

Hill Echoes

Bulletin of Rotary Club of Thane Hills

Issue # 5 - November 2022

RI President: Jennifer Jones

Club President: Jayram Mendon

Club Secretary: Samir Limaye

DG: Kailash Jethani

The
Rotary
Foundation

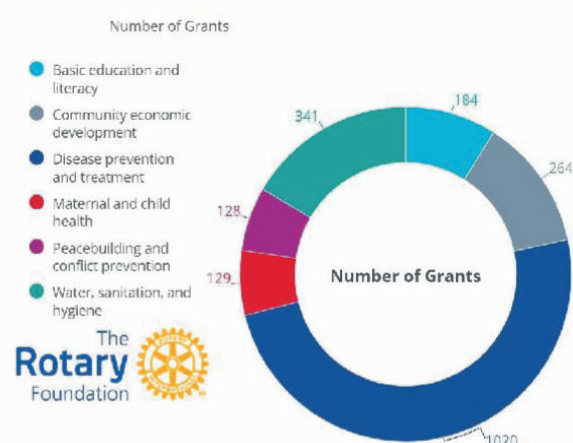
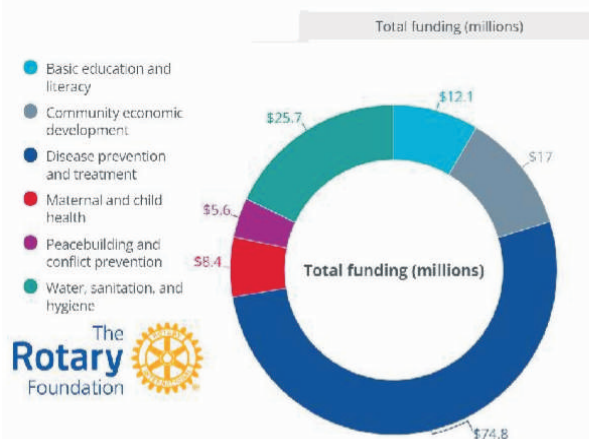


Doing Good In The World



**Since the first donation of \$26.50 in 1917,
the Foundation has received contributions
totalling more than \$1 billion.**

Rotary Foundation & RCTH



November: Rotary Foundation Month



President's Message

Rotary Pranam to all Hillers,

The Month of October is all about Festivals. Two biggest festivals, Dussehra and Deepavali in the span of 20 days are celebrated across the country. In the midst of Festivity, Sunil Gwalani's brainchild BizQuiz has seen overwhelming success. 20 corporates participated in the quiz and RCTH was the winner in true sense. It has brought the business community closer to foundation activities. We distributed wheelchairs to TMC at the hands of honorable Chief Minister Eknath Shinde ji. Rotarian A. S. Kumar made all the arrangements. We have formerly handed our toilet block in Karadi village primary school run by Zilla Parishad. Project was adopted by IPP Varsha Likhite last year, conceptualized by Samir Korde, supported by Nilesh Puranik.

The month of October has also witnessed the following projects:

- Handing over of an old ambulance to NGO Manav Seva Samithi. Thanks to Triumph Blood Bank and Rotarian Ravi Iyer for the noble cause.
- Our Eye Hospital conducted around 8 cataract surgeries so far.
- Dry waste collection team has collected around 700 kgs of dry waste.
- Scholarship team has identified 4 beneficiaries.
- Ambadi Dam may soon become reality. PP Nilesh Likhite has applied for Global Grant.

Our pet project Triumph Autism Center got a lot of traction in the month of October. Biz quiz has generated around 6 lacs for the project.

The most memorable event of October is the grand success of the smile year. Hillers were at the top of the chart with 8 distinguished awards. All three years of pandemic have brought the best out of our leaders. And the future leaders are gearing up for celebration on 4th November.

November is the Rotary Foundation Month. The Rotary Foundation becomes a medium of service. Since its inception, the Foundation has spent more than US\$4 billion on life-changing projects and challenges such as Polio, illiteracy, and malnutrition with sustainable solutions that leave a lasting impact.

November is the month of giving and Hillers will never fall behind when it comes to giving. We will be announcing it on November 4th.

