

ROTARY HAMILTON AM NEWSLETTER



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

July 2021, Vol. 2 Issue 7



Photo credit: Dave Gruggen Photography

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July is Rotary Transition Month

Welcome Message from incoming President John Dalglish

I welcome every member to a new Rotary year. Our new year's RI theme is 'Serving to Change Lives.' We will be serving our community and the world (1.2 million Rotarians worldwide) in this capacity under President Shektar Metha of India, who is himself a COVID survivor.

Governor Anne's District Conference will be held in October of this year right here in our city. Instructions on how to volunteer will be sent out soon, however, you may indicate your interest now to either Tim McClemon or myself if you would like to participate in planning the District Conference.

The new slate is listed to the left of this welcome. I invite you to contact them with your questions/comments throughout the year. I am always available to talk to you directly by phone/email.

For those new to the club, our board manages to the new club Strategic plan, Rotary International Club Goals, and the membership survey (which all members will get an opportunity to comment on at our July Club Assembly). We are limited in our actions and decision-making by the Club's by-laws and governance policies which are extensive.

This month we have the Mayor and Marvin Ryder speaking to our club updating us to events going on in the community post COVID. We are waiting for word as to when we can meet again in person. Club dues are due by the third week of the month. Check our website for news and updates.

The Fundraising event for the month of July is the Ribs to Go event (Ancaster Fair Grounds). I am seeking younger members for volunteer positions (contact Irene Stayshyn). Enjoy the warm weather all. Thank you for making every effort to stay safe and positive during this past, and most unusual, year.



Wednesdays 7:30am – 8:30am

Meeting via Zoom – <https://zoom.us/j/97313165265>

Take Action: <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/294>

Member Spotlight – Marta Stiteler



Many years ago, I attended a Rotary meeting but it was such a large group that I felt lost. But there was always something about Rotary and serendipitously it kept showing up in my life. While traveling in the northern Sierra Madre mountains of Mexico in a tiny village orphanage – we were shown a room full of white beds with white dollies on them – a gift from the Rotary Club of California. At the entrance of Machu Picchu, you are met with a plaque dedicated to Rotary. No matter where you go, Rotary is there. It was a symbol I had seen around the world and when Paul Lakin invited me to the Hamilton AM meeting, I felt welcome and knew that I had found my Club.

Over the past ten years, I have served on most committees and Chaired the very successful 2014 Auction where we netted over \$80,000. During my time with Rotary I have served in all Executive positions and proudly served as President from 2015-2016 in a year when we brought on Corporate Members and increased our membership by double digits. Since then, I have served as Assistant Governor with District 7090 and happily sit on the Great Lakes Watershed Cleanup Committee, the Membership Committee and Fundraising. Rotary is people and I have discovered that Rotary is my people. Belonging to the club has brought me friendships that I may never have had and experiences that I will never forget. We may all be different but we all want the same thing – to make a difference and make the world a better place.

Oh and yes, I own a successful Financial Planning Practice, live in the North End, have two beautiful daughters and sons-in-law, have my handsome and wonderful partner Pedro in my life and a very large dog named Oscar. And I'm going to be Grandma in September to two future Rotarians.

Drive-Thru Ribfest

Here are some pics from our first Drive-Thru Ribfest held Father's Day weekend. Our next two dates are at the Ancaster Fairground, July 23 - 25,

<https://northernheatribseries.ca/ancaster-rib-fest/> and

at McMaster Innovation Park, August 20 – 22,

<https://northernheatribseries.ca/hamilton/>

To book your volunteer time slot, please reach out to Irene Stayshyn, irenestayshyn@gmail.com or by phone at 905-547-9173



Impact of Rotary Continued – by John Mokrycke

Practicing the art of creating buildings is not a linear process, where productive thought leads to totally complete answers. A potentially good idea can simmer, then, disappear through practical review. With this process often come many late evenings, where a whisper of an insightful reflection may come, then slip away, and so in frustration one keeps searching.

