

THE ROTARY CLUB OF GLENROTHES

MISSION

Investing in People

Making a Real Difference to People's Lives
both at Home and Abroad for over Sixty Years

The Origin of Our Club

All Rotary Clubs have a beginning and a reason for coming into existence when they did. The Glenrothes Club is no exception, although the reason for its starting is a little bit different from many others.

Within ten years of the end of the Second World War there was a general and desperate need for more housing everywhere and this was coupled in Eastern Central Fife with the requirement to build many new homes for the influx of coalminers from western Scotland. Those men were soon to be needed to produce coal from the completely new Rothes Coal Mine being sunk near Thornton.

Land, which up till then had been agricultural land of quality, was given over to being the site of a vast amount of fresh housing... so vast and so well-planned that it was the nucleus of one of Scotland's new post-war towns.

Soon domestic dwellings found themselves side by side with shops, banks and surgeries and other necessities of modern living, but alas, the mine and the marshalling yards for the coal trains that were due to give employment and wealth to the area were never fully functional.

The government and local leaders realised that, if the town was to survive and the situation was to be saved, then new and completely fresh manufacturing industry had to be brought into the area. We must thank Mr John MacDonald MBE (of Glenrothes Development Corporation) for seeking out and bringing in industry from world-wide sources. So it was that through hard work and clever thinking by many people, the new town of Glenrothes grew and prospered, while at the same time linking itself with other countries world-wide.

By 1955 the new town had a nucleus of professional and business men who realised they had much in common and that all had the desire to come together to assist others. With the help of the Kirkcaldy Rotary "Mother Club" we formed our new Rotary Club on March 5th 1957, which seemed like doing the right thing at the right time.

The members' judgement on that matter was, in hindsight, the right decision!

So the Club was formed and Mr Tom Gibb was its first President and a man with a great load upon his shoulders. Because the land on which the new town stood had been in the heraldic keeping of the Rothes family for many centuries, those new Rotarians wanted to call their new club.... **"The Rotary Club of Rothes"**. It was quickly realised, however, that there was another existing town in Morayshire already bearing the name "Rothes" and so the Fife club was officially christened....

“The Rotary Club of Rothes-Fife”.

That name held true until 1983 when it was decided by the members to link their club name more firmly with the town of Glenrothes itself. In that year, therefore, the new incoming President, Mr Archibald Lawrie, was handed two badges of office.... one bearing the name of “**Rothes-Fife**” for the last time and the other proudly carrying the new title of

“The Rotary Club of Glenrothes”.

How Our Club Has Bonded with the World

Benefitting Others

While the Rotary Movement as a whole began in the United States of America, its reach as such is so widespread that it is truly an international organisation.... and one that our members are proud to belong to, for it gives us the opportunity to link with and to assist others less fortunate than ourselves in so many foreign parts.

The division of the funding available for disbursement to needy people overseas, as opposed to the needy of our own country, will always require discussion, but The Rotary Club of Glenrothes has never been loathe to step forward and to fund projects in overseas countries. Some of our members have even gone further by following up the giving over of money for a project by making an actual visit to the chosen site. And as I write this, I know that Mr Brian Johnson of our Club has taken it upon himself (mostly at his own expense) to attend an international aid conference in India.

There have been two major drives during the lifetime of our Club to eliminate the curse of **Polio**. In 1985 Rotary International decided to raise \$100m by 2000 to fund the eradication of polio through a campaign called “Polio Plus”. This sum was raised but yet polio was not eliminated and so a second attempt was made in 2016/2017.

By today’s reckoning it is felt that there are only about a dozen existing cases, worldwide. Let there be no mistaking that our Club’s resolve on this matter is stronger than ever!

We backed the “**Mercy Ships**” project heavily after we asked to be sent a special speaker to explain to us more about the charity, and our Club was privileged to be invited to visit and look over one of the charity’s extremely well-equipped ships.

Likewise, it was with enthusiasm that our Club (from 1995 to 1997) blended with other Rotary Clubs in Scotland in the Rotary ‘**Joint School Improvement Project**’ to fund the upgrading of the furnishings and laboratory equipment of six rural schools in the **Kanakapura region of India**. It is to his credit that our President of that period went out to India to oversee the work.

