

Rotary Club of Hout Bay



Bay Breezes

15th. Aug 2013



Meeting last Tuesday

We welcomed back Ralph Tobergte from his India travails if only for this one meeting before he heads back again.

He gave us in illuminating insight into the current socio-economic situation in India with the occasional comparison with our own South Africa. In a nutshell, if you are inclined to think that the poverty in this country is not addressed by the powerful in office, then you should sample the unbelievable level of nepotism and corruption in India and dreadful human suffering there.

Of a population of 1.2 Billion, 600 million Indians live below the poverty line. That is more than the population of Europe and America together!

The GDP is still 5% but there is no industrial capacity at all. There are I.T. specialists and accountants by the bucketload but no engineers.

Ralph kind donated a bottle of Indian red wine to our President and another for the weekly wine raffle which was won AGAIN by Patrick.

Ralph is a regular reader of Bay Breezes and likes to be kept informed of what we are up to. It would be great to have you back full time though Ralph. See what the future brings.

“SPOTS”

President John reminded us of the upcoming mini-conference in Montague on 12th October which he will be attending. Anyone else wish to go? Sign up now.

John also gave us a brief account of the Zumba dancing Princess at the community hall in Imizamu Yethu and the 50 or so local kids dancing with her. This was an inspiration of our Asst. Distr. Gvnr. Gavin Schaschat raising money for his club's charity account.

Don Peters reminded us of the generosity of Old Mutual at our last District Conference where they purchased 100 Nonceba dolls at R100 each.

Don, while attending their offices recently to collected the R10,000, learned from them that they intend to become involved with Rotary on a more inclusive basis, maintaining contact with Nonceba and indicating that they will attend the next District conference in Knysna.

Old Mutual as an entity, has commitment to young people and have also shown interest in the Ashley Award scheme.

No doubt Don will continue discussions with Old Mutual and keep us updated.

Thanks Don. Excellent stuff.

THE ENTERTAINMENT

Butch Liebenberg suggested that those of us who have experience something strange/bizarre/inexplicable or downright X-files material, share it with the rest.

He kicked off with his story of how, on the way to a function, the bow tie he had tossed onto the back seat of the car was never found again. No windows open in the car and no possible explanation as to how it had disappeared by the time he got to his event.

And how during the period he was away on holiday, the numeric combination on his garage door remote managed to change from that on the unit inside the garage thereby rendering it ineffective. No intruders in the garage. No means of getting to it or to the remote to change the settings.

President John Routley told us about a car accident he had in Streatham, UK many years ago. The attending police officer first took a statement from the other driver then went to John for his. The copper took a dim view at first of what he thought was John pulling his leg. It transpired however, that the name of the other driver was also John Routley!

Roy Graham told us how he got the “there's something wrong and you have to guess what it is” routine from Florina years ago. Those were the days when he used to work late at the office. Unfortunately, this also coincided with the late night strip-clubbing antics of another Roy G Graham which were reported [and spotted by Florina] in the local papers.

Bill Kilbride mentioned the sheer coincidence of meeting a Rotarian at the first club he joined here in South Africa who attended the same Church in Chiswick, UK as Bill had visited many years before.

A similar sort of coincidence befell Patrick when I joined Hout Bay Rotary some years ago. Patrick had been given a book [The Debt We Owe] by the Director of the R.A.F. Benevolent fund when he visited to thank them for paying the way for his private education after the loss of his father. Patrick wanted to know if I was related to the Air Commodore Dutton he had met as Director of the fund. That was my father who had written an elegant note in the book for him. Of course, I instantly recognised Dad's handwriting when Patrick showed me the book.

David Heath also mentioned that when he was recently visiting relatives near Caterham in the UK there were various Battle of Britain mementos and photos adorning the walls of the nearby Wattenden Arms public house [close to what used to be Kenley Airfield in the war] some of which featured a young pilot by the name of Dutton. Sure enough, it was him again! Since we also lived nearby when I was a young man, that remained my father's “local” and many of the customers still remembered him. Mind you [and not being unkind to the “old man”] David could have gone into any number of pubs in a 20 mile radius and there would have been customers who remembered him.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree!