One such evening, I was in my tiny studio, well past 2:00am, lost in the mist of an elusive design solution, when I drifted slightly enough to remember, that in a few days I would be boarding a plane for Melbourne, Australia, to attend the May 1993 International Rotary Convention, as an incoming club President, and I did not yet have accommodation. Google was not an option at that time. I found the international booking number for Sheraton Hotels in the yellow pages. My call was answered by a woman, whom when asked, said that she was in Huston, Texas. I told her I was calling from Hamilton, and that I would be flying to Melbourne in a few days, and needed a place to stay. Would Sheraton have any reasonably priced accommodations for my time of stay? She replied that she was from Hamilton also. She was born and raised in the same Park Row North neighbourhood as I, and went to Delta high school, and was the same age as I, therefore we were in the same classrooms together, and when we exchanged names, we knew each other. We then, in the post twilight hours, chatted for a while, exchanging updates on each other's lives. During our pleasant conversation, she said, "Oh, by the way, there are no rooms available within the Sheraton Hotel system in Melbourne, and, also, there are no rooms available anywhere else in the city, because of a Rotary conference." "Oh," I also said. "I have a problem". She was silent for a few minutes, then, she happily told me that she had a solution. The only room not booked within the entire Sheraton Hotels community in Melbourne, was a barrier free suite, in the brand new luxury Sheraton Towers Southgate complex on the Yara River, immediately across the river from the RI conference. "I can't take that suite", I said. "Well", she slyly commented, "when you arrive at the hotel, tell the front desk that a mistake in booking occurred, because clearly I was not physically challenged". "The staff will have to find you an alternate suite". She booked that suite for me, and then we chatted for some time more into the late night, then wishing each other the best of health and happiness, I shuffled off to bed.

One of my friends from Queen Mary grade school days, in my Park Row North neighbourhood, was a bit looney. Russ liked doing dangerous and crazy things, and often trapped us less adventurous youth in bizarre situations of his mischievous making. Often these events were quite dangerous. Somehow we all survived. Russ became a saturation diver, and worked on construction projects deep down, in the Seas of South East Asia. All of his diving classmates died doing this line of work, Russ said. He was the last one he said, because he could suppress fear. I would find out in those later years that this work made Russ much more bonkers!

It's a long flight to Melbourne, at the bottom of the Australian continent. At that time, Russ was living in Jahore Baru, in Malaysia, next to Singapore, with his Javanese Muslim wife, and their two little children. I decided to break my flight with a stop in Kuala Lumpur, and fly to Jahore, and spend a day and night with Russ.

Russ met me at the airport with is his family. We took a taxi to a local shopping centre, where Russ immediately disappeared. When I asked his wife, Wit, where he went, she assumed he went to pawn his gold necklace, to get some money for food. While Russ was gone, I became aware that many men were beginning to gather around us and Wit was beginning to get anxious. Russ returned, and immediately began a very loud rant while moving toward this threatening mob, and they quickly dispersed. I soon found out that Russ had been having serious altercations with the local male population because he was married to a Muslim woman. Russ brushed it off, telling me not to be concerned, and we went off to the market where I bought beer, and Russ bought very large shrimp.

Russ's home was a bamboo structure built off the ground on stilts, with a banana leaf roof, and next to very dense jungle. Russ made a fire outside, and he grilled the shrimp and we drank beer. As we brought each other up to date about our lives, Russ asked me how difficult it was for me to get an Australian visa? "Why would I need a visa to go to Australia", I said, "it's in the Commonwealth!" Russ reminded me that he was a Canadian citizen, and he need a visa to travel to Australia! From his home phone I called the Australian embassy in Singapore, and they informed me that without a visa, I would not be allowed into the country. I had only one chance to get a visa, if I could track down an embassy official at the Kuala Lumpur airport the next morning. My flight for Melbourne left that next day at 8:30 pm.

I returned to the camp fire, where Russ greeted me with that – I told you so smile! He then, suddenly, like a hunting leopard, shifted his attention to the wet jungle foliage, and in a second disappeared into the dense, dark mass of green. Before I could call out to him, he returned with the biggest, fattest snake I have ever seen, that was wrapping itself around him as he fought with it. He staggered and struggled with this enormous slithering creature until he reached the camp fire, where he managed to pick up a knife, and quickly remove the head of this horrible serpent. It fell to the ground, body and head. Russ said, "I'm still hungry, aren't you? Have you ever tried BBQ snake?" I excused myself, and went to bed, leaving Russ with his after dinner treat.

The next morning, at sunrise, I was awoken by a murmuring sound that seemed a bit strange. When I looked outside, Russ's little bamboo shack at the edge of the jungle, was completely surrounded by a significant number of local men, whom did not look too friendly. I quietly shuffled to Russ's bedroom hoping he was there, and thankfully he was. I told him what I saw outside. With a Russ grin, that I knew well from when we were kids, he calmly stood up from his bed, naked, reached under his sheets, and pulled out a revolver, with a very long barrel, and walked outside, still naked. I watched him, calmly look out over the assembled menacing crowd, and discharge the revolver over their heads. They all ran away. I asked Russ to call me a taxi, and that I was not staying for breakfast.

