



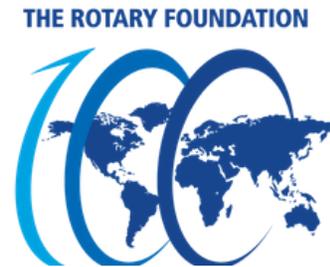
# CONNECTIONS

APRIL 2017

KIMBERLY CARROLL, EDITOR ([kvc Carroll@yahoo.com](mailto:kvc Carroll@yahoo.com))

*See you in Atlanta!*

<http://www.rotaryconvention2017.org/>



ITHF volunteers are still needed to operate the ITHF “*Buth*” at the RI Convention in Atlanta, Georgia in June 2017. This is going to be an extremely busy convention with over 23,000 already registered to attend.

As a volunteer, your role will be to meet and greet Rotarians from around the world and tell them about the benefits of being an ITHF member. You will renew memberships and encourage new members to join. It is also a great opportunity to make new friends, rekindling old friendships, and just have a great time telling other Rotary members what it is like to live and travel the ITHF way.

We need at least three, and preferably four, ITHF members in and around the booth at all times because of the sheer numbers of people who stop by. No experience is necessary as there will be experienced volunteers to guide you and assist you. Ideally, shifts will be from 9-12, 12-3, and 3-6 pm. If you want to volunteer but are only available for a shorter, shift, please confirm this. If you are experienced in staffing the ITHF “*Buth*,” and are willing to take a leadership role, please confirm this.

The House of Friendship and our booth will be open the following days and hours:

**Saturday June 10, 2017 09:00 AM - 18:00 PM**  
**Sunday June 11, 2017 09:00 AM - 18:00 PM**  
**Monday June 12, 2017 09:00 AM - 18:00 PM**  
**Tuesday June 13, 2017 09:00 AM - 18:00 PM**  
**Wednesday June 14, 2017 09:00 – 16:00 pm**

For those of you working the early shift, there is early access to the building from 8:00 am. If you are interested in experiencing this new level of involvement with fellow ITHF members, please contact Sheila Hart at e-mail:

**sheilahart@shaw.ca**

Provide your name and date(s)/time you would like to volunteer, etc. President Sheila will get in touch with you by return email in follow-up, and coordinate a schedule with you. You can also sign-up at the booth during the Convention, however, Sheila would like to complete this scheduling task as soon as possible.

### ***ITHF Members Directory***

A new ITHF Members Directory was recently mailed to members and is available on our website when you log in. It lists the contact details for all active members and runs to over fifty pages. You will find an index of countries, so if you are planning a trip to Botswana, Goa, or Mongolia you can quickly find ITHF members in those countries. On pages 49 to 53 you will find members for whom we don't have details of country or state. Please check your own entry and if the location or contact details are incomplete or out of date, visit our website at [www.ithf.org](http://www.ithf.org) and update your profile. There is a guide to the new profile and how to edit it available when you log in. Feel free to print the directory or use the PDF file with an app or program such as Adobe Acrobat Reader. Most PDF readers have a facility to search PDF files (Ctrl-f), and this can be useful to quickly find contact details of someone you know.

For members attending the RI Convention in Atlanta, please call in at the ITHF booth. If you haven't yet booked a place at the AGM Breakfast please check the details on our website and arrange to be there. Meet the officers and ITHF members from around the world.

***A huge and heartfelt thank you to Roger Siddle for his amazing efforts in compiling this Directory! It will be most helpful to ITHF members as they make new connections and life-long friends around the world!***

***A Match Made in Heaven***  
***Judith Filangeri***

E-Clubs and the International Travel and Hosting Fellowship are natural soulmates. First, a little background on cyber Rotary, aka E-Clubs. In June 2001, Decision 348, the RI Board agreed to support a pilot project establishing cyber Rotary clubs in order to extend Rotary folks who are unable to meet traditional attendance requirements because of extensive travel, or conflicting occupational demands, or physical immobility, or resident beyond reasonable distance from an existing Rotary club. On April 1, 2004, District 5510 in Arizona chartered the Rotary E-Club of Southwest USA (RECSWUSA). RECSWUSA currently has 81 members, scattered from coast to coast in the United States, as well as in Mexico, France, China, India, Germany, Kenya, Nigeria, Japan, and Turkey. RECSWUSA members attend weekly meetings on-line, whenever is most convenient for their schedules.