I am sure that many of us, if not all, have experienced the bizarre and unexplained. Butch may have started something here. This is an invitation to all and sundry who read BB to come back to me with your own story for inclusion. Please do.

Finally, attendance officer Roy Graham did the numbers, did them again and came up with a 65% attendance.

Another thoroughly enjoyable evening in the company of Rotarians and Rotary friends.

This is quite lengthy Blog which Don passed on to me. It really is a MUST READ.

Rather than just give you the blog address on its own [<http://discopantsblog.com/2013/09/13/on-moving-back-to-south-africa/>] I have cut and pasted the whole article.

I personally find this very interesting as it is such a true and well presented outline of the way many seem to have progressed [or regressed depending upon your opinion] since arriving in South Africa.

In the case of the author, she is a returning South African but the same principle applies. This is why we have to refresh our “humanity” for want of a better word, by visiting with, and working with, people like Ashley and Maria and by visiting places like Nonceba, Little Angels and Starfish Angels.

“When I moved back to South Africa after spending nearly a decade in northern Europe, it was with no small measure of shock that I realized I had forgotten how to live in this country. It wasn't just the small things like not knowing where to buy stuff or at what age kids here go to school – it was a culture shock which took me entirely by surprise, having longed and yearned for home during most of my time away. In retrospect, what happened was that I lost my tough outer shell.

During those years of living in a place where egalitarianism is the norm; where nobody goes hungry and almost everybody had a roof over their heads, the thick skin you need to live in South Africa had grown soft. I couldn't cope with the children begging at the traffic lights and the thin women with babies who knocked on the front door asking for food. Once, in Pick n Pay, I found myself behind a woman with two things in her basket – pilchards and rice. That was obviously all she could afford. Yet, she continued to walk up and down the aisles as if, magically, the contents of her wallet would increase the longer she hung around. I had to leave the shop; I couldn't bear it.

I gave to everyone who asked me. In those early months I parted with vast sums of money. One morning I gave an old man nearly blind with cataracts R500 so that he wouldn't be evicted from the room he shared with his son. I would stand behind people in queues and pay for all their groceries. I was in despair, and utterly outraged by the wealth surrounding the poverty and the collective blindness everyone down here seemed to practice. I shook my head at the people waving the children away from their 4X4s – as no doubt my friends shook their heads at me, wondering how I was ever going to survive living back in this country.

Then, slowly, I became immunized like everybody else. I started being more selective about who I helped; stopped taking every sob story at face value. One day a man whose groceries I was paying for asked me to hang on a second and dashed off for five minutes, coming back with wine, salmon pate and imported crackers. I hired somebody to clean and look after the girls. Before I knew it I was attending meetings with her grandson's school principal; buying stationary for her cousin's child, bankrolling the entire family and – by the way – being taken for the biggest ride. Slowly I started to realise I was behaving like a total imbecile, and if I couldn't come to grips with my white guilt and accept South Africa for what it was I would be better off living in Perth.

Eventually, I stopped giving to people on the street. I guess I got tired of it – the constant, relentless need and the tales of woe coming at me each time I walked out my front door. And the gaping black hole no amount of R5 coins will ever fill. At first I was horrified by this callous version of myself. Now I've made peace with her. There is no other way. Random acts of kindness just don't work down here. You need to get over yourself and understand where you're living. The complexity of our socio-political context is impenetrable to foreigners, and you have to have lived here a long time to get it. It's everything and nothing to do with race and colour. It's the wild west where dog eats dog and survival of the fittest is the ethos you have to practice, even while you're acutely aware of the injustices. It's brutal, and you have no choice but to be as tough as nails.

You make a decision about how you're going to give, whether of your time or your money, and then you draw the line. You pay people well, care about their families and behave like a decent human being, but you institute boundaries and you stick to them. And, paradoxically, South Africa remains the warmest, friendliest (dare I say 'happiest'?) country I've ever been to, and I've been to many. I live in a road with a couple of B&Bs. I'm regularly accosted by tourists who want to tell me how much they love my country and its people – how they've never encountered such warmth and generosity of spirit and that they can't wait to come back. And I have to agree – it's a crazy place, but it's beautiful and vibrant and alive. It buzzes with a kind of energy that makes me feel like I can do anything I choose. And what I probably love most of all is the freedom and the open-endedness of life down here; there is something which makes the human spirit sing. A sort of wonder at being alive which Europe – for all its fabulous old buildings – lacks. For reasons I can't really qualify, it seems to fill people with joy.