I flew back to Kuala Lumpur, and after a very tense many hours, I was allowed to board the plane 15 minutes before departure. Upon arriving in Melbourne, I was immediately taken to the security office, where I spent the next 3 hours. Had I not been a Rotarian, attending the conference, I believe the authorities would have sent me back to Hamilton without concern! I was very tired, and quite rumped, not having showered, nor changed my clothes for a few days, and I was very much looking forward to soaking in a hot hotel bath, with a very cold Australian Chardonnay. The hotel was very new, only open a few weeks, and very posh. An escalator took me to the front desk. The staff all gave me that look..... Thankfully, my Hamilton/Huston friend successfully booked my suite. I, at that point, had completely forgotten about the barrier free suite. The lady at the front desk told me my room number, and said that, my butler, would be waiting for me outside the room with my key. Arriving at my room, one level up, I was greeted by a very lovely young lady whom introduced herself, saying that she would be responsible to me during my stay. Huh! Entering the suite I glanced into the bathroom and without thinking, I asked, "where is the bath tub?" She looked in the bathroom, looked at me, and said that there must be some mistake, "this is the barrier free room!" The only remaining suite in the hotel was the most expensive, on the top floor, the Presidential suite, and that's where I stayed for the duration of the conference. Within minutes, my butler, provided me with a very cold bottle of excellent Chardonnay, and, I was soaking in one of the largest tubs ever, with a view overlooking the beautiful city of Melbourne.

I had made arrangements to meet my friend Mark's sister, whom lives with her family in Melbourne, to give her a gift from her brother. We arranged to meet in the morning after my arrival, for breakfast, at the mall food court, at the lower level of the hotel. We had just seated ourselves with our breakfasts, when a very large Australian man came literally flying through the air, and landed right on top of Mark's sister's husband, a 5 foot tall, skinny, Goan Indian. Another, also large Australian male appeared and the flying Aussie and he continued their very violent brawl. I picked up my new Goan friend, and we hobbled out of range of the battle. Apparently, my friend Mark's brother-in-law was sufficiently, lightly injured, that going forward, he was able to retire. This was how my Melbourne conference experience began!

The conference, like the Mexico City conference, the year before, was outstanding! The various Melbourne Rotary Clubs treated the visiting Rotarians, royally. On the first day of the conference, during a break, I was at a pay phone... remember those... calling home to tell my family that I had survived Russ. After the call, a woman approached me and said that she overheard that I was in the city on my own, and asked if I would like to join her husband and her for dinner that evening. I said of course. I was severely jetlagged and fell asleep when I returned to my room in the sky, only to be woken up by the same woman an hour into my deep sleep, saying she was downstairs waiting for me. It was not easy to get up, but I'm so glad I did. I spent the evening with this woman, her husband, and two other couples, interestingly all Lawyers, and members of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, at a wonderful 'meat only' restaurant, in the heart of that fabulous city. I am looking forward to the 2023 RI conference in this city, and perhaps I'll track down my Hamilton/Huston friend to book my accommodations, once again.

July 2021 Guest Speakers and Member Meeting Responsibilities

Date	Speaker	Front Desk 1	Front Desk 2	4 - Way Test	Invocation	Intro- Speaker	Sgt. At Arms
July 7	Marvin Ryder	Yoland a	Lisa	Mark	Clare	Norm	John M.
July 14	TBD	Don	Cheryl	Walter	Michael	Ashi	Paul L.
July 21	Club Assembly	John J.	Kerry	Martina	Jennifer	Paul L.	Cameron
July 28	TBD	Macneal	Sharon	Ruth	Tim	Janet	John J.

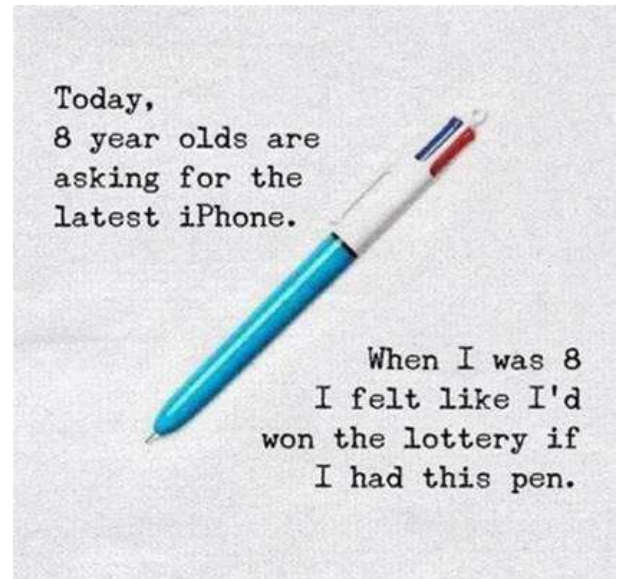
CELEBRATIONS!

Birthdays

Celine Legret, July 2
 Ellard McBane, July 11
 Macneal Lashley, July 16
 Jennifer Kinnunen, July 28

Rotary Anniversaries

Jennifer Kinnunen – July 2, 2018



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