While mentioning the Indian Sub-continent, I must record that not everything works out as we plan, for in this Anniversary Year we had hoped to supply two villages in

Kandy, Sri Lanka with fresh water but regrettably local heavy metal contaminants precluded our ability to give this aid.

Nothing daunted, our Club united with other Fife Clubs in funding the building of a new Health Centre in Burumbika, Uganda.

And as I write this, I note that we have recently been visited by an African delegation from Malawi, one of whom was an expert in how solar-powered pumps could help with water supply.

From year to year we really put our back into things as and when required... for example, when we were called upon to assist in the aftermath of the dreadful tsunami that struck parts of Asia in 2004 and killed 200,000 people. **“Shelter Boxes”** were, at that point, the most sought-after items and we helped to supply a good number of them! Likewise, ‘Aqua Boxes’ and associated filter straws were supplied and our Club has also helped fund Eye Camps.

For many years now, **“Shoe Boxes”** of aid have been financed and put together annually by our Club, many of which have been taken, filled and returned by local schools who have done amazing things in order to assist needier pupils in other parts of the world.

(Further good work by ...and with...the younger Glenrothes community is recorded further on in this archive.)

International Socialising

Purposeful bonding with people from other countries has always been part and parcel of our Club’s ethos and so over the past 60 years, families from our Club have set up **Exchange Visits** with families from, for example, Norway, Finland, Romania, Portugal, Denmark, Canada, the USA as well as various other countries. The Club still has physical mementoes from some of those overseas tours ...like the model **“Conestoga Wagon”** from Hamilton, Ontario which is now passed on as a District 1010 prize.

Exchanging with a Norwegian family from the Kongsvinger Rotary Club in the 1980s meant that one of our Rotarians and his family saw the mid-summer Arctic sun merely touch the horizon at midnight before rising again to give light to the following day. That same Fife family also found the wildlife of those northern climes fascinating.... for who would have thought that snakes four feet long could exist in Lapland or that the Scottish visitors would be kept awake during the night by having a family of bears scratching away at the outside of their log cabin!

The Norwegian hosts, who in turn visited Fife the following year, seemed fascinated not only by the Forth Bridges and our Highland Scenery, as one would expect...but also by our **“hole-in-the-wall”** cash machines which they had not come across before!

On another official Rotary Exchange trip to Finland one of our Rotarians was put up by a fascinating wealthy landownera **“Landsbrokemaister”** who had the unique government job of leasing out the last truly uninhabited territory in Europe to young couples who wanted to start farming or forestry on barren virgin land!

On that same exchange trip, the Helsinki Rotary Club arranged for us to be taken by bus to a theatre where the Finnish National Orchestra played the acclaimed music composed by the great Finnish composer, Jean Sibelius. We felt privileged too on that

occasion to meet the Norwegian Rotarian Admiral who had sailed the country's entire submarine fleet from Norway to the Tay Estuary to save it being seized by the Nazis in 1940. How we all laughed when he told us that he had signed over the entire fleet to a "policeman on a bicycle from Invergowrie" who had been passing when they all surfaced and manoeuvred up the Tay!

Over the years Rotarians from our Club have often acted as hosts to other groups like ten young Italians, curlers from Canada or golfers from various places but the situation concerning the mature student from Romania, Gica Popescu, is worthy of note.

Our Club paid for Gica to come from a rural village in his own country to attend a course at nearby St. Andrews University and he was a guest of several of our Rotarians during that month. The three things that he said stood out most in his memory when he looked back upon his visit gives us a unique insight into what life in a Romanian village must have been like in the 1970s.

Gica loved being taken to any of our local supermarkets so that he could just stand and marvel at the array of food available, its quantity and its variety. Also, he couldn't get used to the fact that when he went to get his hair cut he was not expected to hand over a few eggs or a chicken (as a 'bribe') as well as money for the service. Our visitor also found it difficult to believe that our village streets had tarmac surfaces as his at home were just muddy tracks!

