

VOL. 133

November, 2025

KHORLO

Bulletin of Rotary Club of Darjeeling

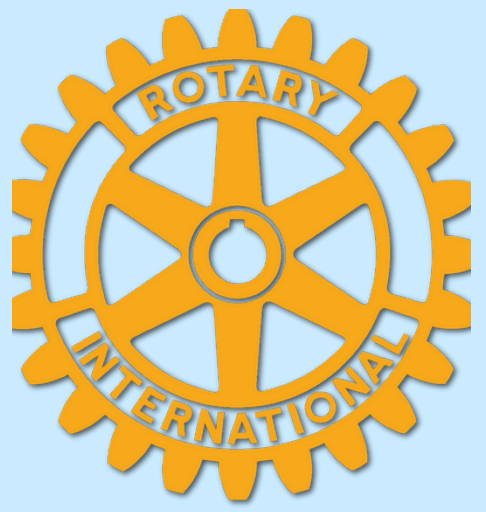


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Rtn. Vivek Chettri

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Club's learning Facilitator: Rtn. Sunirmal Chakravarthi

Foundation Chair: Rtn. Deepak Kr. Sharma

Membership: Rtn. Jorden Norbu

Administration: Rtn. Cheten Norbu Bhutia

Public Image: Rtn. Sankalp Lama

Sgt at Arms: Rtn. Dawa T Bhutia and Rtn. Bikash Singh



Thursday



**We meet on:
Hotel Seven Seventeen.**



5:30p.m.



Khorlo



The Brouhaha around ‘relevance.’

In a talk show that is receiving a lot of flak recently, the host and the guest were divided on the topic of ‘relevance’. Two Bollywood celebrities, one in her fifties and the other in her sixties. The question raised was- with age and the ever evolving environment , how do we stay afloat and relevant? The relentless exposure and terms like “FOMO - fear of missing out” etc in social media, has built such hype around the subject that in a bid to stay ‘relevant’ everyone wants to join the bandwagon of being seen, heard and followed. Perhaps this explains why a sizeable population in a not so young age group, are seen making reels and content , in their homes, at their workplaces, airports, malls, highways and our good old mall road, lest they become irrelevant.

Accomplishment comes from a lot of things- for some it may come from wealth, for some appearance, while for others- their work and their education. But in each case, it is the culmination of one’s efforts and investment that have given them something to be proud of. So does the years that you have put in to build your life no longer be important because you are aging? Is your relevance and importance inversely proportional to the lines and furrows on your face?

In our very own club, I can with conviction say that our senior members are far more relevant , experienced and bring much more dignity to the table. While some of us disappear for months on end from meetings , yours truly being one of the foremost ones , I find it amazing to see that the most committed of Rotarians are the ones who have been in the organisation for decades. Neither have their enthusiasm dimmed nor their committment wavered in the many, many years that they have given to the club. Ever willing to accept and guide , they are the ones who greet you with the brightest of smiles, warmest of handshakes and quell your doubts and queries.

So where does age come into the picture? Your environment shapes you, your education fortifies you and your attitude defines you. Age perhaps is the last thing that should validate your relevance.

And if making reels and dancing around mall road with the primates or otherwise , is being relevant... Thankyou but many of us would happily choose to be irrelevant , i guess.

In this edition, I am extremely pleased to present an article from one of the most prolific writer and orator I know- Rtn Chuck , where he takes us on a trip down Rotary memory lane, a club that has been relevant since 1957 and will always be.

Happy Reading!

In Rotary,

Prativa
Editor



Thursday



We meet on:
Hotel Seven Seventeen.



5:30p.m.

DARJEELING ROTARIANS DOWN MEMORY LANE

By Rtn. Sunirmal Chakravarthi (Chuck)



Since the time I joined Rotary in 1983, it has been my privilege and joy to have met an amazing set of people who have added sunshine, wisdom, happiness and lots of laughter in my life. In this brief essay I will try and share with the current group of fellow-members some of those wonderful Rotarians, who have left an indelible mark on my life and who continue to live on in the recesses of my memory.

First among these was **Bonny Edwards**, a former Municipal Engineer and outstanding businessman. Bonnie Daju, as he was known to all of us was a “gentleman Rotarian,” who literally and figuratively stood tall. Committed to the ideals of Rotary he never allowed anyone of us to forget the Four Way Test in anything we did. Generous to the core of his being, I will always remember him for never having been absent from our Rotaract Club meetings and for the way he groomed us as Rotarians of the future.