Jayaram Mendon



Editorial

Dear friends, we complete another eventful month with few projects completed as listed by Prez Jayram. Its not small task to complete so many projects in a month. It only shows dedication of our project teams.

We have carried out so many projects in four months we tend to lose count. We need to list the projects and follow the status. We have family event on 3rd that will be interesting to attend and would highlight few projects as well as our performance. I request everyone to attend the meeting, I am sure you will be thrilled to be there.

November is TRF month and the information about the subject in this bulletin comes straight from Rotary International. The Transparency about all the aspects of the fund management is there to see for all. This foundation has been responsible for the Polio eradication drive that Rotary undertook and almost succeeded in removing Polio from the face of earth. When people like Bill Gates trust with over 450 million USD or Rajshree Birla follows with almost 16 million USD, there has to be reputation to match. All the figures show how Indian share is slowly but surely increasing in TRF collection. Our TRF collection has been very good with us topping the district few times and being 2nd position otherwise. Since TRF is the backbone of Rotary performance November is dedicated month for TRF.

In NGO like Rotary, we come together for friendship and encouraged to think about society that has given us everything. Living in society for livelihood and participating in Rotary projects is synergy that benefits everyone, the society and us, Rotarians.

Rajesh Salaskar



BizQuest - A Quiz for a Cause

On October 8, 2022, RCTH created a sort of history for organising the first-of-its-kind business quiz for the corporate world.

The idea for the quiz was mooted by PP Atul Bhide way back in 2014, but it could not be conducted in that year due to certain reasons and the idea just went to the back burner for eight long years. However, when the President Jayaram spoke about raising funds for the year's major project of building the Autism Centre, the idea was revived by making this quiz a fund-raising event and creating awareness about the project.

The work started a couple of months before the event with the core team comprising President Jayaram Mendon, Secretary Samir Limaye, PP Atul Bhide, A S Kumar and Sujit Uchil, and Sunil Gwalani, who was also to be the Quiz Master. The core team was assisted ably for another 10-12 Hillers performing their roles to perfection.

Despite it being the first year, we received encouraging response from the corporate world and had 20 teams from 15 corporate. We received participation from Cipla, Blue Star, Grant Thornton, Fujitsu, Wimco, Sterlite, Toyo Engineering and many more. Besides that, we also had teams from a few Hillers' companies.

The Hillers, in their trademark style, left no stone unturned and ensured that the logistics and presentation of the quiz was absolutely professional. We had LED screens, timers, buzzers and the works to make it a quiz of the best standards.

The quiz day saw the teams arriving by 8:30 a.m. and there was excitement in the air. At sharp 9:30 a.m., the proceedings began in the presence of the Chief Guest DG Kailash Jethani and the Guest of Honour Mr Rane. President Jayaram briefed the gathering about the project and appealed to them to come forward and support the initiative. This was followed by Mr Rane and the DG addressing the gathering.

And then came the moment that all were waiting for. Our own quiz master Sunil Gwalani took over the stage and conducted the quiz with elan and energy that he is known for. There were 4 preliminary heats and the winner of each team proceeded to the finals. Two second-placed teams with the highest scores also moved to the finals. There were in all ten rounds in each heat on various business topics. It was a very engaging and enlightening quiz, prepared by Sunil along with Lata Gwalani and Sagar Gwalani.

The finals was pulsating where the best teams competed with each other to win the first BizQuest title. While the ultimate winner Fujitsu Consulting steam rolled all other teams by a big margin, there was a tough competition for the first runner-up and the second runner-up positions. We had three teams on the same scores and a tie breaker was conducted to get the winners. The first runner-up was Fortress Infracon and the second runner-up was Team Rustic. The winners and runner-up teams were awarded beautiful trophies and gifts at the hands of the Chief Guest Mr R N Bhaskar, a business journalist and author. Mr Bhaskar, in his inimitable style addressed the gathering.

All the participating teams were handed the participation certificates and gift vouchers.

The event gave RCTH very good visibility in the corporate world and helped us connect with many corporate, who in the future will definitely partner with us for our community development projects. A few participating companies have shown keen interest in joining hands with RCTH for the Autism project.