While it was a 'one-off', surely the peak event of our Club relating both nationally and internationally with other Clubs took place in 1983 when the **World Rotary Movement** met in the **Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, England**. What a week of coming-together of nations and costumes and flags and goodwill! What an exchange there was of ideas and ideals! In a similar way in 1997 there was an international meeting in the Glasgow Exhibition Centre and members of our Club who attended came back with glowing reports of that particular function.

Probably the closest ongoing linking we have ever attempted to form was with the **German Rotary Club of Boblingen**. That began in 1971 when our town of Glenrothes in Scotland twinned with the German similar-sized town of Boblingen. For many years there were very friendly sporting activities and visitations between those two populations and a great feeling of closeness and amicable rivalry. Naturally our Rotarian member, Mr Jim Penman, who was the Director of the (then) **Glenrothes Fife Institute of Sports and Recreational Education**, played a major part in this pairing arrangement and lasting friendships have undoubtedly been made.

Sadly, whilst the citizens of Boblingen blended wholeheartedly with those of Glenrothes, the Boblingen Rotary Club did not seem as keen as our Club to form a closer friendship and the two Clubs drifted apart.

Speakers

About one third of our average weekly meeting is taken up by us having a chosen speaker telling us something new and fresh, and hopefully, interesting. Through the collective efforts of members, we have been able to gain the services of a diverse range of speakers

who have contributed to our agenda and who have willingly shared their ideas, expertise and experiences with us.

How Our Club Has Benefitted the United Kingdom Direct Links to RIBI

Being part of RIBI, we naturally take part in virtually all suggested national projects, many of which concern world disasters of some sort where speed and efficiency are of the utmost need.

Rarely, fortunately, do we have any sort of UK national disaster which needs urgent and immediate action, but the dreadful Grenfell Tower Block fire in 2017 that cost more than 70 lives is an exception, for that high-rise apartment block in London was virtually burned down in a few dramatic hours. We swiftly sent financial aid to the needy, but through the control of the local Rotary Club in that area of London.

In 2004 our Club took upon itself to fund the local **“Maggie’s Cancer Care Centre”** in a greater-than-usual financial way and to that end we hosted a charity dance which raised many thousands of pounds for the Centre. This was a similar event to one arranged in 1980 to benefit the **“Fife Rehabilitation Service”**.

On two occasions, Rotarians have been called upon to develop a pleasant floral garden in the grounds of **Glenrothes Hospital**.... once in the late 1980s and again in 2016. Also in the 1980s we co-funded, along with three other Fife Rotary Clubs, £32,000 to purchase eye-laser equipment for a local hospital.

Each year since the late 1970s, we have run our local edition of **“Kids’ Out Day”** on behalf of RIBI. We have always had a good bond with the **Special Schools** of the area and so organising this annual outing for special-needs pupils (some suffering severely) is now done more easily than it once was..... although seeing to the needs of more than a hundred disabled children and their carers on an outing to, say, a country animal park, can never be said to be a simple logistic operation.

On such a day ... and with such numbers and varieties of disabilities the school staff along with carers and Rotarians are joined by senior pupils from three local High Schools. While helping those much less able than themselves, those young men and women see, firsthand, what disability really means for those who suffer daily. This, we believe to be a good practical lesson for our local youth.

Kids Out Day is an outstanding Rotary success story involving dedicated leadership and teamwork which brings an added dimension to the quality of life for those pupils....as well as to their parents and teachers.

The very positive feedback that our Club always receives after those annual outings illustrates to our members that we are not only meeting the needs of our community but that the Glenrothes citizens are very appreciative of our help.

The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Scheme gives a few annually-selected senior High School students a splendid yearly opportunity and as such is supported by our Club and strongly backed by RIBI. Not only do those able students gain from being put under pressure at those residential camps in the ‘great outdoors’ but they later return to our

Club meetings to tell us what a splendid time they all had, not only meeting like-minded students from other areas but also meeting new challenges and gaining the satisfaction of overcoming them.

Several times over the past 60 years our Club has attempted to start an **Interact Club** with younger members of the local community. The continuous nature of such Clubs has proved difficult simply because young people in their late teens soon “spread their wings” and move to different jobs, colleges or universities.