I was inducted into Rotary in 1983 under the Presidentship of **Rtn. Dr Tamal Deb**, who was at that time attached to the D&DMA Hospital. Soft spoken, but firm in his ways, Dr Deb championed the anti-tuberculosis programme and initiated a project through which patients suffering from the dreaded disease would be “followed up” to see whether they were taking their medicines regularly to avoid relapse. Sadly he and his wife (also a doctor) left soon after initiating the programme to join the Tata Hospital in Jamshedpur and we were unable to pursue the programme with his intense commitment, and the project died a natural death.

Among the friends of old I miss a lot is **Rtn Austen Plant** (Aus to most of us)- the alu-dum eating Englishman. I still remember, when in days of yore members were allowed to smoke during meetings, his knocking of his smoking pipe at one of the table was often mistaken for the President’s gavel adjourning the meeting (we did not have gongs in those days)! Among the favourite memories I have of him was his stern role as Sergeant-at Arms at the PETS in Mirik, where trainee Presidents used to shiver in fear if they were caught loitering outside the meeting hall or were late for meals. He really had them by the shorts.

Then there were the inimitable gentlemen of old - **Rtns Maurice Banerjee** (with his impeccable English accent), **Shakti Puri-ji** (who treated all visiting District Governors as well-meaning persons with respectful irreverence), **Shree Prakash Khemani-ji**, Shiru daju to all of us - (who often slept through meetings but always woke up in time to make a telling point). Also I remember with great fondness **Rtns Dr PS Sagreiya and Krishna Hari Pradhan** - both getting on in age, but always regular in attending our Health Clinic below Step-Aside in Bhutia Busty. Their dedication was not just motivational but also inspirational to all of us new Rotarians. PDG Ajit Prasad, who stood tall and spoke with eloquence, was the first DG from our Club, and there was much to learn from him on how to hold oneself with dignity. And then there was Rtn. Jhangiani. Rotaractors had been assigned reception duty at the Railway station during the Rotary District Conference being hosted by the Rotary Club of Darjeeling, and Rtn. Jhangiani arrived with all the other outstation delegates, thanked the Rotaractors for their welcome and wondered if we could help him get home - and we thought “Really? Isn’t he a part of the host club?”

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And how can I forget my own teacher in School, who went on to become a friend for life - **Rtn. John West**. Thanks to my years with him in school, I was often asked to “interpret” what he said at meetings because it took our members a long time to get used to to his accent. Having given up Lions to join Rotary, his dedication to Rotary was complete and his knowledge of Rotary’s Manual of Procedure was enviable as was his ability to guzzle beer on any occasion.

Rtn. Chandan Mal Agarwal was, very much like our current Treasurer - nominated for life, and would have continued till this day had he not chosen to migrate to Siliguri. He was particular to the core and would submit quarterly lists of defaulters. There was another member who was habitually absent but one day he suddenly made an unlikely appearance on the day the list was being read out. When his name was called out, all hell broke loose, he challenged the Honourable Treasurer to meet him outside the meeting hall at the Oberoi Mount Everest and stormed out of the room. Quite naturally, there was crackling tension when the meeting ended and so three young Rotarians, in the form of Rtns Udaya, Deepak Hamal and yours truly, were sent out as advance party to check if the irate member really meant business. Well, we stepped out a little tentatively but hurried back to happily report that the gentleman had probably lost patience waiting outside and had gone home! You can well imagine the relief that coursed through the tense tea room where we used to have our meetings. Well, that evening also put an end to the practice of reading the names of defaulters.

I cannot forget **Rtn. Dr. R K Kondilya**, who coined the famous phrase in Rotary, which is often heard even today: “Sorry for the late” he would say as he turned up habitually late towards the end of most meetings. He was always full of life and enjoyed Rotary to the hilt. And that reminds me of another gentleman who thoroughly enjoyed a brief membership in the Club. Rtn. DN Singh was Manager LIC and promised to raise funds for the Club by making sure he would get corporations to insure every lamp post in Darjeeling town, and a percentage of the premium paid would be shared with the Club. I don’t think any of us believed him, but we encouraged him. Unfortunately, before he could put his grandiose fund-raising plan in place he was transferred.

