



BLISS



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1628th Regular Meeting

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We meet every alternate Thursday at THE ANTELOPE, 3, Ho Chi Minh Sarani, Kolkata - 700071 at 8.00 pm.

Rtn Angana Paul
President

Rtn Sabyasachi Roy
Secretary

PP Rtn Chandra Kumar Paul
Treasurer

PP Rtn Subhashis Ghosh
Editor

TOGETHER, WE

DO GOOD

Child Heart Surgery Project

Reminiscing The Past

**ROTARY YEAR 2012-13
LED BY PP-RTN SUJIT DUTT**

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FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

This summer camp is turning out a new generation of environmental stewards

By Amy Hoak

On a summer day, stop by the shores of Clear Lake, a short drive from Peterborough, Ontario, and instead of the beeps and dings of phones you will be greeted by shrieks and laughter. Kids race in kayaks, scoop up water in search of frogs, and make friendship bracelets. When evening comes, they gather around lit candles and sing to the strum of a guitar.

With about 200 acres of land punctuated by forests, wetlands, and waterfront, Camp Kawartha, 30 kilometres north of Peterborough, enthralls children and adults alike.

But it's more than just a beautiful place for kids to spend summers away from screens or a collection of programs that only encourages children to learn outdoors. An even loftier mission is at the heart of Camp Kawartha: to teach young people the importance of caring for the land they live on and foster a new generation of environmental stewards.

It's an important assignment for a place that has deep roots with the Rotary Club of Peterborough, which founded what was to become Camp Kawartha in 1921. With the support of dedicated Rotarians over multiple generations, the camp today serves approximately 16,000 people annually at two locations and through outreach programs.

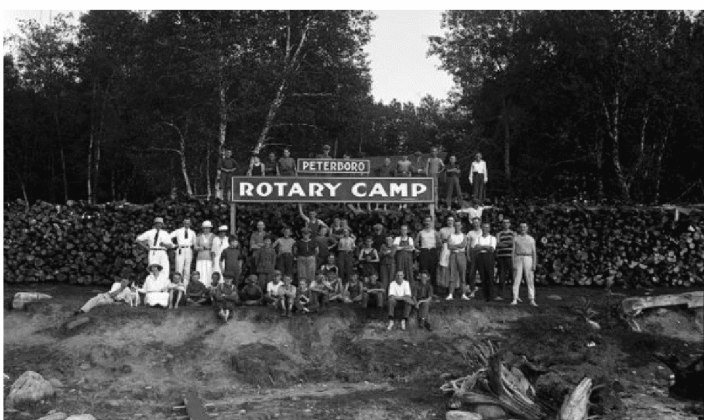
"We know that kids are increasingly more concerned about climate change, because they're the ones that are going to inherit the mess from the generations in front of them," says Peterborough Rotarian Bruce Gravel. "The kids get a strong education while they're staying there of how important the environment is, how important clean air and water are, and how to minimize your footprint."

Of course, that's the camp's modern-day mission. It was founded more than a century ago as the Rotary Boys' Camp. Its aim then was to get underprivileged boys out of the city and spending time in nature, says Gravel, who worked with his wife, Frances, on a book about the history of the Peterborough club for its centennial. With urging from Claude Rogers, a charter member of the club, Rotarians acquired an initial 10 acres on the shore of Clear Lake for a mere \$250 in 1921 and built the camp structures themselves. The first group of campers consisted of 40 boys.

In 1954, the Peterborough YMCA purchased the camp. But the camp hit financial hardships in the 1980s and faced the possibility of being sold to a developer. It may well have been if not for 10 Rotarians who pooled their money to purchase the camp, giving it a second act. It reopened officially as Camp Kawartha Inc. in 1985. "The Camp Kawartha that exists and thrives today is from that solid footing and those 10 Rotarians who made it happen," Gravel says.

After buying the camp, volunteers and local tradespeople fixed it up to welcome campers. "The sleeping cabins were not insulated, and there was no wiring in them," says John Cockburn, the last living member of the group of 10 Rotarians. "We didn't have a dock. We had very few canoes or kayaks." Cockburn, at 85 still a member of the Peterborough club, says that saving the camp was one of the highlights of his 60-plus years as a Rotarian.