Fortunately however, our members have been able to form reasonably stable Interact Clubs in two High Schools over the past three years. Those have eight to ten members, mostly from the two senior classes and are successfully involved in some very valuable Rotary projects..... collecting goods for the local Foodbank, organising and delivering Christmas hampers for old folk, ‘filling handbags’ for disadvantaged women, collecting used spectacles for recycling and much more. It is easy to see why our Club awarded the longest serving members of Interact with Associate Membership of our Rotary Club for the remainder of their school careers.

We have made beneficial changes to our Club over the years, many at the behest of RIBI and embodying its principles: two of those changes were:-

We assisted the new **Rotary Club of Kinross** to come into existence in 1976 by being their ‘Mother Club’ and guiding them in their early days.

And in **1993 we changed our membership rules so that lady members could enter the Club**. After that point, I’m pleased to record that we have received into our membership a considerable number of the opposite sex, some of whom have become dedicated and hard-working Club Presidents.

Our Club has always shown a readiness to take up RIBI originated suggestions..... For example, we liaise closely with that central organisation regarding the annual **Young Chef Competition**....but details of that can be seen below under “Competitions”.

How Our Club Has Served and Enhanced our Local Community

The Auchmuty Adult Learning Centre

Our Club has always had close links with commerce and manufacturing in the area and we have seen firsthand, the dreadful effects that the closing down of factories can have on the outlook of the local population. People who have worked conscientiously for one employer for many years can suddenly find themselves unemployed through no fault of their own. It is easy to see how applying for further or different employment in some new industry can be a daunting task for both skilled and unskilled people.

Because of that, our Club has linked itself with the Glenrothes Adult Learning Centre so that our members can play their part in helping the Centre Manager and his staff to mentally assist out-of-work people so that they can eventually move back into employment.

Many of our Club members have themselves been in industry, education, retailing, or local and national government and can understand the traumatic effect of losing a job after a lengthy period of full employment. Now it is our turn to help others by rebuilding their confidence until they can face up to the twin challenges of new employment coupled perhaps with a new attitude to modern living.

We do this in several coordinated ways..... by helping each mature student to write a meaningful C.V., by inviting them to take part in ‘mock interview’ situations and by showing them how to relax and give of their best at real interviews when in front of potential employers.

Helping the Younger Generation

Because the Rotarians of our Glenrothes Club are all too aware that the youngsters of today are the adults in control of tomorrow, we spend a good percentage of our time (and money) seeing to their wellbeing. This is done not by pampering them in any way but by including them in various ventures and trying to extend their experiences by example and through competitions of various kinds.

While it is a current fad in some quarters not to subject a young person to anything competitive in case it makes them feel a ‘failure’, members of our Club know for sure that life itself is of a highly competitive nature at times and that youngsters must therefore prepare themselves mentally for both winning and losing.

The Rotary Club of Glenrothes has firmly bonded with our three local High Schools and more than twenty Primary Schools to develop a whole raft of competitions and events which allows all pupils to take part and for the best pupils to show off their talents.

A TYPICAL PROGRAMME OF VARIOUS COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS ORGANISED BY OUR COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Young Chef Competition	Secondary Schools	Annual *
Inter-School Quizzes	Primary and Secondary Schools	Annual
Young Musician	Secondary Schools	Annual
Young Artist	Secondary Schools	Annual
Young Photographer	Primary and Secondary Schools	Annual

* It is worth recording that a student chef put forward by our Club in 2006 was in the UK final of the **RIBI Young Chef Competition** which was shown on BBC Television that year.

ASSISTING OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

Christmas Tea Dance for OAPs by Secondary School Students	Annual
Respite for Fife's Young Carers	Annual
Disability Sports, Fife	Annual
Fife Festival of Music	Annual
Peace Walk Students and Adults	Annual
Mock Interviews for Senior High School Students	Annual
The Men's Shed (A new venture in 2017)	
Awards Evening All recipients of merit gather with Rotary	Annual

NOMINATIONS

Young Citizen of the Year	Annual
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Fundraising for all our Club Projects

It is obvious that any Rotary Club initiatingand continuing to run.... charitable causes of the above nature, needs to raise considerable annual funds in order to further its chosen objectives.

