

ROTARY HAMILTON AM NEWSLETTER



June 2021, Vol. 2 Issue 6



Photo credit: Dave Gruggen Photography

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June is Fellowship Month

June is designated Rotary Fellowships Month to recognize the importance of international fellowship and goodwill among Rotarians with similar recreational and vocational interests, promote increased participation in fellowships, and increase understanding of this program.

Fellowship provides opportunities for Rotarians to make lasting friendships outside their own club, district or country. Fellowships contribute to the advancement of world understanding and peace.

Rotary Fellowships informally began in 1928 when a group of Rotarians with an interest in Esperanto joined together. In 1947, Rotarians organized a group of boating enthusiasts, which became the Yachting Fellowship. These activities gained more attention and operated over the years as World Fellowship Activities, International Vocational Contact Groups, Rotary Recreational and Vocational Fellowships, and finally, Rotary Fellowships.

Each Fellowship is officially recognized by the RI Board of Directors, but operates independently of Rotary International, with its own rules, dues requirements, and administrative structure. Each fellowship must maintain a membership base representing at least three different countries.

There are many Fellowships (from amateur radio to wine and license plate collectors to beer, even an International Bee Rotary Fellowship – catch more on that in this newsletter) that may be of interest. Check out more details <http://www.rotary.org/fellowships>.

Rotary



Wednesdays 7:30am – 8:30am

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

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

Member Spotlight – Cheryl Gzik



I have been a member of Rotary Hamilton AM since October 1, 2017. However, my involvement with Rotary began as a teenager: a) attended RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award) b) family hosted exchange students c) sister was an exchange student to Mexico where I visited her and d) relatives were Rotarians (father: Lyle Jeakins and uncle: Robert Packham) both with Hamilton Mountain.

When I was ready to become a Rotarian, I looked for a club with morning meetings as I work at the John Sopinka Courthouse as an Assistant Crown Attorney. I attended a few meetings and was warmly welcomed by many, including Irene Stayshyn who became my mentor. She is one inspiring, hard-working volunteer! Tony Wellenreiter and Dr. Tom Tweedie both knew my father-in-law (Edward Gzik) so I felt an instant connection to this club.

When our club announced we were going to resume hosting exchange students, I eagerly volunteered. The quote "travel is fatal to prejudice" has always resonated with me and I wanted my boys to experience the same exposure my family and exchange students had given me.

How lucky we were to host Simona from Switzerland for six months! My boys loved the exposure to Swiss chocolate and cheese and her homemade chocolate chip cookies! Then we had Anna from Croatia! She loved studying here and when the pandemic hit and she returned early, she was grateful to complete all her science courses with the Hamilton Board of Education online from her own home. My family plans to visit both Simona and Anna in 2023. My eldest son's Rotary exchange to Sweden was twice cancelled due to the pandemic but the fact he was wanting to go was a positive benefit of hosting the students.

My sabbatical year is coming to an end. I was unable to travel to the countries intended and instead of doing the Camino trail in Portugal, I have started hiking the Bruce Trail. I love it! Recently I have seen trilliums and am grateful for all the nature we have in our own backyard. So far I have hiked about 120 of the 900 km, and when the stay at home order is lifted, I hope to finish before my return to work.

Rotary Geography Fun Facts

- RC of Reno, Nevada is farther west than the RC of Los Angeles
- RC of Portland, Maine meets farther south than RCs in London, England
- RC of Pensacola, Florida is west of RC Detroit, Michigan
- There are 69 RC with "Tokyo" in their Club's name
- The RC of Nome, Alaska lies west of the RC of Honolulu, Hawaii
- RC of Santiago, Chile is east of RC of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Hive Mind – Global Fellowship, as seen in the May 2021 issue of Rotary Magazine

With June being Rotary Fellowship Month and just passing World Bee Day last month (May 20th) we are drawing attention to a great article in the May issue of Rotary Magazine.

Bees are in trouble. According to a recent study in North America, you are nearly 50 percent less likely to see a bumblebee in any given area than you were before 1974. Bee species have seen dramatic population declines all around the world, and without bees, global food security may be at risk because pollinator dependent crops make up 35 percent of global food production volume.

Rotary members in Slovenia, one in every 200 Slovenians is a beekeeper, are behind the creation of the International Bee Rotary Fellowship (IBRF). The fellowship hopes to work on projects such as building bee houses and organizing bee focused camps for young people.

'Rotary and bees have a lot in common. Bees are hardworking, creative and productive, and so is Rotary' – Nina Kolenc Rotary Club of Maribor-Park.

Hamilton Rotary AM Ribs To Go

Mark your calendars for June 18 – 20 to take a shift at our first Ribs To Go fundraiser. Contact Paul Lakin (paullakin@sympatico.ca).

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 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, 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 ruffled, 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!

June 2021 Guest Speakers and Member Meeting Responsibilities

Date	Guest Speaker	Front Desk 1	Front Desk 2	4 - Way Test	Invocation	Intro- Speaker	Sgt. At Arms
June 2	Hamilton's COVID-19 Response	Cathy	Martina.	Jennifer	Paul	Mac	John M.
June 9	Club Assembly	Celine	Sharon	Ruth	Tim	Janet	Paul L.
June 16	Renewable Energy Strategies	Dan	Angelo	John M.	Paul R.	Shikha	Cameron
June 23	Club Assembly	Darren	Janette	Irene	Frank	Marta	John J.
June 30	Board Changeover	Tom	Michelle	John	Shayna	Anne	Norm

Blast from the Past – Reading Buddies



As we near the end of another school year. We think about all of students we have met through the reading buddies program at Hess Street school. Pictured from left going clock wise Paul Reardon, Tom Tweedie, Mark Ewer

CELEBRATIONS!

Birthdays

Paul Lakin, June 10
Lisa Dunlop June 29
John Mokrycke June 30

Rotary Anniversaries

Frank Stechey - June 11, 1971
Paul Reardon - June 14, 2005
Dan Millar - June 21, 2006
John Mokrycke - June 30, 1996

Thank you to our sponsor!

Contact Info/Text from mcCallumSather

mcCallumSather
ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING INTERIORS