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e Newsletter

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Message from President David

It is hard to believe we are close to the end of our 3rd quarter, with the New Year a distant memory.

On the membership front, that 3rd quarter has brought us the pleasure of introducing two new members, Ken Lennox at the first meeting of the New Year and Dave Edmonds at the beginning of March. Years ago, the introduction of new members was a long protracted affair, with no hint being given to the prospective individuals until the last minute and of course no opportunity for them to experience a taste of what Rotary was all about beforehand. Thank goodness that is in the past and both Ken and Dave (especially Dave) were able to enjoy the fellowship of Banchory Rotarians for some time before they joined. It is a credit to the existing members that neither was put off!

A superb Burns Supper easily qualified once again as a 'highlight' of the Club's year. This was made possible by the first class planning and overseeing of the event by the Entertainments Committee. However, it was also down to the quality of the speakers and entertainers, judging by the reaction of the audience. And PP Eddie Gillanders, having the good fortune to be first to speak, made it possible for the traditional top-table bottle of Macallan to be polished off by the end of the evening – I believe a first for many years!

The Burns Supper was well supported by the Club. I wish I could say the same for the International Evening. Only 21 members out of 49 attended (albeit supplemented by 11 wives), which was a great pity when we had invited international guests to speak to us. It was an evening with a difference in that the guests were 'professionals', not students. It was an extremely interesting evening and sincere thanks

must be given to Ryan Bond and members of the International Service Committee for making all the arrangements and being such attentive hosts.

At the Club Assembly last June, the Club agreed to aim for a Presidential Citation, or the more appropriately named Certificate of Excellence. I can report that the application for the Citation was forwarded in the second week of March and I understand from AG Ewen Hatchwell that we have 'qualified'. Many thanks are due to all Convenors and members who (possibly unconsciously) contributed towards this, by participating in a wide and varied programme.

As we go to press, PE David Marquardt and his team will be preparing already for next year. That's Rotary continuity for you. However, as every Youth Activities and Crathes Rally Convenor will say, there is still much to be accomplished this year, with the Young Musicians Competition, Young Achievers and the Rally all taking place in the 4th quarter. And this year Banchory will be involved in Kids Out Day on 11th June.

Long may the activities continue and long may we continue to **Share Rotary**.

President David

Habitat for Humanity at Guangdong Province, China

A "Thank-You" in the form of an information bulletin was recently sent to the Club by Kelsie Williamson from Torphins.

The club recently supported Kelsie when, as part of a volunteer team, she travelled with **Habitat for Humanity** to Guangdong province in China to undertake building work as part of an ongoing project.

Habitat is a non-profit making organisation that builds and renovates simple decent homes in partnership with low-income families, to help to break the cycle of poverty and hopelessness through volunteer labour and donations of money and materials.

During their time in Guangdong, Kelsie and fellow volunteers worked alongside young people from the local Communist Youth



Kelsie Williamson (red top) with members of the Habitat for Humanity team on site

League and local villagers. The houses they helped to build were an average size of 80 m² constructed from red clay bricks and comprising one to three bedrooms, toilet facilities, living room and kitchen.

After the day's work, the volunteer labourers spent time at local centres of interest learning more about Chinese culture and by visiting local exhibits and using local restaurants they also contributed to the local economy. They also made contact with the local schools and found the local children very keen to try out English words in exchange for Cantonese.

At the end of their short stay in Guangdong, the members of the team were all tired from their labours, but nevertheless they felt that they had made a difference in helping to improve the lives of the villagers. On a personal note Kelsie wished to express her sincere thanks to our Club for enabling her to make a difference.

Rotarians can find out more about Habitat for Humanity by logging on to their website on <http://www.habitat.org>

An International Evening with a Difference

In a departure from previous years, the 2008 International Evening for members and guests was attended by seven professional guests, from different parts of the world, but currently living and working in the Scotland. After the meal Ryan Bond introduced the various guests

The guest contributions began with Meteorologist Harry Chen originally from Guangdong Province, South China and now working in Banchory for Aerospace Marine International. Two ladies also from South East Asia followed, Herine Lamb who told the audience about life in Hong Kong. Herine came to Aberdeen with her husband who is in the oil industry and she has a Travel Agency in the city. Ping Lin, an accomplished artist is from Chenadu in China and lives and works with her husband in Aberdeen. She is also teaching Mandarin and Chinese dance at Kingswells Primary School, Aberdeen, including a co-education project between Scotland and China.

