Rotary Connection

Iceland in the Middle of Summer, and a Tim Tam Slam

Club Meeting Highlights • Wednesday 28 October 2026

President Bob Hall was in the chair at the Geraldton Golf Club at 7.00 am. Di Gilleland gave the invocation and the toast. Sergeant Bob Urquhart had the box. Ian Taylor was the guest speaker. Leni Tenwinkel and her host mother Janica Ringwood were also guests.

Meeting at a Glance

- Bob Hall in the chair; Sergeant Bob Urquhart; invocation and toast by Di Gilleland.
- Guest speaker: Ian Taylor, Iceland. Guests: Leni Tenwinkel and Janica Ringwood.
- No apologies.
- District 9423 AGM by Zoom, Tuesday 17 November, 5.30 pm. Club AGM 2 December.
- Leni moves to the Keoghs today. Clare McElhinney takes April and May.
- Heads and tails to Jim Dillon. October fines to RFDS.

Opening the Morning

Barry Dring gave the thought for the day. The 28th of October has form: the 1834 Battle of Pinjarra, Faraday's first dynamo in 1831, the end of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, and the founding of the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot in 1664, which became the Royal Marines. He also reached for Rimsky-Korsakov and the 1888 premiere of Scheherazade. Then he sang. If you're happy and you know it, stay in bed. Grant said he would be recruited by a choir before he left the room. Hugh said he would not pay the fees.

Announcements

Sea Containers and Venues — Bob Hall

Bob and Di have been into the sea containers looking for gear for the radio auction. There is stuff everywhere. A major clean-out is needed. The honour boards and banners are stacked and collecting dust. The club has no home for them. Bob is mindful of what they mean, and of how long they can be kept. He and Grant are also looking at other meeting places. Nothing is decided. Options are being explored.

District and Club AGMs — Grant Woodhams

The club's annual general meeting is on 2 December, here. District 9423 holds its own AGM by Zoom on Tuesday 17 November at 5.30 pm. The district rules require at least 40 per cent of clubs to be present. Bob will attend. Hugh has volunteered to be there as well. Any member may join as an observer.

Radio Auction — Di Gilleland

Setup is on Friday 6 November. The sheet was on Di's table. Hands are needed then, and on the day itself, Sunday 8 November at the NACC rooms. Those who can come are asked to bring a plate. The volunteer list is healthy. A new Friend of Rotary has joined after a donation. Rotary cakes are still available.

Youth Exchange — Hugh Lavery

Leni has been out and about. She is back at school. Janica Ringwood took her to Exmouth after the holidays began. Anyone with a trip that might suit Leni is asked to let her know. She is changing host families today, moving to the Keoghs. Chantelle and John. The club will not have to pay for Chantelle's breakfast. April and May, which were open last week, are now filled by President Elect Clare McElhinney. February and March are being confirmed.

Leni Tenwinkel — I've been everywhere

Leni Tenwinkel reporting to the club.

Leni told her own tale. Part of the holidays she spent at Exmouth. They broke the drive at Bullara Station for two nights. The sun was so red. Five days at Exmouth, snorkelling the whole time. Many fish. No sea turtles, which was a disappointment. Then Coral Bay, Gladstone Bay for a night, Kalbarri, and back to Geraldton.

Leni presenting her report.

Next was Perth, for a Rotary weekend with other exchange students at Byford. It rained. They did a lot indoors. One day in Perth she went to Fremantle markets with a friend. Then the ten-day Outward Bound camp with Geraldton Grammar at Walpole. Hiking and rafting. Hard, and fun. One whole day of rain. Clothes completely wet. Sleeping in a bivvy. The toothpaste exploded in the night. There were also good mornings: rafting early, games, nachos, hot chocolate, and her first Tim Tam slam. Not the last. No houses, no showers, no real bed. After ten days, the shower and the bed were a relief.

She is back at school for four weeks, then a Rotary trip to Albany. Today she changes host families. She is excited.

Guest Speaker — Ian Taylor

Iceland in the middle of summer

Ian Taylor presenting his photographs of Iceland.

Ian needed no introduction. He took the club on a guided tour of Iceland, courtesy of his own photographs, from a recent cruise with his wife Diane and with former Geraldton Rotarian Kim Stokes and his wife Jocelyn. Iceland sits just south of the Arctic Circle. Its closest major landmass is Greenland. A volcanic island, settled by the Norse, later managed by Denmark, it became a republic towards the end of the Second World War.

> *"It was bloody cold. This was the middle of summer, for goodness sake! And if this is what summer's like, you don't want to be there in winter."*

The first port was Akureyri. Icelandic horses were everywhere. They are a breed brought in, not native. No horses are allowed onto Iceland. If one goes overseas, it cannot come back. The locals are particular about keeping the breed pure. Bob noted, later, that the Icelanders also eat them. There is little other meat on the island.

> *"Trolls are monsters that are in the rocks that come alive at night and they go after naughty children. It's a wonderful way the Icelandic people keep their kids under control."*

There were mud pools, steam coming out of the ground, and geothermal power plants. Ian stayed on the boardwalk. The Dettifoss waterfall is one of the most powerful by volume of water. He slowed the shutter on his Pentax and got the spun-glass effect, hand-held. The ship was Cunard's Queen Anne. The cabin was brilliant!

Dettifoss waterfall, one of Iceland's most powerful.