I joined RECSWUSA because I wanted to stay in Rotary although, now semi-retired, I do a lot of travelling. Like me, many of our members travel for pleasure or for business but still want to stay connected to Rotary, for the Service opportunities and for the Fellowship. Encouraging Fellowship when members are scattered all over the globe is a challenge for an E-Club. Enter ITHF, which is all about Fellowship. I'm a big believer in WIFM, so let's take a quick look at what's in it both for E-Club members and for ITHF members. ITHF membership can be a real boon for E-Club members. As an ITHF member, not only do Fellowship opportunities come knocking on your door (well, initially on your Inbox at least), but you also can combine your travels with an easily accessible network of Rotary connections. Opportunities for Fellowship abound. E-Clubs can be a boon for ITHF members as well. RECSWUSA recently asked me to do a program to introduce ITHF to our members. That program will likely be on line in April. ITHF members might want to visit the RECSWUSA website ([www.recswusa.org](http://www.recswusa.org)) later this month and check it out. And especially for ITHF members who are travelling, an E-Club is a perfect opportunity to do a make-up! See what I mean? ITHF and E-Clubs: a match made in Heaven.

***Russia in Ponte Vedra Beach***  
***Alice & Bill Hill***

Tatiana Vida Past President of Moscow East RC and ITHF member joined us at Pharr's Follies an annual beach front event celebrating the life and memory of George Pharr one our first Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Presidents. Tatiana was a hit and we learned so much about present day Russia, including Murmansk one of Jacksonville's current sister cities. We hope that she will return soon as she will be staying in nearby Palm Coast for a while and will be attending the Atlanta Convention with a group from Russia. See you all in Atlanta! Bill & Alice Hill, Ponte Vedra Beach FL

***ITHF Goes Aloha!  
Bill & Sheila Hart  
Noko & Steve Yoshida***

Sheila Hart & husband Bill enjoyed sharing hopes and dreams for ITHF with Steve Yoshida and Noko, while the Harts were on a shore excursion in Hilo Hawaii, from the Grand Princess. The Harts love renewing acquaintances and making new ones while travelling at sea.

It must have been one of the shortest ITHF visits ever. We picked up Sheila and Bill Hart at the Hilo, Hawaii cruise ship dock and took them to the nearby Hilo Yacht Club for lunch. They were escaping the winter in British Columbia, Canada and came to the right place. The temperature was a balmy 80 degrees F with clear blue skies. We enjoyed lunch and sharing ITHF stories. It seemed like the wink of an eye before it was time to take the Harts back to the ship. We returned to the Yacht club to catch the sunset and watch the cruise ship dipping over the horizon. Aloha, Sheila and Bill, until we meet again.

***G'day from Australia  
Ken Thompson***

Lonely, friendly Aussies ISO fellow ITHF travellers who want to visit the wonderful land Down Under. We live in one of Australia's finest resorts (Port Macquarie), perhaps fellow ITHF people come this way but they may assume that we would be worn out with requests. It is not so. We shall just keep waiting to be discovered. PS: Monique and Humbert were great hosts. Humbert drove down to the seaside each morning for fresh croissants, which I mentioned as having a gourmet affair with; Monique battled with her English language (a battle she is not winning yet) and brought out beautiful home-made preserves. Their home was guest perfect. We would love to do it again but there's still too much world to "do." Thanks and love to Monique & Humbert from Dahlis & Ken.