The one person who suffered at his hands was **Rtn. R Narashimhan**, who managed a pan-national Travel Company but we will keep that story for another day. What “Nara” did teach us young Rotarians was that there was no shame in eating with your hands even in a swish place like the Oberois. He was also the gent who coined the term “PB in place of PP”. I would be glad to clarify this quirky comment in person, but it would be impolite to describe it here.

Over the years there have been many more wonderful Rotarians, many of whom led this club with distinction, there have been others who provided endless entertainment and fellowship, but time and space constraints prevent me from carrying on. These are only some of our predecessors on whose shoulders we have built this Club which has been on “Top of the World since 1957.” May we continue to thrive and serve the community through our enduring fellowship and further the legacy that's been handed down to you and me by those who wr paragraph text

NOVEMBER SNAPSHOTS





THE MONTH THAT WAS - NOVEMBER



- **Health Camp-Heart and Breast Screening**-The club in association with Durgapur Mission Hospital and Manipal Cancer Hospital, Raniganj organised this camp on 1st Nov, 2025 at GDNS hall. More than 115 patients benefited from this camp. Specialised diagnostic facilities like ECHO cardiogram could be extended to the patients. ECG and breast cancer screening and awareness was also extended to the attendees of the camp. The camp was a resounding success.
- **Nation Builders Award** - A total of six teachers, from different schools, were felicitated with the Nation Builders Award for their exemplary contributions in the field of education on November 2. The programme was held at Hotel 717, followed by lunch.
- **Senior Citizen's Day**- was observed on the 2nd of November too. The programme was held alongwith the Nation Builder's awards. More than thirty senior citizens participated in the programme and enriched the audience with stories of their experiences. The club also felicitated parents of Rotarians in the super senior category of 80yrs and above, this year. However, since two events were held on the same day, a space crunch was observed. The lack of sound system also contributed to some minor hiccups. A bigger space would have to be kept in mind for the future while organising such events.
- **Menstrual hygiene workshop**- The menstrual hygiene workshop was conducted by Rtns Mamta and Shoy at the Nava Bikash Gram Samaj. The approach taken was different this year. The ladies conducted a session with parents and elders of the families, rather than children to work around traditional mindsets and taboos of menstruation. The workshop was well attended and successful.
- **Children's Day Programme**- Thirty-one children were taken to the zoo on 15th Nov. The children were given a tour, provided with lunch and ice cream. Rtn. Shiro and Rtn. Tashi made arrangements for the execution of the programme.
- **Member Induction**- Colonel Rajnesh Joshi, Principal of HMI, was inducted as an honorary member of the club on 20th Nov 2025.
- **Global Grant** - Rtn. Shoy informed the house that the Rotary Club of Darjeeling had fulfilled the financial commitments for the Global grant. The execution of the projects benefiting from the global grant would soon commence.
- **Mountain Tracker and Dustbin**- The projects are well underway.
- **Others:**
 - The Board of Directors have nominated Rtn Dr. Deepak Kr. Sharma as the District Governor candidate for the year 2028-2029 and Rtn. Cheten as the club president for the year 2028-2029
 - Rtn Rahul to hand over the certificates of appreciation to Rtn. Chuck as a member of the Paul Harris Society and also the Polio Plus Society.
 - A certificate of appreciation was also handed over to Rtn. Dr. Deepak for being the outstanding Zonal Foundation chair.
- **RWM**
 - The club held all its regular meetings this month on the designated days. The regular functioning of the club was discussed, matters that required attention were attended to and the minutes of the meetings were recorded, read out in the proceeding meetings and house acknowledgement taken.
- The club handed over digital portraits in the form of birthday cards to Rtn. Shoy Rtn. Sandeep, Rtn. Rahul and Rtn. Amit.

DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

Rtn. Sankalp Lama- 12th Dec

Rtn. Saom Tshering Namchu - 16th Dec

Rtn. Vikram Rai - 21st Dec

ANNIVERSARIES

Rtn. Dhrubaraj Shresth - 1st Dec

Rtn. Rajesh Chettri - 1st Dec

Rtn. Mamta Chettri - 6th Dec

Rtn. Vivek Chettri. - 6th Dec

November birthday cards