An abandoned village in the north-west accessible from Isafjordur has been turned into a tourist attraction. The fishing failed. You cannot grow much. Gravestones, small waterfalls, a surgeon's equipment that included an instrument for removing plaster. Then Reykjavik, the capital, the most northerly capital of a sovereign state, population around 140,000, with another 250,000 in the region. About 64 per cent of Iceland's people live there. A bit like Western Australia and Perth.

The Golden Circle, and a passport

The Golden Circle is a 300-kilometre loop from Reykjavik through the south-west. Lava rock covered in moss, green, almost Martian. The Hellisheiði geothermal plant, 303 megawatts, produces hot water as well as power. Reykjavik's houses are heated with geothermal water piped in. Virtually all of Iceland's power is geothermal, solar or wind. No fossil fuels.

> *"Virtually all the power that is generated in Iceland is either geothermal or solar or wind. There's no fossil fuels used in Iceland for their power."*

The Kerið caldera, turf roofs, the Gullfoss waterfall that nearly became a hydroelectric plant until the locals stopped it, and the Strokkur geyser, which goes off about every four minutes. A rift valley, stunning weather in Reykjavik, flowers that looked familiar. The summer holiday area in the south was less impressive than what we have here.

As a bonus, Ian showed the black houses of Scotland, the loom for Harris Tweed, and the Dun Carloway Broch, an Iron Age stone structure from about 500 or 600 AD. They left it as wet as shags. The tour guide said next time they would put towels on the bus. In Edinburgh there was a 96% solar eclipse. He walked out of the hotel, pointed the camera up, and caught it.

96% solar eclipse over Edinburgh.

Morning tea on the Royal Yacht Britannia, on display in Edinburgh. An absolute must-see.

Getting home was the fun part. The British passport would not produce a boarding pass. It had no visa for Australia. Twenty minutes later the Australian passport worked. He left the UK. He is still not sure if the UK thinks he is still there.

The thanks were from Bob: a certificate, and polio immunisations in Ian's name. Bob had done the same cruise eighteen months earlier. He recommended it. Very clean, very tidy. He noted the Dockers shirt in the last photograph.

Ian's Photographs

A selection from Ian Taylor's Iceland and Scotland photographs.

Volcanic landscape and mud pools.

A troll in the rocks.

Gravestones near Isafjordur.

Hellisheiði geothermal plant.

Strokkur geyser erupting.

Black houses in Scotland.

Dun Carloway Broch, Lewis.

Surgeon's instruments.

Coming Up

Wednesday 4 November — Club meeting
Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Grant Russell, Great Northern Football League.

Friday 6 November — Auction setup
Heavy frames. Hands needed. See Don Rolston and Bob Symington.

Sunday 8 November — Radio auction
NACC Conference Rooms, 8.00 am to 4.00 pm. Bring a plate.

Wednesday 11 November — Club meeting
Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Rob Houwen, Future Automobiles.

Monday 16 November — Club board
In person, 5.30 pm, Mid West Financial Services. Agenda items to Grant before the meeting.

Tuesday 17 November — District 9423 AGM
By Zoom, 5.30 pm. Bob Hall and Hugh Lavery attending. Observers welcome.

Wednesday 18 November — Club meeting
Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Bob Hall, Scotland.

Wednesday 25 November — Club meeting
CWA Hall, 6.45 for 7.00 am.

30 November — RYLA applications close
Ages 18–28. Camp in mid-January. Grant, or ryla@rotarywa.au.

Wednesday 2 December — Club AGM
Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am.

Wednesday 9 December — Club meeting
Geraldton Golf Club, 6.45 for 7.00 am. Guest speaker Bishop Michael Morrissey, a Christmas message.

Saturday 12 December — Christmas function
Tarts & Co., 5.30 to 8.30 pm. The list is still thin. Names to Grant.

Register: Christmas Celebration

Wednesday 20 January 2027 — Club meeting
Breakfast at Levy Street Life. Guest speaker Rohan Prowse, Levy Street Life and the Friday Circulars.

Fellowship and Fines

Heads and tails was the quickest raffle in history. Two heads, and Jim Dillon had the only head. Then the box. October's fines go to the RFDS.

Barry, forty years in Rotary on 1 November. Don, forty-one years the same day. Jim, thirty years in this club. All stood. All paid.

Clare, for arriving after the bell. Just.

Di, for the auction countdown. The countdown starts the day after the auction finishes. We are always on a countdown. She also found seven pieces of gold while prospecting. Pieces of eight, Grant said.

Barry the singer. Don't give up the day job. He also noted that Jonas Salk, who developed the polio vaccine, was born on this day in 1914.

Kim Wann, for the Lion's Club shirt. A dollar for the lion. Those without Rotary insignia for the public. Grant was among them.

Ian, already fined, confessed. His daughter-in-law has banned him from ladders. He climbed one at home alone. If he had fallen, no one would have known. He also has tickets for the Messiah on 12 December, which is the Christmas function. He will pay for both.

Jim has been in the Royal Automobile Club for fifty years. His brother turned eighty and woke at ten past twelve to discover it. Holy, he said. The oldest in the family.

Hugh reminded the room of Sir Charles Court's creed. It is Western Australia. Not West Australia.

A Word of Thanks

Thank you to Bob for the chair and the sea containers, to Di for the invocation and the auction, to Barry for the song, to Sergeant Bob for the box, to Grant for the district AGM, to Hugh for the host parents, to Leni for the Tim Tam slam, and to Ian — for the horses, the trolls, the geothermal pipes, and the passport that would not work.

— Rotary Club of Greater Geraldton —