



# Rotaract Newswire

## Update from the Chairman

Hi everyone,

It has been an amazing month for Rotary and Rotaract, and there is so much still to come before the end of the year.

After the ski trip in March, which you can read about here, it was all about the build up to RIBI Conference, which started the busy Conference season. RIBI (Rotary) Conference was held in Bournemouth on 13 - 15 April, and I travelled down with a few other Rotaractors to take part in all the Conference sessions, attend parties and balls, run a Rotaract stand and make a presentation, oh and attempt to break a world record!

The weekend was great, we had a lot of interest for Rotaract, met some great new people, and the presentation, with my lovely assistant Paul Simon, went down very well. You can read all about the World Record attempt later in this edition. From my perspective down on the beach, it was incredible to see the whole of Bournemouth beach running to get their kites into the air at the same time.

The following weekend, we went up to Alcester, Warks, for the seminar on Rotaract Development for incoming District Chairmen and Rotaract Officers. It was a successful day with a lot of keen, new people with a lot of new ideas for Rotaract. It was particularly good to see several new young people from Scotland who are looking to revive Rotaract there.

April finished with another great Conference, this time my first Conference outside of GB&I, EUCO in Milan. I really enjoyed meeting Rotaractors from all over Europe, and seeing the beautiful city. I'm afraid you'll have to wait till the next issue for the full report on this, and on RGBI Conference in early May.

Claire

### Inside this issue:

Update from the RGBI Chairman	1
RGBI Meeting Dates	1
Deben do Skiing!	2
Ramsbottom Charter Night	3
Record Breakers	5
Meet the Exec	6
Events	6
Have Your Say	6
RGBI 2006/07 Exec	6



### RGBI Council Meeting Dates:

- ◆ *Sunday 10th June 2007 - High Wycombe*

**Use the resources available to you, visit the RGBI website for ideas on club projects, how to increase your membership, upcoming events and news items.**

**[www.rotaract.org.uk](http://www.rotaract.org.uk)**



Rotaract is sponsored by Rotary International



---

## Deben Rotaract Club Do Skiing.....

Members of Deben Rotaract have gone abroad skiing for several years now.

This year, they decided to make it an official Rotaract event, and as whilst they were at it, decided to open it up to everyone in RGBI. In total, 11 people from seven clubs (and seven districts) went over to the French/Italian border for a week of sun filled fun in the snow.

The group featured a good mix of abilities; from "shall I bother using both skis or just the one this time?" (Michelle, of Deben), through to "I've had a few hours on a dry slope" (Matt, of Colchester), right down to "So, these ski things, they go on your feet, right?" (Claire, as in 'RGBI President Claire').

Clearly by design, the week they'd chosen was World Rotaract Week. So they felt they had to put in an entry for the RGBI 'Have Breakfast in an Unusual Place' competition. The reasoning was that 2450m up a French mountain (and for part of it, being sat inside a disused well) would probably count for something. Breakfast consisted of chocolate croissants, oranges and toasting marshmallows on a pair of fire clubs. And thus breakfast contained all the vitamins, minerals and sugar that healthy Rotaractors need.



One of the peculiar things about ski holidays, is that they are remembered as much for off piste activity, as for being on the slopes.

One evening was spent snowmobiling over to Italy for a 9 course meal, and endless wine - with typical Deben logic 'that wearing snowman antenna on our heads' would be a good idea.

The meal ended with everyone setting fire to alcohol-fuelled sugar cubes, and putting them in their mouths alight (more fire... More sugar... a strange pattern emerges!). Another night found everyone partaking in a Silly Games session; Putting on blindfolds, feeding each

other with chopsticks, and competing in a race to shove stuffed marmots down their trousers. (Marmots, for those who don't know, are mythological creatures found on French ski slopes).

One game gave Sylvia (of Harts & Rushmoore) the chance to show her flexibility, while another demonstrated that Nicki (of Earley) should in future avoid tying banana to her waist. On another occasion, there was Russian roulette with chocolate and chili, and the very popular nightly happy hour also made for pleasant non-skiing moments. As well as skiing, there was hill walking (treaded by Ian, of Deben), some snow-blading (super-short skis, enjoyed by Gavin of Bournemouth and Adrian), snowboarding (loved by Mark, of Deben), and various snow-balls (landing on Carrie, of Bromley), and several sessions of bum boarding (crashed by all). These last, if you are unfamiliar with them, are small plastic mats only just big enough to sit on. You walk up the slope at night and slide down with barely a pretence at any control. Creating trains of two, three and even four people is not only implausible, but probably quite silly. Turned out to be rather good fun though.

Aside from a lack of fresh snow (the first time white stuff fell from the sky was when they landed back in England), everyone had a great time, there was some super skiing, some almost brilliant boarding, and some marvellous meals. Many a new friendship was born, and only one question remains... Where to ski next year?

A few choice quotes from the trip...