With the success of the event, we are sure we would like to continue conducting this event in the coming years and ensure that the partnership between the development sector and the corporate world benefits the community at large.



BizQuest - A Quiz for a Cause



Inner Wheel Report

The Inner Wheel club activities in October were for the children and Diwali celebrations with an old age home. It was an eventful month with lot of celebration and projects.

In Project Mamta we distributed new clothes for a new born babies for twice in the month of October. We had our Hindi and English classes at Balsnehalay and could see lot of improvement in the students.



Project mid day meal was carried out three times in this month.

Nayana Gala carried out "Sparsh" session at Darshana academy. This is awareness session for children to understand "unsafe touch" to prevent child abuse. Her Sparsh session at Deolali was covered in Dainik Loknama.



We had a great Diwali celebration at Shree Ganesh Vrudhashram with distribution of clothes, diapers, bed sheets, fruits and sweets.



We also inducted 4 new members during our fourth general body meeting.



- Mala Sachdev

Projects

Donation of Ambulance

We donated our Omni ambulance to Manav Seva Samajik Sanstha of Kurla. This will be used in Kurla slums since there is no access for bigger vehicles.



Toilet renovation for school

Secondary school toilets were renovated for Zilla Parishad Secondary School at Bede Kon. This was started last year by IPO Varsha Likhite. There are many such schools in need in rural areas. Girl students tend to leave the education because of want of toilet facilities.



Plastic Waste Collection

In August 2022, RCTH launched the Interschool Plastic waste collection contest in Thane city in collaboration with the N.G.O. Samarth Bharat Vyaspeeth. RCTH representatives visited schools in Thane city and motivated them to enroll in the contest.

About 30 schools signed up but only 16 schools contributed plastic waste in the first cycle.

Most of the head teachers welcomed the idea of holding an Interschool Plastic waste collection contest as it would reduce plastic littering on the road.

The fact that this plastic waste was segregated at the Samarth Bharat Vyaspeeth Centre at Kopri and then sent for recycling to big companies, appealed to the school administrators.

We firmly believed that students are agents of change. We are confident that the Interschool competition would spur students to collect more and more plastic waste, submit the same in their schools and win rich laurels for school. The students will learn the importance of plastic menace through their own contribution. Our faith in the educational institutions reaped rich dividends..The schools responded enthusiastically. The students have been bringing the collected plastic waste to their schools regularly.



To sum up, 16 schools contributed to about 650 kg of plastic waste in a month.

Winners declared for this cycle:
First position: Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhania School, Thane.
Second position: St. John The Baptist High School & Jr College.
Third position: Holy Cross Convent Special School.



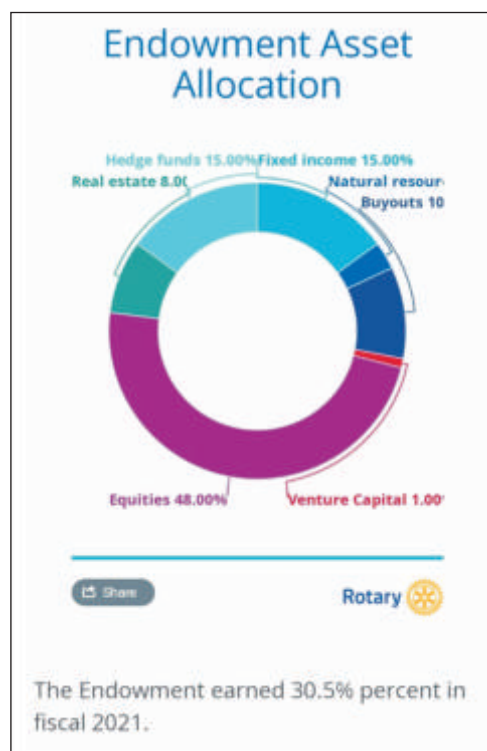
TRF

Investments are critical to the sustainability of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation.



The Office of Investment is responsible for managing Rotary's investments according to policies set by The Rotary Foundation's Trustees and Rotary International's Board of Directors. Through a commitment to stewardship and excellence, we seek to establish a legacy that distinguishes Rotary as a prudent investor, supports Rotary's objectives, and promotes sustainability.