So, what I've learnt over the past four years is that I can't save Africa and, frankly, I've started to wonder whether it needs my saving. A while back I got a whatsapp from a friend who receives daily words of wisdom and counsel from a sage by the name of Abraham, and it was a message that challenged the way I see this country. It said, what if there is nothing 'wrong' with South Africa? What if it simply operates by a different set of standards and norms? What if the 'problems' are about us and our perceptions and that there is nothing, in fact, to fix?

Of course I interpret this in my personal paradigm that nothing is random and that this earth realm is the school of hard knocks. We come here for a certain type of experience, and we choose our setting accordingly. No, this doesn't exempt us from doing the right thing and giving whatever we can, but it does serve as a type of reminder not to take too much to heart; to step back a bit and observe rather than taking everything on as a personal battle. Practice love. Be a good human being. But, it is what it is. It was the a-ha moment I'd been needing all along. You don't always have to understand things to love them. Sometimes it's the complexity and the mystery that create the firmest grip on our hearts. We all have different ways of interpreting our truth, but I felt like I 'got' it at last. And what a relief to lay down my panga.”

AND WHILE WE STRUGGLE TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO FULFILL THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK OF FEEDING THE HUNGRY:

As reported in News 24:

NORTHERN Cape premier **Sylvia Lucas** - who has dubbed herself **Queen of the Kalahari** - spent an astonishing **R53,159** on food during her first 10 weeks in office, using her official credit card to indulge her passion for treats from Kentucky Fried Chicken, Nando's, Spur and Steers

The following is a direct transcript of an article Ria sent me and I make no apology for the author's [not Ria's] misunderstanding between "two choices" and "a choice of two".

It is a wonderful story though.

TWO CHOICES

What would you do?...you make the choice.

Don't look for a punch line, there isn't one. Read it anyway.

My question is: Would you have made the same choice?

At a fundraising dinner for a school that serves children with learning disabilities, the father of one of the students delivered a speech that would never be forgotten by all who attended. After extolling the school and its

Dedicated staff, he offered a question:

'When not interfered with by outside influences, everything nature does, is done with perfection.

Yet my son, Shay, cannot learn things as other children do. He cannot understand things as other children do.

Where is the natural order of things in my son?'

The audience was stilled by the query.

The father continued. 'I believe that when a child like Shay, who was mentally and physically disabled comes into the world, an opportunity to realize true human nature presents itself, and it comes in the way other people treat that child.'

Then he told the following story:

Shay and I had walked past a park where some boys Shay knew were playing baseball.

Shay asked, 'Do you think they'll let me play?' I knew that most of the boys would not want someone like Shay on their team, but as a father I also understood that if my son were allowed to play, it would give him a much-needed sense of belonging and some confidence to be accepted by others in spite of his handicaps. I approached one of the boys on the field and asked (not expecting much) if Shay could play. The boy looked around for guidance and said, 'We're losing by six runs and the game is in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team and we'll try to put him in to bat in the ninth inning.'

Shay struggled over to the team's bench and, with a broad smile, put on a team shirt.. I watched with a small tear in my eye and warmth in my heart. The boys saw my joy at my son being accepted.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shay's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three.

In the top of the ninth inning, Shay put on a glove and played in the right field. Even though no hits came his way, he was obviously ecstatic just to be in the game and on the field, grinning from ear to ear as I waved to him from the stands.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Shay's team scored again.

Now, with two outs and the bases loaded, the potential winning run was on base and Shay was scheduled to be next at bat.

At this juncture, do they let Shay bat and give away their chance to win the game?

Surprisingly, Shay was given the bat. Everyone knew that a hit was all but impossible because Shay didn't even know how to hold

the bat properly, much less connect with the ball.

However, as Shay stepped up to the plate, the pitcher, recognizing that the other team was putting winning aside for this moment in Shay's life, moved in a few steps to lob the ball in softly so Shay could at least make contact.

