racial gang neighbourhoods. Spoke about the requirements of peace. It is not about making things *possible*. It's about making things *probable*. And that the first step for peace is acknowledgement of others' pain and where it comes from and to apologize if we have done wrong. Is it the truth? And we must embrace the tension of conflict, acknowledge what it is, and push through it.



DAY 4: JUSTIN TRUDEAU

Justin Trudeau was the final speaker. He talked about Canada's role and dedication to the End Polio Now campaign and Trudeau accepted Rotary's Polio Eradication Champion Award in recognition of Canada's contributions to polio eradication.

"Let there be no doubt we are winning the battle against polio," he said. "I want my children to grow up in a world without polio. Together I know we will make that happen."



Breakout Sessions



BREAKOUT SESSIONS OVERVIEW

Every afternoon, we were given the choice of dozens of Breakout Sessions in the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Each session had a different topic where a presenter or panel of presenters would discuss their topic with the use of a slideshow and follow with a questions/discussion period. Each session lasted one to two hours.

Our name badge was scanned as we entered a session and they had availability screens in several places so that you could monitor whether the session you wanted to attend was full yet. The system worked quite well.

To give you an idea of topics, I (Jason) attended the following sessions:

- Hard-Won Partnerships: Best Practices from the Field
- Brain Power for Peace: Building Global Relations through Neuroplasticity
- Rotaract: Rotary's Bridge to Millennials
- Insights and Results of Recent Rotary Research
- Global Grants 101
- Simply Irresistible: A Contemporary Approach to Membership



Closing Ceremony



PRESENTATIONS

The Closing Ceremony started with entertainment and ended with entertainment. And in between were several presentations:

- 2019 Hamburg Convention Promotion
- Recognition of the Convention & Host Organization
- Recognition of Past RI Presidents
- Introduction of the RI President Nominee and the 2018-19 international board of directors
- Introduction of the RI President Elect & family
- RI President Elect (Barry Rassin) presentation and introduction to the 2018-19 Rotary theme:

Be The Inspiration

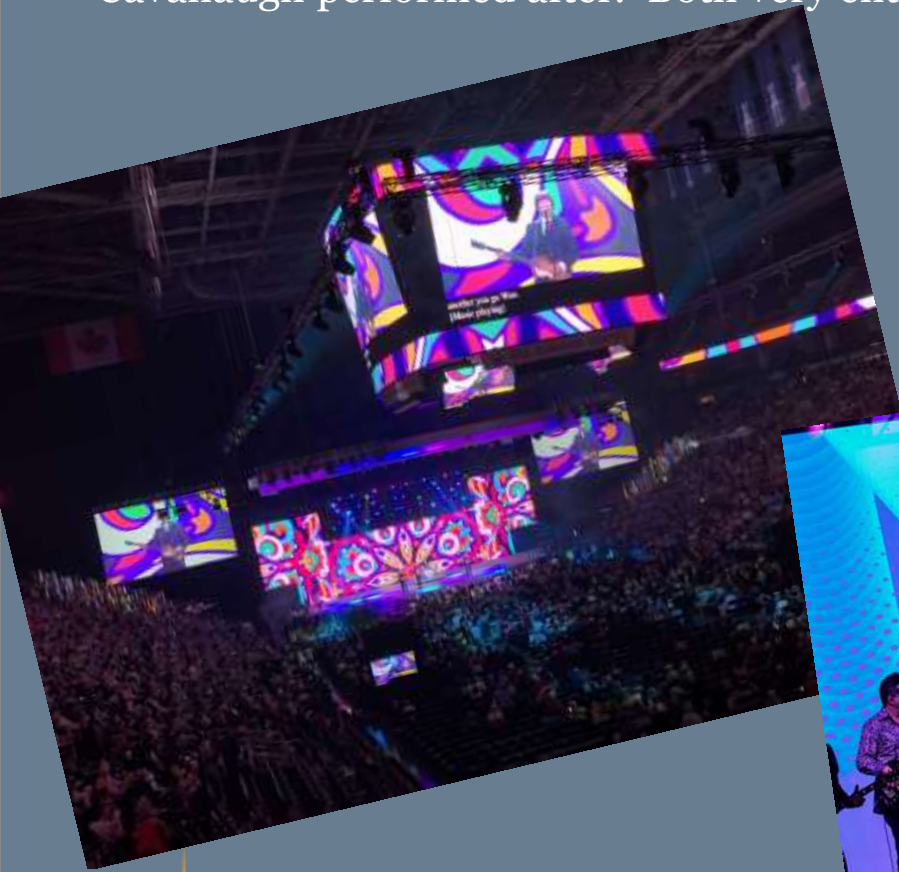
He stressed the importance of building sustainability in every project and initiative Rotary clubs and districts conduct.

“We need to look in all our areas of focus and every one of our projects through the lens of sustainability”



ENTERTAINMENT

Vancouver's The Fab Fourever played before the Closing Ceremony and Michael Cavanaugh performed after. Both very entertaining.



2019 Rotary International Convention in Hamburg,
Germany: <http://www.riconvention.org>

Videos of most General Session presentations:
<https://vimeopro.com/rotary/toronto-convention/>

Slide presentations of most Breakout Sessions:
[https://www.slideshare.net/Rotary International](https://www.slideshare.net/Rotary_International)



THANK YOU