Endowment



The objective of the Endowment is to provide a permanent and sustainable source of funding.

Contributions to the Endowment are invested in perpetuity and investment earnings are used to provide a permanent source of income to support Foundation programs.

The long-term nature of the Endowment dictates a bias

Annual Fund

The Annual Fund is the primary source of funds that support The Rotary Foundation's programs and areas of focus.

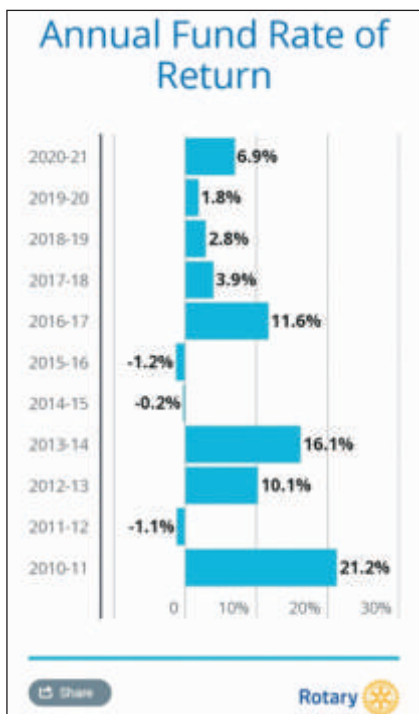
Contributions to the Annual Fund are invested for three years to generate earnings to meet the Foundation's operating expenses.

To achieve the objective of the Annual Fund, the portfolio is invested conservatively with an emphasis on liquidity and income over capital appreciation.

The Annual Fund portfolio is 82% vested in fixed income assets and 18% invested in real estate.

The Annual Fund earned 6.9% in fiscal 2021.

Over the past five years, the Annual Fund generated an average rate of return of 5.4% and grew from \$426 million to \$437 million. The rate of return is the total realized and unrealized capital gains, and interest and dividend income.



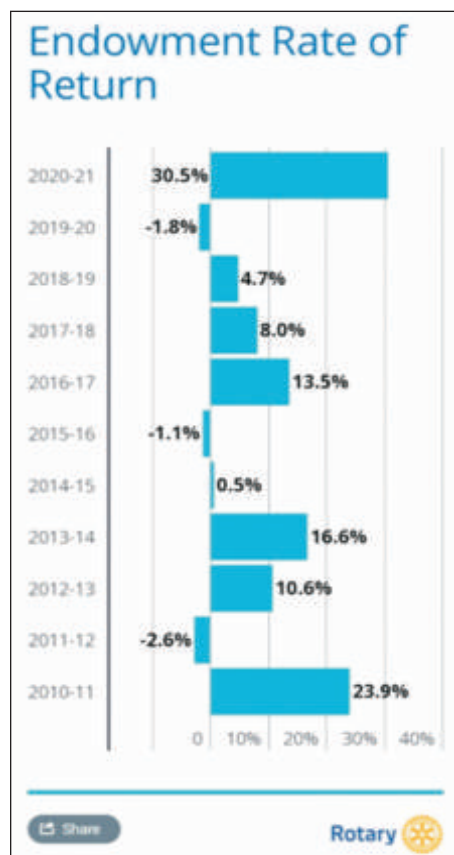
toward equity investments because of the higher return potential in comparison to fixed income investments.