Over the years this large amount of money has been obtained in a whole host of different ways. In the early years this was done, almost totally, by the members themselves organising Club dances and dinners where raffles and the like were carried out but as time moved on, a wider variety of methods came into being ...depending on the attitudes of the period. For example in the 1970s we gained significant funds through holding Antique Fairs, evaluation sessions and auctions, while in the late 1980s two senior Rotarians organised "Motor Shows" and the entry money all went to Rotary good causes. "Car treasure hunts" in those days, carried out both at Club and inter-Club level, gave much pleasure to us all and brought in considerable funds at the same time.

As this is an archive, it is interesting to report that in the early days of our Club the committee meetings formed to organise those charitable projects met, for the most part, not in the comfortable homes of Rotarians as is done today but after-hours in the back rooms and offices of factories, banks, shops and schools.

In more recent years we've raised our funds in some unusual ways: by sponsored "Swimathons" last year for example, and in 2006 in order to aid polio victims, two of our more enterprising Past Presidents, Mr Edgar Shields and Mr Murray Grubb drove a vintage car around Scotland for a week and raised funds for Rotary on the way. Mr Shields was also the main 'driving force' when the Club (with many other organisations in the town) decided to put together a DVD which would be a definitive **Historical Record of the town of Glenrothes**. Because grants and donations were forthcoming from various quarters, the magnificent sum of almost £10,000 was raised!

One of our recent Rotarians founded and now runs the **Glenrothes Heritage Centre**.

We do have one major annual event, however, which has raised more money than most of the others.... and that is our **"Sportsman's Dinner"**. On that well-attended

evening, where the main speaker is often a national sporting celebrity, we can fill our large venue with a great numbers of attendees..... each of whom gives generously and bids for some rather good prizes handed in by donors. An excellent social evening is guaranteed and by the end of it we usually find we have enough money for most of our worthy causes.

As author of this Report, I would be failing in my duty if I did not compliment the Club's current Fundraising Committee for it is their excellent work which enables our Glenrothes Rotarians to assist others and to uphold so well, the principles upon which we were founded.

Obviously, all funds placed in the keeping of the Club have to be recorded accurately and accounted for, and this arduous task has been carried out meticulously year after year by a long-standing member.

How We Celebrated Our 60th Year

It would be remiss of me to let this anniversary pass without saying how our Club celebrated the event.

We are not a Club for large or lavish celebrations and so our President for this special year, Mr Brian Johnson, organised a very pleasant evening dinner in a nearby golf club where we were all delightfully entertained musically by pupils from local schools who were already known to us through linking with the Club in various previous projects.

That evening we were very aware that we had a rather special person with us Mr Ian Chalmers..... 'special' because he had been a member of our Club from the very start when it was founded in 1957..... and even more special because he still attends virtually every one of our lunchtime meetings to this day!

Retiring President Johnson honoured him by handing our fellow Rotarian a bottle of best malt whisky and by asking him to symbolically cut our 60th Anniversary Cake.

There is no doubt about it ... Rotary Year 2016-2017 was indeed a unique year for us all and it will certainly be remembered by each of us for many years to come.

Interpreting this Archive

In preparing this archive, I have highlighted a range of successes and achievements to give the reader a flavour of how our Club has adopted the principles and values of Rotary over the past 60 years.

Inevitably, we have herein selected highlights from a much more comprehensive range of activities and those above are merely a sample of the range and intensity of our work.

Readers should be aware that this archive is merely the tip of our achievement 'iceberg' and that there is much, much more to celebrate!

What of our Future ?

The Rotary Club of Glenrothes is undoubtedly held in high regard by our local community.

Following this year's Club Assembly, the Assistant District Governor recorded:-

“This is a good productive Club Assembly, well attended, with positive energy throughout. The Club has an ambitious but realistic programme of events and activities and will continue to grow and thrive.”

Frequently our Club is described as “punching above our weight” hence we look forward to the future with confidence!

