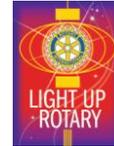


Rotary
Ireland



District Governor's Newsletter – October 2014

Conference Lights Up Rotary

Rotary Ireland lit up Rotary **and Belfast** when on Friday night 26th September, Belfast City Hall was beautifully bedecked in Rotary's Colours, saluting the Rotarians from all over Ireland who were meeting in Belfast's iconic Titanic Centre for the 89th annual Rotary Ireland Conference.



The hugely successful Conference, held on 26th - 27th September, was organised by DG Phillip's Comber Club and attended by 450 delegates and guests who enjoyed the fabulous setting.



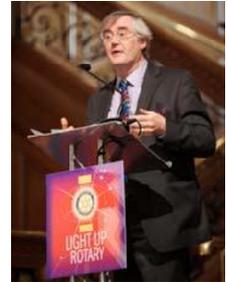
Following a welcome from DG Phillip and Comber Club President Roy Ramsay, RI President's Representatives Bob & Ann Scott, Rotary Club of Coburg Canada, brought greetings from RI President Garry Huang. Ann expressed her delight to also represent and bring greetings from President Gary's wife Corinna.

Bob in his address challenged Rotarians by saying ***"who knows about you?"*** and ***"urged all to let the world know about Rotary"***.



Guest speakers reflected on the wider world beyond Rotary with eminent scientist Dame Jocelyn Bell, Irish historian Dr Eamonn Phoenix and businessmen Tony O'Reilly (*Providence Resources PLC*) and Michael Ryan (*Bombardier Aerospace NI*) giving the Conference a captivating and frequently amusing scientific, historic and business perspective.

Irish historian Dr Eamonn Phoenix described to delegates the tapestry of the turmoil of the decade of Irish history from 1911 when Ireland was on the brink, highlighting the Ulster Covenant, third Home Rule Bill, Partition, the rise of the UVF and Irish Volunteers/IRA, the outbreak of the Civil War, the Easter rising, Battle of the Somme, and the Irish Civil War. Rising to the challenge to fit all this into his 20 minutes, he also interspersed it with illuminating stories of many of the personalities, sung and unsung, at that time.



A most interesting summary of the exploration for oil and gas offshore Ireland was given by Tony O'Reilly, CEO Providence Resources PLC, the Irish based upstream oil and gas company. He pointed out that, compared to the North Sea, historically very few commercial sites had been developed mainly because of poor infrastructure, pricing and tax structures. However changes in these 3 factors now meant several old sites were being re-appraised and 8 new sites considered. He noted that the success of the oil and gas industry had transformed economies with increased exports, employment and revenues and that there was enormous future potential in offshore Ireland.

A fascinating, informative and entertaining portrayal of her view of the origins of the Universe, its future and its fate, was heard from eminent scientist Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell. She highlighted the distinct possibility that life in some form may be found in other galaxies and queried if the world was ready? Stating the now generally confirmed scientific view that the Universe started with the "Big Bang" she noted that no-one knows what was there before it. She pointed out that as we are "children of the stars" eventually million and millions of year's away life will be exterminated – if we don't do it ourselves first! She concluded that science is evolving and this is the current best understanding we have of the Universe's past, present and future and urged all to take care of, not only the planet, but also the people on the planet.



Michael Ryan, CEO Bombardier Aerospace NI, gave a most informative account of the "magic" of aerospace and Bombardier's place in NI. Noting how Bombardier was moving forward for the future he highlighted that the company are excited by the new step change in aircraft technology, the using of a composite material for the wing of the C Series aircraft. This has huge implications for the industry as not only is it more lightweight resulting in greater speed, reduced cost and vast environmental benefit, but also because it is stronger and will not corrode. Michael noted that he expects this to be a major project for 30 years and that Bombardier will continue to be part of this future and the magic of flying.

Excellent detailed presentations on current activity were made by all Service Chairs.

First Service Chair to address Conference was Maria McGilly, Rotary Club of Armagh and as District Vocational Service Chair, she advised that this year District was asking all clubs to recognise International Woman's Day by nominating an award recipient and organising an event large or small, strive for the Len Smith Cup award and submit information to the District database.



Next Janet Howard, President Inner Wheel Clubs in Ireland, brought greetings from all Inner Wheel Clubs in District 16.



District Marketing, PR and Communications Chair Dale Orr, Rotary Club of Lisburn, urged all clubs to tell their “Rotary Story” stressing it was crucial for the future expansion of Rotary in Ireland. He highlighted the launch of the new District website and, the exciting new development in PR in Rotary, the launch of Rotary News. A paper to be published every two months (at no cost to Rotary) aimed at the general public. Copies will be sent to Clubs to place in public areas.