Camp Kawartha became a nonprofit, and the Peterborough Rotary club remained committed to supporting it. Today, the camp welcomes all children. "In the last 20 years, it's migrated to helping kids, business leaders, and NGO leaders get an appreciation for the planet we live on," says longtime Rotarian Jim Coyle, who has been involved with Camp Kawartha for years, volunteering on projects as well as fundraising.



In addition to the original location, Camp Kawartha has an Environment Centre, situated next to Trent University's Wildlife Sanctuary in Peterborough. Camp Kawartha programming is offered there year-round, catering to children and educators, with opportunities for corporate team building.

"Even if you have one connection to the land — you have one positive memory or you're able to identify one species of plant or animal — then all of a sudden your relationship is stronger," says teacher on supply Lauren Yandt. She has worked as a volunteer and on staff at the Environment Centre and says she has seen the impact of those experiences on the way she teaches. "You're not going to want to take care of something, or be an advocate for something, that you don't have a connection with."

Proof that the camp's lessons are resonating with young people comes from the many campers who go on to study environmental issues when they're older, with a goal of pursuing conservation-related occupations. Molly McLean, who attended Camp Kawartha for several years, is one of them. She is studying environmental engineering at Dalhousie University in Halifax and says her time at the camp inspired her to do so.

"Spending the summer at Camp Kawartha in the environment, pretty disconnected, I realized that the environment was something that I cared about a lot," says McLean, who is serving as the camp's operations director this summer. For kids today, playing in the lake, learning the names of plants, or turning over rocks to see what lives underneath can be a welcome change. Without the distractions of technology, she says, "you're forced to explore and make connections with the people around you."

Several years ago, Camp Kawartha directed research to explore the idea of learning through outdoor exploration. Its purpose was to understand what childhood experiences make a person care about the environment as an adult, says Jacob Rodenburg, executive director of the camp. The resulting guide, *Pathways to Stewardship & Kinship*, suggests activities for every age, from catching insects to calculating your ecological footprint.

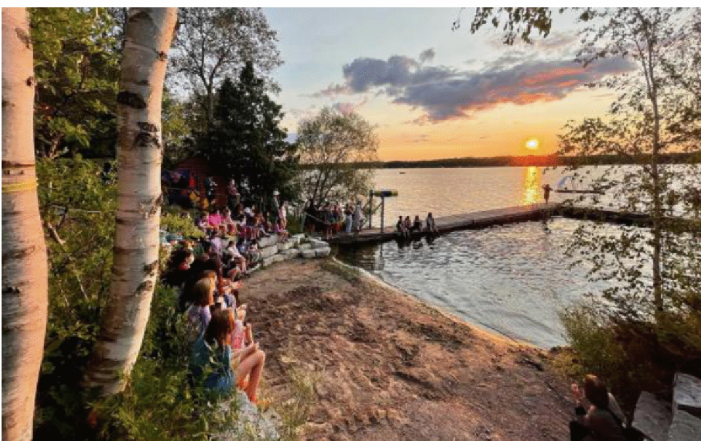
Camp Kawartha also partners with the Canadian Canoe Museum to offer an annual Adventure in Understanding program, a multiday canoe journey for First Nations and non-native 16- to 18-year-olds to travel Trent-Severn Waterway to learn about the land and its people. The program was developed by the Rotary Club of Peterborough Kawartha with the assistance of the Curve Lake First Nation Youth Committee.

The Peterborough Kawartha club, as well as the Rotary Club of Bridgenorth-Ennismore-Lakefield, have helped the Peterborough club support Camp Kawartha over the years, Gravel says. In addition to offering hands-on volunteering, Rotarians fundraise for the camp, and a portion of that money is used to offset registration costs for children from low-income households.

They have also helped fund major structural improvements to the camp, such as the large addition to the main dining hall in 2004 that used eco-friendly straw bale construction — one of the first buildings of its kind in Ontario, Gravel says.