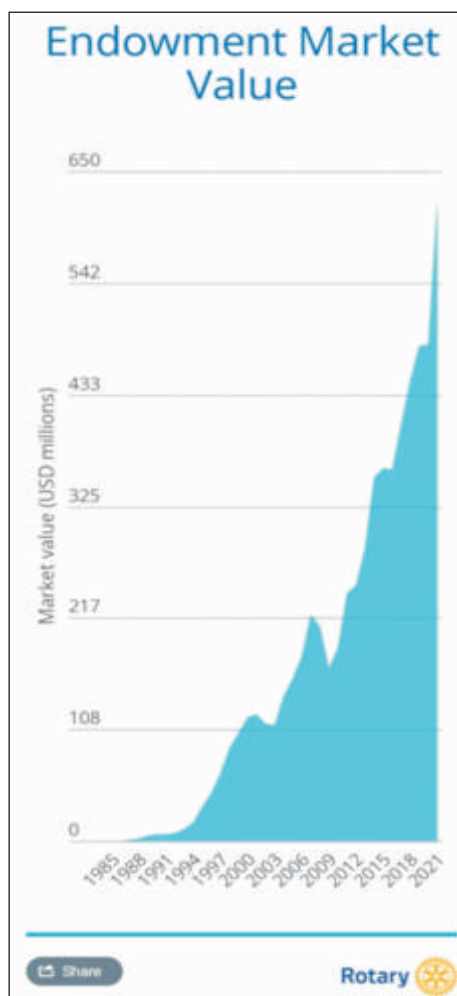
Hence, 85 percent of the Endowment portfolio is targeted for investments in assets expected to produce equity-like returns.

The Endowment should generate a higher rate of return over time compared to the Annual Fund, but with more variability in the returns from year to year.

The Endowment earned 30.5 percent in fiscal 2021.

Over the past five years, the Endowment grew from \$483 million to \$623 million and generated an average annual return of 10.3%. The rate of return is the total realized and unrealized capital gains, and interest and dividend income.





PolioPlus fund

The PolioPlus Fund has always been invested only in fixed-income securities (i.e., bonds) because of the need to protect and preserve the funds contributed toward the effort to end polio. In the past, when the time horizon for both investment and grant-making was longer, the investment portfolio held longer-term bonds that generated higher yields.

The PolioPlus Fund portfolio benefitted from the long cycle of declining interest rates.

Today, the investments are limited to short-term fixed-income securities because

the Foundation is raising and disbursing funds within a short time frame as we get closer to reaching our goal.

The returns over the past few years reflect the low interest rate environment and the lower-risk, short-term nature of the investments.

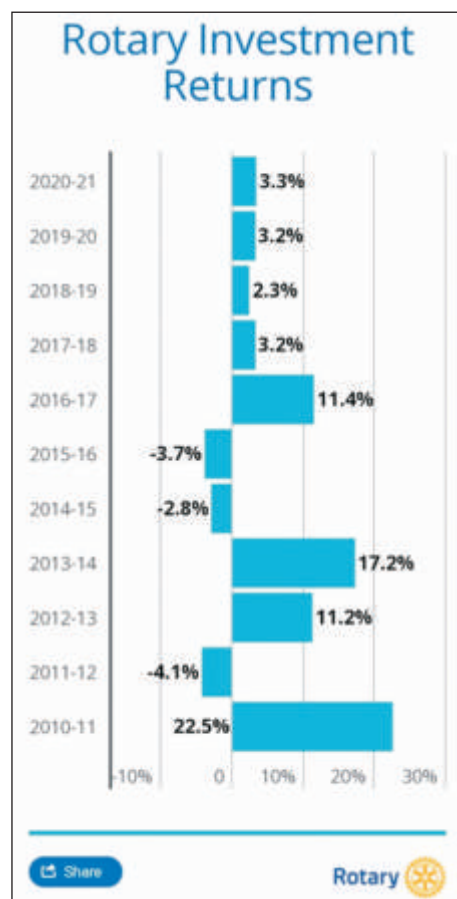
Rotary International

Rotary International holds a portfolio to ensure that Rotary is financially stable and can cover its obligations in unforeseen circumstances.

These funds are invested in a conservative strategy that emphasizes liquidity and income over capital appreciation.

The Rotary International portfolio is 91% invested in fixed income assets and 9% in real estate.

The Rotary International portfolio earned 3.3 percent in fiscal 2021.



Over the past five years, the Rotary International portfolio generated an average rate of return of 4.6%. The rate of return is the total realized and unrealized capital gains, and interest and dividend income.

Learn more:

Rotary Foundation Endowment Email Investments Office

International friendship development through Rotary



PP Deepak from RC Rose Belle from Mauritius came to meet PP Anindya Dasgupta with his family during his visit to Mauritius.

His club in the Covid period jointly did a project with RCTH for getting Oxygen concentrator. This was initiated by our Narendra Rao.