Foundation Chair Patricia Lindsay gave a detailed presentation on Foundation joined by RI President’s representative Bob Scott, who spoke about the “End Polio Now” campaign.



Past DG Barney Callaghan gave an informative session on the rules from the Council on Legislation.



ADG Garth Arnold, Rotary Club of Donaghadee, highlighted several community projects but particularly called all members and their friends to “ride a bike” on Father’s Day 2015 and make the Prostate Cancer Charity Bike Ride the largest charity bike ride ever; he pointed out that 250,000 men are currently living with or after prostate cancer. He also urged all clubs to support the Daisy Lodge Playground Project before introducing Gillian Creevy, Chief Executive Cancer Fund for Children.

Gillian thanked Clubs for agreeing to raise funds for the playground and was delighted to say it was finished and ready to be formally opened. She pointed out that they are very proud of it and that it will make a huge difference to the children who stay there from all over Ireland. She hoped that more facilities like Daisy Lodge could be built as they are so needed, as 7 children per week are diagnosed with cancer and for each child there are three to four other family lives are affected.



A lively and amusing presentation from Membership Chair Gerry McElvogue, Rotary Club of Banbridge, had everyone on their feet. Gerry said that we all had to wake up to the challenge of membership. He urged all members to take the time and effort needed to recruit new members and to retain existing members.

He emphasised that it was important to tell everyone we meet about the good work Rotary are doing locally, nationally and internationally and to tell that Rotary is a great organisation and it is well worth joining.

Grainne Bagnall, Youth Service Chair, Rotary Club of Cork Bishopstown, urged clubs to light up young Rotary by engaging with young people highlighting in particular District’s outstanding Youth Leadership Competition. Grainne noted that the Master of Ceremonies Claire Savage was a past winner and was now President Elect of The Rotary Club of Belfast. She also highlighted RIBI’s Young Chef and emphasised the importance of technology, before introducing Bill Liao who promoted Coder Dojo – the provision of a safe space for children to learn the language of computer programming noting that young children take to it like a duck to water.





However Conference hearts were lost to Aoife Heverin, nominated by the Rotary Club of Ballycastle, the 11 year old winner of the RIBI's Youth Writer 2014 (*Intermediate Category*). She captivated all as she impressively read her winning entry. DG Phillip then presented her with certificate and award.



International Service Chair Matt Porter, Rotary Club Dublin North, stressed how Rotary Ireland is making a difference and is changing lives in Africa with deaths per day significantly down. Several delegates reported on visits to Rombo and Ray Jordan, Chief Executive Gorta – Self Help Africa, and David Swettenham, Jole Rider also spoke. Matt concluded by highlighting and stressing the need for support for Project 538.



New friendships were made and old ones renewed at the coffee and lunch breaks and the fabulous social events.



At the City Hall on Friday night, Councillor Nichola Mallon Belfast's Lord Mayor hosted a reception before dinner in the magnificent Great Hall thanks to the generous sponsorship from power generation company Edina. The surprise of the evening was the "the incognito singers" who entertained the enthusiastic crowd.





Conference was illuminated over two days by Master of Ceremonies, Claire Savage, President Elect of the Rotary Club of Belfast, who, with great charm and aplomb, introduced the speakers and the sessions.

Proceedings were expertly kept to time by Sergeant at Arms, Comber Club's President Elect John Dawson.



Closing the Conference DG Phillip said "Firstly to all our external speakers whose contribution to the Conference has been terrific, scientific, historic, captivating, amusing, and with a business perspective – **Thank you.**



To the Rotary Service Chairs for sharing with us the work they are doing with members of Rotary Clubs throughout Ireland – **Thank you.**

To all of our corporate sponsors who have been so generous in their financial support of the Conference – **Thank You.**

Please be sure to return their support where possible.

To the many Rotarians North, South, East and West who have been more than generous in giving of their time, skills, and expertise to make these two days a success – all I had to do was ask - **Thank You.**

To all the members of the Comber club who have been tireless in their support of this Conference. Each one of them has contributed to making this event a truly memorable one – **Thank You**

And finally to you, Rotarians, from across our country, who have once again answered the call to invest your time in the work of Rotary - not just at this Conference, but in your daily activities, as you work ceaselessly together to improve the lives of people around the world.

You may never meet them and they will never know who to thank. So, on their behalf – **Thank You.**

RI President's Representative Bob Scott complimented the great leadership skills of DG Phillip and "this tremendous group of people" noting that the Conference had covered all aspects and, with the launch of Rotary News, Rotary Ireland was answering his challenge "**who knows about you?**"