The Peterborough club committed \$100,000 in honour of its centennial toward the building of a new health centre in 2021. That centre, which also uses straw bale construction, is designed to have a negative carbon footprint, absorbing the plant-warming gas instead of emitting it. "It produces more energy than it uses, just like a tree, and the architecture looks like it belongs on the land," Rodenburg says. It is surrounded by features including pollinator and sensory gardens, "where both nature and people can thrive," he says.

It's likely that Claude Rogers couldn't have imagined the Camp Kawartha of today or how local Rotarians would fight to keep it alive. But it's also not often that any kind of organization sustains itself for more than 100 years, Coyle says. "I'm so proud that our Rotary club started it in 1921," he says, "and that it still continues today."



Know your ROTARY

Rotary offers various club types to suit diverse needs and interests. The most common are:

- Traditional Rotary Clubs: Meet regularly in person, focusing on service, connections, and personal growth.
- Satellite Clubs: Sponsored by a traditional club, they have their own meetings and projects but collaborate with the sponsor club.
- E-Clubs: Primarily meet online, ideal for those with busy schedules or who travel frequently.
- Passport Clubs: Allow members flexibility to attend other club meetings while maintaining membership in their own club, suitable for frequent travelers.
- Corporate Clubs: Composed mostly of employees from the same company, focusing on community good.
- Cause-Based Clubs: Members share a passion for a specific cause, dedicating their service efforts to that area.
- Alumni-Based Clubs: Primarily for former Rotary or Rotary Foundation program participants.
- Rotaract Clubs: For young adults (ages 18-30) who focus on service, leadership, and professional development, often sponsored by a Rotary club.

COLS (Club Officers Learning Seminar)

COLS being conducted by AG - Admin Rtn Surojit Kala at the International Club on 17th July, 2025. The learning session was followed by an interactive session between the AG and the members on various aspects of Rotary.



Project Report – Mega Health Check Up Camp

A Mega Health Check Up Camp was set up by RC Calcutta Laban Hrad in association with RC Salt Lake Metropolitan. RC Calcutta North East was the co-host of the project in which 26 Rotary Clubs and 3 Inner Wheel Clubs participated. The program was attended by President Rtn Anagana Paul and Rtns PP Subasish Halder, PP Vivekananda Bhowmick, PP Ramprasad Chattopadhyay, PP Chandra Kumar Paul, Prof Dr Amitava Datta.



Project Report - Helping Hand

On 26th July 2025, Rotary Club of Calcutta North East inaugurated a new Occupational Therapy Instrument facility at SABITRI, an organization that supports differently abled children and women. The equipment will enhance therapy outcomes and strengthen RCCNE's continued collaboration with the centre. Club President Rtn Angana Paul, Secretary Rtn Sabyasachi Roy, and Past President Rtn Ramprasad Chattopadhyay were present at the event, reaffirming the club's commitment to inclusive community health.



Project Report - Mother And Child

In accordance with the month's theme of Mother & Child, Rotary Club of Calcutta North East donated a 43 inch TV in the Haematology Ward of NRS Hospital. We also donated drawing books and colouring pencils to the children and packets of Sattu (to provide wholesome nutrition) and biscuits to the mothers.

PDG Rtn Angsuman Bandopadhyay graced the occasion. District Thalassemia Co-ordinator Rtn Shampa Chowdhury, AG Service Rtn Vivekananda Bhowmick, Rtns Partha Sarathi Sarkar, Nilanjan Mitra, Rina Sinha Roy, and home club members Rtns Sabyasachi Roy, PP Chandra Kumar Paul along with President Angana Paul were present at the project.



ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA NORTH EAST
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING NO. 1627 &
COLS (Club Officers Learning Seminar)

Date : 18th July 2025

Venue : International Club, Kolkata.

Call to Order

President **Rtn Angana Paul** called the meeting to order with the permission of **AG Rtn Surojit Kala**.

The National Anthem was led by **PP Rtn Sujit Dutt**, with all members standing in respect.