The first pitch came and Shay swung clumsily and missed.

The pitcher again took a few steps forward to toss the ball softly towards Shay.

As the pitch came in, Shay swung at the ball and hit a slow ground ball right back to the pitcher.

The game would now be over.

The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could have easily thrown the ball to the first baseman.

Shay would have been out and that would have been the end of the game.

Instead, the pitcher threw the ball right over the first baseman's head, out of reach of all team mates.

Everyone from the stands and both teams started yelling, 'Shay, run to first!

Run to first!'

Never in his life had Shay ever run that far, but he made it to first base.

He scampered down the baseline, wide-eyed and startled.

Everyone yelled, 'Run to second, run to second!'

Catching his breath, Shay awkwardly ran towards second, gleaming and struggling to make it to the base.

By the time Shay rounded towards second base, the right fielder had the ball. The smallest guy on their team who now had his first chance to be the hero for his team.

He could have thrown the ball to the second-baseman for the tag, but he understood the pitcher's intentions so he, too, intentionally threw the ball high and far over the third-baseman's head.

Shay ran toward third base deliriously as the runners ahead of him circled the bases toward home.

All were screaming, 'Shay, Shay, Shay, all the Way Shay'

Shay reached third base because the opposing shortstop ran to help him by turning him in the direction of third base, and shouted, 'Run to third!

Shay, run to third!'

As Shay rounded third, the boys from both teams, and the spectators, were on their feet screaming, 'Shay, run home! Run home!'

Shay ran to home, stepped on the plate, and was cheered as the hero who hit the grand slam and won the game for his team

'That day', said the father softly with tears now rolling down his face, 'the boys from both teams helped bring a piece of true love and humanity into this world'.

Shay didn't make it to another summer. He died that winter, having never forgotten being the hero and making me so happy, and coming home and seeing his Mother tearfully embrace her little hero of the day!

Do you prefer Sweetener to sugar?

According to the patent, which is available for the public to read online, genetically modified E. coli are cultivated in tanks and fed so that they can defecate the proteins that contain the aspartic acid-phenylalanine amino acid segment used to make aspartame. The proteins are then collected and treated in a process called methylation to produce the sweetener.

The patent was first filed in 1981, but this is the first time it has been made publicly accessible.

- See more at:

- <http://www.metro.us/newyork/news/national/2013/08/27/patent-confirms-aspartame-is-made-from-bacteria-feces/#sthash.SyWH5MDw.dpuf>

I

In from John Glassford at Coolamon

Morning Peter

Thanks for the BB always welcome.

Last time we were in Hout Bay you all kindly gave us a weather rock or champagne cork.

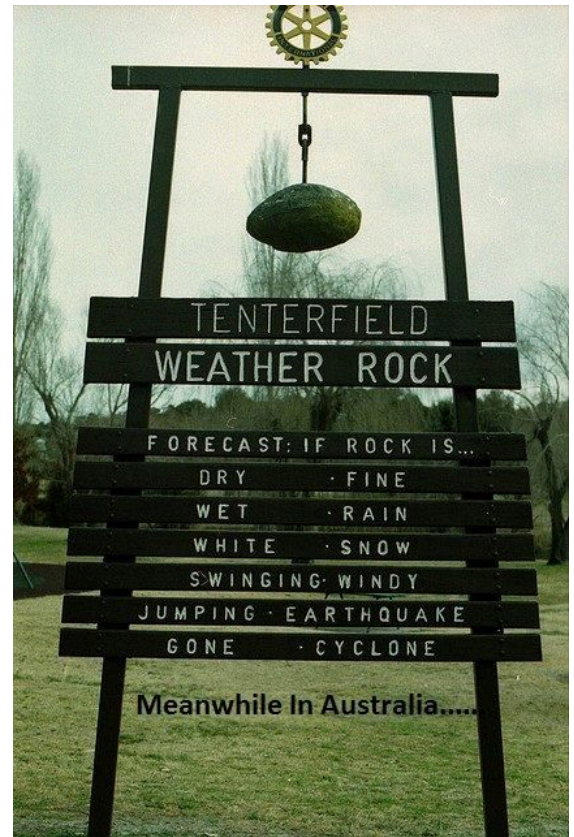
I cannot bring this one with me in 2015 or send it to you so here is a photo of our gift to you at Hout Bay RC.