Why I support The Rotary Foundation

I first became acquainted with The Rotary Foundation and its Fellowship for Undergraduate Study Abroad in 1970, as a sophomore at the University of Oklahoma. My faculty adviser suggested I apply for the fellowship. Little did I imagine how much it would change my life. I used the fellowship to study Economics at the University of Melbourne in Australia during the 1971 academic term.

Australia was very far from Oklahoma. There were no cell phones or internet service available for the typical college student. There were one-page aerograms which carried news to and from home that was already over a week old by the time it reached the reader. International telephone calls were few and far between and could quickly deplete a student's discretionary budget.

Fortunately, the family of my Rotarian host and the Fitzroy Rotary Club quickly made me feel at home by welcoming me to the beautiful city of Melbourne. Many Rotarians in Melbourne and other areas graciously invited me to their homes, businesses, and sporting events so that I could get a taste of the culture down under.

Melbourne University was on a trimester system and the breaks between the sessions and occasional weekend trips provided ample time for me to travel and become acquainted with other parts of Australia. I was able to spend time in all major Australian cities except Perth. My host club, Fitzroy, used their contacts to make sure I always had accommodations and a host for my travels during the academic breaks. I was also very fortunate to be able to attend the Rotary International Convention which was held in Sydney in 1971.

Upon my return to the United States, I concluded my undergraduate degree and enrolled in Law School at the University of Oklahoma. A year or so later I received a call from the chief executive of the telephone company in Oklahoma. He was a member of the Oklahoma City Rotary Club and was chair of their Rotary Foundation Committee. He explained that his speaker who was to talk about the Foundation had to cancel due to an emergency. He asked if I could come and talk about my experience in Australia. It was finals week, but I did not have a test that day. So perhaps remembering the dozen Service Above Self talks I had heard at various Australian Rotary clubs, I could not refuse.

After graduating from Law School, I served as the head of the Contracts and Real Property Division of the city attorney's office in Tulsa. After 10 years there, I spent 25 years on the bench as a trial judge for the state.

Shortly after I moved to Tulsa, my father (who had become a Rotarian after I had returned from Australia) met the gentleman who I had helped by agreeing to present a talk. This Rotarian contacted a member of the Tulsa Rotary Club and insisted that he sponsor me as a member. I accepted the invitation and joined on 11 October 1976. Forty-six years later, I am still an active member.

I support the Rotary Foundation because it made my life better. And I will continue to support the Rotary Foundation and my club's foundation because they are working in new and important ways to improve the lives of people around the world.

FAB!

ROTAL'22

Annual Rotary Talent Competition

Singing & Dancing

REGISTRATION DATE EXTENDED TO

10th November 2022

My Rotary Journey

We rise by lifting others..... Robert Ingersoll

As I reflect on my two years as a Rotarian and a Hiller , I think of 100 reasons on why I joined rotary in the first place ,albeit a bit late in my life.

- Could it be “Service Above Self” the guiding principle, living by the Four Way Test ?

OR

- Just the privilege of being associated with our wonderful Hillers whom I really enjoy meeting

OR

- Could it be the feeling of being with professionals who are highly accomplished personnel in their own respective fields ?

OR

- Could it be the fun events and the feeling of being part of a large extended vibrant family?

From my perspective all are valid reasons with some reasons dominating the others.

I joined Rotary club of Thane Hills in 2020 ,during the Pandemic ,after being introduced by my friend and fellow Rotarian MsAsawariPalwankar. Initially I was a bit apprehensive and uneasy as I knew little of our Rotary club and their members.

It took two wonderful Rotarians PP Bijay Yadav and our dear departed friend and Rotarian Sharath Ail , who inducted me into the realm of Rotary with ease putting to rest any doubts that I might have had.My fellow Rotarian friends who are now more like my family were not far behind. They too warmly welcomed me and my family with open hearts , while extending a hand of friendship.

How time flies ? Two years passed in a jiffy and with the pandemic threat over , our Hiller folks rose from hibernation and with great gusto went about carrying out their roles & responsibilities towards Rotary.