"Sitting down is quite an attractive proposition" - Carrie  
"Ah, I feel like I'm in a ski resort now; Sitting down at the bar having a drink" - Ala



# Stop the Press...for Banbury 2007

The wild west is coming to Banbury! So saddle up and join the Banbury Crew and all to make it the best ever!

This year we're asking you to join us at high noon on 24th August for a Wild West weekend. The party will kick off on the Friday; Saturday will see a line dancing master class and Sunday will be Sport Sunday with the added bonus of archery for the dead keen.

There will be masses of entertainment (organised or spontaneous!) and a community event to muck in with too.



**Book before the 25th May and pay only £45!**  
**Group bookings of five or more will receive a 10% discount (excluding food)**

**Dates: 24th - 27th August**

**For more details visit [banbury2007.co.uk](http://banbury2007.co.uk) or e-mail [banbury2007@rotaract.org.uk](mailto:banbury2007@rotaract.org.uk)**

*"Banbury was the first big thing I did when I joined Rotaract and I can't even begin to describe how much fun I had - you may not think that camping in a field sounds that exciting but I promise you it will be a weekend you won't forget in a hurry!"* Laura, High Wycombe Rotaract

## Ramsbottom Charter Night

Ramsbottom Rotaract last week celebrated its first year as a club with its charter celebrations at Carmello's Restaurant in Tottington. The club is the first web-based Rotaract club in the country, as in addition to holding its meetings in Ramsbottom during the holidays, it also holds its meetings online during University term times. They have had a very successful first year, most recently holding a quiz night at Greenmount Cricket Club, which raised £67 for Derian House Children's Hospice. The Charter Celebration also saw the outgoing council hand-over to the new one. Incoming President Keira Jenkinson said 'I'm really pleased with how successful we've been, considering that we are a new club, and, due to our online element, are unlike any other club in the country. We've already got loads of things planned for next year!'

For more information on Ramsbottom Rotaract, either from prospective members, or from charities looking for support, e-mail [ramsrotaract@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ramsrotaract@hotmail.co.uk)



(Là R) Incoming President Keira Jenkinson, Mark Skelton, Incoming Vice President Holly Hooker, Jonathon Catley, Anthony Zuk, Melissa Shipley, President Sian Williams



Incoming Secretary Jonathon Catley and Incoming Treasurer Anthony Zuk

---

# Rotaract are Record Breakers!!!!

6 months ago, I was sat in a meeting with the rest of Bournemouth Rotaract going through our agenda. As the meeting was coming to a close and we reached "Any Other Business", I was glad that the meeting hadn't run on too late – I had a game of football to watch!

"Any Other Business?" I offered, whilst gathering up my things. "I have" came the response from the corner of the room where our Rotary District Liaison Officer, Richard Burnett, was sat. I wasn't going to see my football match... From that second, until it turned 4.57pm on Saturday April 14th, Bournemouth Rotaract were set on a World Record Breaking mission – to Fly 1000 kites at the same time on Bournemouth Beach.

The club were told of how the RIBI conference '07 was to be held in Bournemouth, in the Bournemouth International Centre on the sea front. Basically, Rotary were coming to town, and they wanted people to know! We all agreed that this was a massive opportunity to do something that would publicise Rotary, and our own club. We needed something big; something out of the ordinary; something that would capture the imagination of the people of Bournemouth. Ideas of what we could do were flying around the table, when Rich piped up again. "We could break a World Record . . .?"



You don't even want to know some of the records we discussed breaking! From one member who already had quite long nails offering to never cut them again in the name of Rotaract, to pulling a Double Decker bus with our teeth, we finally came up with the idea of flying 1000 kites at the same time on Bournemouth Sea Front. The conference was being held on the sea front. Visually; 1000 kites flying at the same time would be amazing, we would get the message of Rotary and Rotaract to at least 1000 people if we were successful, and it was something that we thought would really interest the general public. At that point, we didn't know how right we were. . . .

In the weeks that followed, we got started in planning this massive event. There were so many things to think about; where were we going to get 1000 kites from? Where were we going to get 1000 people to fly the kites from? Could we take the sea front over? Why is Stuart still growing his nails?

Over the coming months, we met every week, splitting into different committees; Equipment, Sponsorship, PR and Marketing, a Design Team, and a team to plan the day and ensure that we had enough helpers for the event.

Little did we know how much work a record -breaking attempt would be! Our club were meeting every week discussing advertising, the size of kites, the lay out of the beach and well, most importantly of all – wind. It was the starting point of every discussion, whether it was too fast, the wrong direction or just not there at all. It was the one thing that we had no control over, but it had control over us. All we could do was plan contingencies for every potential wind direction and wind speed. We approached the local media to advertise the event and we had club members making their debut on radio and even television. We now have a few celebrities amongst us, doesn't matter that they are Z-list, they are still celebrities!!