Our mission remains constant because we are dedicated to making that vital difference, whenever and wherever we can, and we know we are delivering.

Archive gathered and written by Rotarian, Archibald A. Lawrie, Past President

February 9th 2018 (On behalf of the 61st President, Mr Lindsay Roy, CBE)

EXPLANATORY APPENDICES

Past Presidents

56-58 T. Gibb	58-59 J. Roger	59-60 A. Whittam
60-61 I. Chalmers	61-62 A. Sterricks	62-63 J. Urquhart
63-64 A. Ramsay	64-65 T. Chisholm	65-66 F. Carter
66-67 A. Clark	67-68 T. Dickson	68-69 J. McNally
69-70 A. Roberts	70-71 G. Butchart	71-72 J. Dargie
72-73 J. Wheeldon	73-74 L. Gordon	74-75 J. Imrie
75-76 G. Bennett	76-77 G. Coleman	77-78 B. McLymont
78-79 A. Yule	79-80 W. Mackintosh	80-81 H. Rothnie
81-82 J. Reich	82-83 R. Mackay	83-84 A. Lawrie
84-85 R. Catignani	85-86 J. Boyd	86-87 A. Forrester
87-88 R. Wood	88-89 T. Davidson	89-90 A. Shedden
90-91 J. Purves	91-92 J. Allison	92-93 A. Strath
93-94 R. Murray	94-95 J. Chalmers	95-96 B. Krishnaswamy
96-97 G. Grainger	97-98 G. Ritchie	98-99 M. Grubb
99-00 W. Shields	00-01 I. Cowie	01-02 J. Galloway
02-03 W. Fletcher	03-04 W. Wishart	04-05 E. Shields
05-06 R. Francey	06-07 J. Boyd	07-08 G. Sampson
08-09 L. Christiansen	09-10 I. Hastie	10-12 W. Roger
12-13 M. Grubb	13-14 T. Thomson	14-15 C. Grist
15-16 W. Roger	16-17 B. Johnson	

Giving Credit where Credit is Due

All archives are, by definition, records of human activity over a period of time which, in the case of The Rotary Club of Glenrothes, has culminated in the successful fulfilment of a series of national and international aims.

None of the above accomplishments over the past sixty years could have been achieved without serious endeavour by countless Rotarians.... but it is impossible to mention them all by name here.

While all our members have undoubtedly given readily of their time and abilities, those listed below have either been Paul Harris Award recipients or Rotarians who have put their all into a single project over an unusually long number of years.

It is only fitting that in a document like this, which will be handed down to posterity, we remember those especially dedicated people.

Rotarians who hold a “Paul Harris” Fellowship

Mr George Bennett, Mr Ian Chalmers, Mr Jim Boyd, Mr Alex Clark, Mr Murray Grubb, Mr Edgar Shields, Mr Tom Davidson, Mr John Reich, Mr Ian Cowie.

Members who have given more than Eight Years of Continuous Service to one specific Rotary Enterprise.

Mr Walter Fletcher	Treasurer
Mr William Wishart	‘Kids Out Day’ Organiser for Special Needs Children
Mrs Wilna Roger	Continuous liaison with local Schools and Clubs
Mr Alan Strath	Attendance Officer for many years
Mr Jim Boyd	100% Attendance over 35 years Organised our “Top of the Form Quiz” annually Has visited more Clubs than any other member Has located more Speakers than any other member
Mr Iain Haywood	Chairman of the Fundraising Committee
Mr Archibald Lawrie	Organiser of the Rotary Young Chef Competition
Mr Geoff Sampson	Photographer and Public Relations Officer
Mrs Tracy Thomson	Organiser of overseas Shoe Boxes
Mr Murray Grubb	Club Welfare Officer
Mr Gerald Cameron	Attendance Officer for many years

Footnote:-

“The Rotary Club of Glenrothes owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Past President Archie Lawrie for his meticulous research and unstinting commitment in compiling this archive – dedication well above and beyond the call of duty!

Thank you Archie for an outstanding piece of work.”

Lindsay A. Roy, CBE
President 2017 - 2018