President's Address

President Angana Paul welcomed **AG Rtn Surojit Kala** and invited **PP Rtn Chandra Kumar Paul** to formally introduce the AG before the Club members and the Board.

PP Rtn Chandra Kumar Paul gave a brief introduction, highlighting the AG's long and active service in Rotary.

Project Reports and Announcements

President Angana Paul announced the following projects:

- **Blood Donation & Thalassemia Awareness Camp**

RCCNE successfully conducted blood donation camp and Thalassemia awareness was covered through audio support and a brief speech by **PP Rtn Ramprasad Chattopadhyay** at Naity, Bagampur, Hooghly AADAN Youngster Club. The attendees were President Rtn. Angana Paul, Secretary Rtn. Sabyasachi Roy, PP Rtns Chandra Kumar Paul, Prabir Kumar Paul, Ramprasad Chattopadhyay, Rtns. Sukanta Khan, Salil Kumar Chandra, Rathin Dey, and Suven Mukherjee.

- **Project "HELPING HAND"** – RCCNE will support an organization - **SABITRI**, for specially-abled children (Cerebral Palsy) and plans to donate Occupational therapy units. Inauguration date of the project will be announced soon.

- **Mosquito Net Distribution**

RCCNE will participate in a District aided project on distribution of mosquito nets use it in "Fight Against Dengue" project. Final plan to be announced.

- **Donation of LED TV at NRS Hospital, SealDAH**

A LED TV will be donated for the paediatric haematology ward at NRS Hospital. Additionally Food and Drawing materials for the children will also be distributed among the children. Project date is fixed on 29th July 2025. District officials will be invited along with the club members to attend the project.

- **Joint Project : Health Check-up Camp at Basanti Colony** by Rotary Club of Calcutta Labanhrad.

Club will join as a Co-host at a cost Rs. 2,500/-. The project will be held 28th July 2025 at Basanti Colony, Ultadanga. Members are requested to join.

Treasurer's Report

PP Rtn Chandra Kumar Paul, Club Treasurer, reported that the **First Half RI Dues Invoice** of ₹1,55,000/- has been raised and sent to the Club.

COLS (Club Officers Learning Seminar) by AG

President invited AG Rtn Surojit Kala to conduct the COLS session.

- **AG Rtn Surojit Kala** Greeted all members and Board members.

- Appreciated the RCCNE bulletin BLISS for its presentation.

- Praised the Club's reputation in the District, especially for its work on the "MAA" project.

- Acknowledged RCCNE's **40-year legacy**.

- Highlighted the importance of **District Membership Drives** and **Public Image** activities.

- Recognized RCCNE's role in the **Global Grant Project** at Jadavpur University.

- Invited **new member Dr. Amitava Dutta** to share details on the **project's impact on blind students**.

- Emphasized the importance of contribution to the **Rotary Foundation** and encouraged members to contribute to the fund.

- Concluded the meeting with thanks to all members for their active involvement.

Secretarial Business

President called upon Club Secretary **Rtn Sabyasachi Roy** to present the secretarial business.

- Expressed heartfelt thanks to AG on behalf of the Club.

- Confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting.

- Extended greetings to members and their families for their **birthdays and marriage anniversaries**.

- Announced the **next regular meeting** to be held on **31st July 2025**.

Conclusion

With no other business remaining, President **Rtn Angana Paul** formally concluded the meeting and invited all members to join the fellowship.

Sponsorship Acknowledgements

- **BLISS Sponsor** : PP Rtn Biswajit Chowdhury

- **Fellowship & Refreshment** : PP Rtn Vivekananda Bhowmick & Rtn Salil Kumar Chandra.

Minutes Prepared by: Rtn Sabyasachi Roy, Secretary

Birthday Greetings

01 Aug : Rtn Ram Prasad Chattopadhyay
06 Aug : Bipasa, D/o Rtn Tapan Kumar Bakshi
08 Aug : Rtn Chandra Sekhar Ghosh

Wedding Greetings

06 Aug : Rtn Prabir Kumar & Sutapa Paul
13 Aug : Rtn Chandra Sekhar & Nilima Ghosh