The week before the event was almost as hectic for us as Christmas is for Santa Claus. Frantic phone calls about participants, assembling kites, reserving enough space for us on the seafront, posters, tickets, and yes, you guessed it, wind! Sadly the weather had been wonderful in the last week. I don't think anyone has ever wished for wind more than our club did that week.

April 14<sup>th</sup> was a beautiful day, sunny and warm, it was a perfect day to be spent at the beach...but it wasn't windy!!! Some of the club members were up at 5am to sort out last minute details, setting up the site, eating bacon sandwiches and drinking one too many cups of coffee. When it got to the moment of truth, everything did go to plan. The club had succeeded! At 4.57pm on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of April, Bournemouth Seafront's skyline was filled with 927 kites. The record had been broken and now it was ours. There was media everywhere as local radio were broadcasting live, national TV had a live feed, and newspapers wanted to interview us. The feeling was great, congratulations flew around us and people were cheering. This was definitely worth missing countless footie games for.



For the evening, Rich had organised a nice meal for the club to celebrate putting Rotary and Bournemouth Rotaract on the map. We reflected on how well the day had gone, how all our hard work had paid off. We had been successful in everything we set out to do. Not only had we publicised Rotary and Rotaract, we had brought the local community together for a really good day and made 927 people from the local community - Record Breakers!!!

## 927 kites - what a record!

## Meet the Exec.

In keeping with the questions posed to the members of the Exec. Team, this month's edition see's RGBI Secretary PJ 'Phil' Mitchell stepping up to the mark....

### **Why did you join Rotaract?**

Zimbabwean culture is very family based, and because I had a lot of respect for my Grandfather, I wanted to, like him and my father, do work for charity. Also my priests back home were very influential in my life and they were both part of Rotary (as was my grandfather), so I wanted to follow them into Rotary, thus joined Interact back home, and so Rotaract was the next step in my path to Rotary.

### **What do you do when your not Rotaracting?**

You mean I'm supposed to do something else? Just joking, I am a member of St John's Ambulance in my area, I go to church and I am also a Zimbabwean Activist.



### **Which friends character do you most associate with?**

This could be difficult, seeing as I don't really watch Friends. I think it would be Chandler (I think) cause I seem normal (sometimes) but can also be really weird.

### **Tell us on thing we don't know about you?**

I collect flags. My favourite is the municipal flag of Bulawayo (my home city) and some other favourites are Swaziland, Kenya and Albania. Also my first name is Phil, my second name is Mitchell, and I live in the East End of London. Let the jokes begin.

### **Superhero power would you like to have and why?**

I know this is the most common, but it would have to be flight. The idea of being to get where I want to go in a short space of time is cool, as well as the fact that I'd never have to use the tube in summer again. So where can I get the superpower?

RGBI Chairman 2006/07  
Claire Mercer

Email:  
chairman@rotaract.org.uk

Website: www.rotaract.org.uk

*The views and opinions  
expressed in this newsletter do  
not necessarily reflect the views  
of the Exec Team or the Council  
of Rotaract in Great Britain &  
Ireland.*

An Opportunity to...



## ***Have Your Say...***

*If you have any articles or stories that you think other clubs may be interested in please send them to me (chairman@rotaract.org.uk) for the June Edition.*

*Please send your articles and photos to me no later than  
**27th May***

## ***Upcoming Events***

### **District 1060 Ball**

*Saturday 19th May 2007*

### **District 1140 Ball**

*Saturday 19th May 2007*

### **Edinburgh Rotaract 1st Charter Night and 60 minute Ceilidh**

*Saturday 2nd June 2007*

### **High Wycombe Rotaract's 30th Charter Night**

*Saturday 9th June 2007*

### **Halesowen Blaze of Glory Ball**

*Saturday 23rd June 2007*

# RGBI 2006/07 Exec

Feel free to contact any member of the RGBI 2006/07 Exec team if you have any questions, concerns or ideas that can help to keep Rotaract on the move...

Chairman	Claire Mercer (Rushden, 1070)	chairman@rotaract.org.uk
Vice Chairman	Paul Simon (Colchester, 1240)	vicechairman@rotaract.org.uk
Treasurer	Philip Lenton (Langley & Iver, 1090)	treasurer@rotaract.org.uk
Secretary	PJ Mitchell (Ealing, 1130)	secretary@rotaract.org.uk
Publicity	Mark Bennett (Deben, 1080)	publicity@rotaract.org.uk
International	Gillian Ferguson (Dundee, 1010)	international@rotaract.org.uk
Membership & Extension	Claire Tennant (Deben 1080)	membership@rotaract.org.uk
Internet	Jonathan Nish (Ealing, 1130)	internet@rotaract.org.uk
Past Chairman	Lisa Burnett (High Wycombe, 1090)	pastchairman@rotaract.org.uk
RIBI Rotary Liaison	Richard Burnett (Westbourne, 1110)	rotary@rotaract.org.uk