Tenterfield does get snow, very windy but never heard of them getting earthquakes. Tenterfield is in Northern New South Wales good sheep country for fine wool.

Miss you all and hope all is well in beautiful Hout Bay.

[Don't forget World Rhino Day September 22nd!](#)

JG



From Don Peters

One in four Asian men admit to rape.

Although I said I would not be writing much about rape the latest news published in our own Cape Times on September 11th deserves mentioning, together with the news on the 13th that the Indian rapists will be executed.

About one in ten men in some parts of Asia admitted raping a woman who was not their partner, according to the first large studies of rape and sexual violence. When their wife or girlfriend was included, that figure rose to about a quarter.

It is clear that violence against women is far more widespread in the general population of the world than was thought. There was an additional research comment that children were major risk factors for men's violent behaviour.

The argument for and against capital punishment will be a hot subject again, should there be certain crimes that the penalty will be execution? and what can be done to protect children and women. Perhaps an early start with the education programmes at schools remembering that its not a few years but generations that will be involved before there is a mind set change.

In from Neville Morris:

Peter

Hi Ho

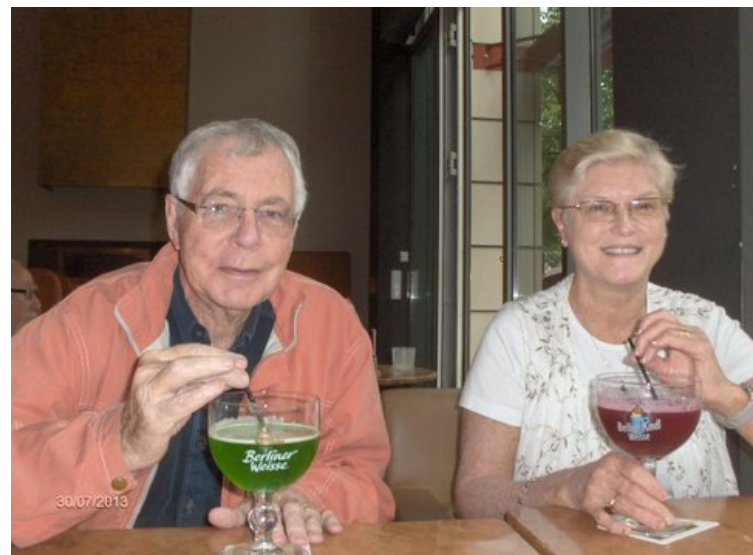
After 3 marvellous weeks in the Baltics (about which more later), we spent some days in Berlin.

Amongst the many activities & sights in this great city, uppermost to many is experiencing a "Berliner Weisse mit Schuß".

As shown in the photo, Joyce & I are enjoying this typical beer, served in a special glass, the Schuß being a shot / dash of either apple syrup (green) or raspberry (red) . . . delicious.

Pros(i)t !

Neville Morris



A paraprodokian sentence consists of two parts where the first is a figure of speech and the second an intriguing variation of the first.

They're used typically for humorous or dramatic effect.

- Never argue with an idiot. He'll drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.
- Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on the list.
- If I agreed with you we'd both be wrong.
- We never really grow up, we only learn how to act in public.
- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?
- Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand at the edge of a pool and throw fish.
- I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
- Women will never be equal to men till they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut and still think they're sexy.
- A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
- You don't need a parachute to skydive, but you do need one to skydive again.
- The voices in my head may be fake, but they have good ideas!
- Hospitality is making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were.
- I scream the same way whether I'm about to be eaten by a shark or seaweed touches my foot.
- Some cause happiness wherever they go, others whenever they go.
- There's a fine line between cuddling and holding someone down so they can't get away.
- You're never too old to learn something stupid.
- Sometimes my mind wanders and other times it goes away completely.
- Never complain about growing old, far too many people have been denied that privilege.
- I live in my own little world, but that's okay, they like me there

HERMAN®

by Jim Unger



"Come on! Tell him you're sorry for stepping on him at the top of the stairs."

HERMAN®

by Jim Unger



"He wasn't always bald. It's acid rain."