Over the last two years, I have witnessed projects to eliminate Polio, the completion of Shenveschool , the special event at Viviana for Autistic kids and a host of other projects and not to forget the many cultural events and ROTAL

All these acts & activities pointed to a vibrant Rotary club with the backing of an international organization, where there is a sincere desire to help those less fortunate while still having some time to have fun in these hectic and uncertain times.

It was so heartening to see the many lives we touched through our club projects and this has kindled in me the “Joy of giving” to those who require the most.

My fellow Rotarians have been like my second family. I have laughed ,danced and sang and also shed a few tears with them for some of the Rotarians like our dear departed Sharath Ail who made a huge impression on meduring my early days in Rotary. The weekly meetings are a thing to look forward to. I never left a Rotary meeting without feeling impacted and learning something new.Overall I had an incredible experience of social interaction and immersion (not to mention great food and parties)

My fellow Hiller Rotarians are like the first responders. Whenever a crisis or need among our members exists they can count on their fellow Rotarians to come to their aid.

The friendships I have made as a Rotarian over the last two years, have strengthen me personally and I have never regretted a single day being a part of Rotary.



On a parting note I personally feel that once we embrace the true spirit of Service Above Self in whatever capacities we can ,we will be emerge as true leaders ,through our collective and sustained efforts to better the lives of those less privileged










I look forward to my contribution to make the world a healthier safer and a cleaner place to live .



Jayant Nagavkar


NOVEMBER

ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH



Rotary Opens
Opportunities

EVERY
ROTARIAN
EVERY
YEAR

The trip... Down Under

Before my trip to NASA in 2014, I started going through articles, pics and videos related to space, planets, satellites, rockets etc. One



particular picture stumped me; that was the image of Great Barrier Reef as seen from the International Space Station. The Australian Great Barrier Reef is the only natural wonder made by living organisms which is visible from space. I have read about the reef as well as taught it as a part of my environmental science lessons. Nevertheless, I did not harbor any illusion of visiting it. This natural wonder stayed put in my books and computer.

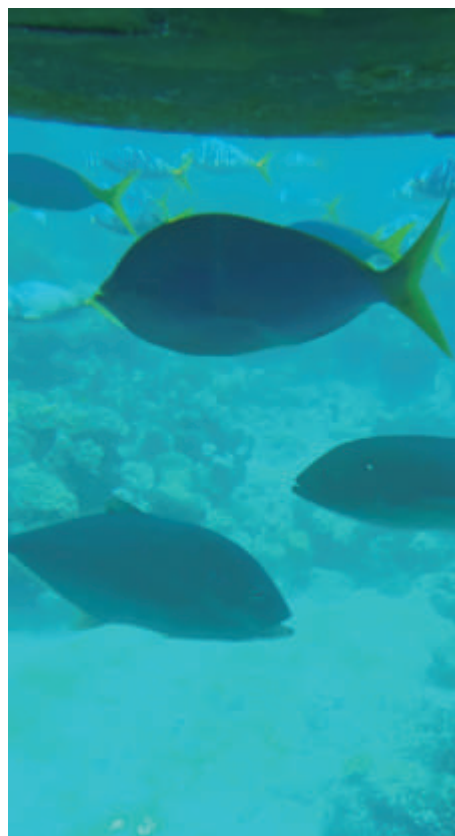
Life keeps throwing surprises all the times; but this one was a bolt out of the blue. My husband got

an opportunity to play the veterans cricket World Cup organized by

the Queensland Cricket Association. As he was preparing to head towards Australia, an idea crept into my mind. This was a golden chance for me to visit Australia and Paddy quickly agreed. We then decided that I would join him after his matches for just a week of sightseeing. After some discussion, we zeroed in on trips within the state of Queensland; the cities Gold Coast and Cairns came into the picture. My heart leaped as we made our plans to visit the picturesque locales of Queensland.