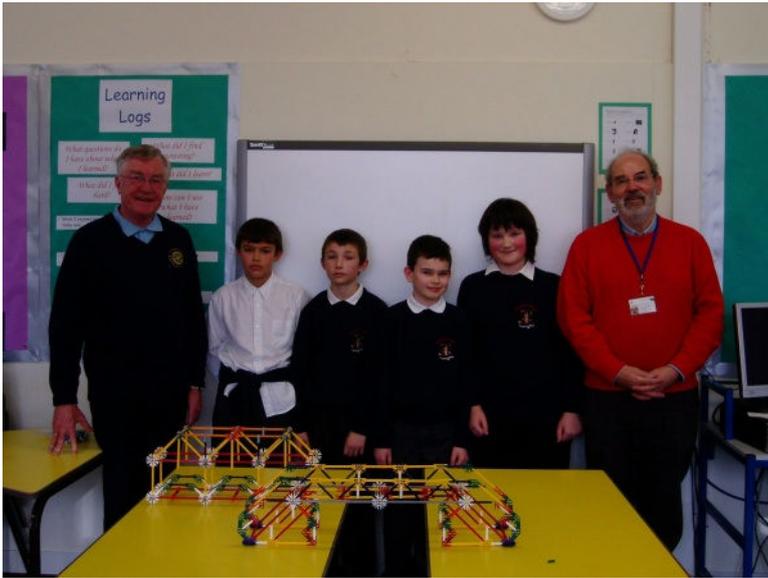
The emphasis then moved to India when Indian couple Parijat and Nivedita Mukerji outlined their cultural background. Nevidita gave an interesting insight into Chandigarh which was the first planned city in India, built under the Nehru regime. They have been here for three years. Parijat is a Principal Petroleum Engineer with Schlumberger. The final international contribution was from Anna and Marek Nohawica from Wolow in Poland. Dentist, Anna, who is a dentist, is a member of the Carden Place practice, while Marek is a building technology graduate.

In taking a popular guest evening and changing it very slightly, Ryan Bond and his International Team are to be congratulated in not going down the same old road.



Club members and this year's International Guests from China, India and Poland

Young Engineers' Challenge at Banchory Primary



The Primary 6 classes at Banchory Primary School had an exciting day when Techfest Setpoint visited the school. The pupils took part in the Young Engineers' Challenge, with the support of Tom Carnie from Setpoint Scotland and Rotary Vocational Convener, John Brind.

Working in pairs the pupils were given the task of designing and building a bridge, which had to meet with Setpoint's strict design criteria. The winners pictured above with John Brind and Tom Carnie, are from the left, Ross Maclean, Damon Ogg, Calum Parkhill and Jakob Davidson. The overall winners were Calum and Jakob, who will represent

their school in the Grampian finals later this year.

TechFest-SetPoint is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity based in the University of Aberdeen with a satellite office in the University of Abertay Dundee. The main aims are to work in partnership with both the Public and Private sectors to organise and promote science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) activities that stimulate interest in science and engineering among school pupils

Rotary Friends Re-united

During a recent holiday in New Zealand, Ian and Liz Hendry took the opportunity to call on former Youth Exchange Student, Chris Ramsay.

The couple hosted Chris when he was the incoming Youth Exchange Student for our Club, back in 1993/94. Chris, a native of Invercargill in New Zealand's South Island, on his return home went on to graduate from the prestigious University of Dunedin. He is now a very successful Marketing Manager for the Dunedin Casino and has kept up with his Banchory host families every Christmas with reports on his progress.



Lunching in a restaurant in Dunedin's Octagon

During a lunch with Chris and his lovely partner Pranita, many memories were evoked of the highly successful YSE year which Chris spent in Scotland, and of the many friends he made while attending Banchory Academy. Chris sends his best wishes to all his Banchory friends. The couple hope to visit the UK in September this year, when Banchory will certainly be on their itinerary.

During the holiday Liz and Ian also made contact with four Rotarian couples who all hosted Ian during the first visit he made to District 9900, Auckland and the Northlands, as a Group Study Exchange Team leader in 1990. In the intervening years all of them have visited the Scottish couple during visits to Europe and the UK.



**Rotarian friendships renewed in Auckland
I-r PDG David Graham & June, PDG Ken Baird & Barbara, Liz & Ian,
Ray & Val Hall and Terry and Pam Dale**

Needless to say the four Auckland Rotarians and their partners had many fond memories to revisit, during Ian & Liz's weekend stay in Auckland, during which they stayed with PDG David Graham and June. The eight Aucklanders also hosted an excellent dinner for their Scottish friends, before parting company again, hopefully to be re-united on some future occasion.

Club News in brief.....

- **Welcome to new member, Dave Edmonds** who was inducted as a member on Wednesday 5th March. Welcome to the club Dave.....
- **Aboyne 25th Anniversary Charter Dinner** – Thirteen Club members will be attending the 25th Anniversary Dinner of our daughter Club, the Rotary Club of Aboyne, appropriately scheduled for Friday 25th April in the Victory Hall Aboyne.....
- **Visit to Vestby – 16th – 19th May 2008** – Bob Daan email has received an email from Sverre Tannum the organiser at the Vestby end of our planned visit, inviting the members of the Banchory group to participate in the Norwegian National Day parade, on Saturday 17th May. He hopes that as many as possible will wear tartan. It sounds like a fun day and the eighteen strong Banchory group look forward to meeting up with Vestby friends again.....
- **Mrs Muriel Geekie** – widow of Ian Geekie, Club Past President (1975-76) and Past District Governor (1986-87) died in Inchmarlo House recently. The longer standing members of the Club will remember Muriel as a fun loving lady who enjoyed attending District Conferences and Club Social activities.....
- **Scatter Month visits** – March replaced February for this year's Club Scatter Month, visits have taken place to Turriff, Westhill, Aboyne, Kintore, Stonehaven and Laurencekirk.....
- **Banchory Academy Young Enterprise team** have made it to the finals. The team together with their teacher and the business advisor, Rotarian John Brind, will attend these at the Marcliffe Hotel, where one of the speakers will be Doug Richard (of Dragon's Den fame).
- **Kids Out at Craibstone** on 11th June 2008. Five pupils from Hill of Banchory and three from Banchory Primary will enjoy the fun at this year's Kids Out at Craibstone Estate.....