From Brisbane airport, I went to Gold Coast with Paddy; we skipped the metropolitan city and chose to visit places with natural beauty instead. I fell in love with the city of Gold Coast. The weather was extremely pleasant and proved to be a big respite for us from Mumbai's sultry days. The 'Surfer's Paradise beach' is the major attraction in the city which is bustling with activity during weekends. The seafront here is the type which offers succor to agitated minds; on the other hand, it is exoticism personified. It is quiet but not deserted; one can stay for hours there and enjoy the sun submerging into the horizon. The local markets are busy in the evenings and can entice anyone towards window shopping. A visit to the 'sea world' followed the next day; the penguin world and the jellyfish enclosure need a particular mention. The helicopter ride here was very exciting and offered a splendid panoramic view of the sea, beach line, islands, rivers, and the sky scrapers. We could



capture the infinite beauty of this coastal region in just a few minutes. It was a first chopper ride for me and what an unforgettable experience!

A ferry to the Tangeloona island off the coast of the Gold Coast city took us to this enchanting site. The white sandy beach, the hills on the shore, the azure blue waters of the sea and its mystique charm can intoxicate any traveller. A trip on a boat helped us to view sting rays, turtles and star fish; as the boat steered away from the shallow coastal waters into the deeper sea, I could not help

but remember Coleridge's immortal lines – "Water, water everywhere, not a drop to drink". A mesmerizing sunset view and a patient wait to view marine dolphins performing aesthetic acrobatics in the sea painted by the setting Sun completed the day's trip.

From Gold Coast, we flew to Cairns, the gateway to the GBR. The Great Barrier Reef. It was time this sensational marvel flew out of my books and computer into my real world. A dream come true..... I pinched myself. As we sat on the cruise, the delightful journey turned congruous with my eagerness to reach the visually appealing 'Green Island'. With the silver sandy beaches, the verdant hills, the endless Coral Sea surrounding it, the Green Island took my breath away. One look at the sea water from the beach and the beauty of the various shades of blue n green in the sea water amazed me... ultramarine to turquoise to azure to teal...it was one big captivating

picture painted in various alluring shades of green and blue on a huge canvas! I am sure fashion designers must be hugely inspired by these natural colour schemes.

As I snorkeled near the coast, I could view the corals in the shallow waters. But the actual beauty of the reef came to light when we went for the submarine boat ride. The pristine bleached sand and the vast stretches of sea grass on the sea bed became clearly visible to us. After a few minutes, we could see coral reefs of different shapes and sizes. There were small ones but there were huge ones too, some of them resembling small hillocks. To me, the world beneath the sea seemed to be more beautiful than the world above the Earth. We spotted clams, molluscs, varieties of colourful fish and other aquatic creatures. In short, the sea bed was teeming with life! These small creatures called coral polyps must be master engineers for fabricating such robust structures under water. I can say emphatically that humans need to learn lessons in architecture from Nature.

The next two days were more to do with forests and wild life - dear to both of us. In the Daintree rainforest, we posed for a pic with the cutest marsupial - the koala bear. This animal resembles a soft toy; it is so cuddly and loves chewing eucalyptus leaves. The Cassowary



bird was another attraction. We saw two of these huge colourful birds in the wild. We were warned against getting close to the bird as it can swipe us with its sharp claws. We could stroke the Kangaroos and Wallabies; these animals found only in Australia area delight to watch as they jump and hop around with gay abandon. The Daintree is the oldest surviving rainforest in the world. These forests are rich in ferns, palms and figs of different varieties. Our jungle trails helped us in learning about the vegetation in this region. The Cape Tribulation beach is a magnificent crescent shaped beach so named because it was here that the explore Captain Cook's ship got wrecked!



During the Kuranda forest trail, we could see four layers of vegetation as we travelled across the forest in a cable car. The flora is indeed, very dense and rich. The best part of this trip was the intersection time given to us with the Aborigines. Their dances are extremely vigorous and their music lively. We also got an opportunity to hurl the boomerang with of course, useful guidelines from the Aborigines.



Australia is an enchanting land with contrasting landscapes and infinite attractions. The people here exude warmth and are very good conversationalists. The state of Queensland is dotted with glorious beaches and is blessed with tropical rainforests, too. The great Barrier Reef is Queensland's crowning glory!

As we prepared to depart from Australia, we could only marvel at this mega diverse nation. Travelling to this land was a magical experience. We felt rejuvenated and energized after a short but sweet vacation. I secretly whispered to myself...will be back here again!



Radhika Padmanabhan