***Aussie Members  
Ross McConnell***

As one of the Australian District Fellowship Officers (DFO) and a member of the ITHF, I have been investigating Fellowship activity in Australia in depth and regret to say that ITHF activity appears to be almost non-existent. We seem to have very few visiting Rotarians coming to Australia using our members, even those Cruising Rotarians who finish tours in Australia. But wait, there is good news. If we can't get international visitors, Australia is as big as Europe so rather than international travel, let's think about interstate travel and hosting. I would like to invite Australian ITHF members to open their doors to each other, and focus on national travel and hosting with the aim of encouraging travel and interchange between Rotarians and growing the Fellowship. Any members travelling in Australia, jump on the directory and ring a Rotarian to see if they are available to host you and/or show you their town. Find out where the other Aussie members are and look them up. Make sure your DFO mentions the Travelling Rotarians when they visit clubs.

How about some non-hosting activities, just catching up and meeting other Rotarians, whether State or local? Have you caught up with other Fellowship members at your District Conference? Do you know who else in your District has offered to host? Do you leave it up to the visitor to ring around or should we be finding out their needs and pointing them to the most appropriate local member? For that you need to know your fellow members. Why not talk to your DFO and arrange a gathering at your conference or attend a gathering at another conference? Why let the wine drinkers have all the conference parties? Find out who has the one spare bedroom and who has 4, who is near the event venues and who is in the country, who has a beach house and who a boat? Who is a member of another fellowship and which fellowship has the most fun? How do we get more Aussie Rotarians travelling and hosting?

Come and see me at the D9710 Fellowship Stand at the District Conference in Bowral, NSW 6-8/10 where we have the Cricketing Fellowship trying to organize a match against our team, and the Wine Drinkers competing with the Recreational Vehicles for popularity. Feel free to contact me with your thoughts and suggestions and let me know if you would like to be part of a Bowral ITHF dinner on Friday night, the 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Sorry, we won't see you at the Atlanta Conference – hope all goes well.

***ITHF in Nepal  
Madhumita Bishnu***

Six Rotary clubs of RC Mahaboudha, Kathmandu North East, Bagmati Kathmandu, Buddhanilkantha, Bhadgaon, RID 3292 had a joint meeting at Hotel Woodlands on 27th February 2017 at 6:30pm.

The Presidents of 5 clubs were present and DG, DGN, AG's and other District Officials from 3292 were present. Club members of all these 5 clubs along with their families were present too. 6 prospective Rotarians became members of the Rotary clubs on that day. Two Rotarians received their PHF's recognition on that day. The club Presidents called their respective club meeting to order and thereafter the clubs conducted their club businesses. DG was given the platform to address the guests. The ITHF Nepal team made introductions and all were welcomed by MC. From the visiting ITHF Nepal team Membership Chair, Ginger Vaunn from Louisiana shared her impression on the visit and AG Devender Grewal gave her impression on how to attract members. The DG from 3292 was very happy to have the visiting ITHF Nepal team and emphasized that more Rotarians should join the various Fellowships. PDG John from RIBI spoke briefly on ITHF and extended invitations for projects from RID 3292 clubs for various clubs in his District.

The visiting ITHF Nepal teams were facilitated by DG, DGN, AGs and Club Presidents

The meeting was adjourned followed by dinner which was enjoyed by all.

***Adventures in Nepal  
Noko & Steve Yoshida***

We joined the 8-day ITHF Nepal tour, but the high point was to stay with ITHF VP Sita Rupakheti and her family in Kathmandu. We had met Sita at international conventions and on a Rotary medical mission and had become "like her parents." We didn't know if hosting was a possibility when we received an excited phone call from Sita asking if we could extend our stay after the tour. We changed our tickets to allow 4 extra days in Kathmandu. Why were those 4 days special? Noko got sick during the tour and was nursed by Sita's daughter, who brought her back to health. Sita prepared a special dinner with her friends, one of whom said it was the best social of her life! We got to go on a polio NID with Sita's Rotary, Interact and Rotaract club members. Steve administered a polio drop for the first time. We became close to Sita's family.

Best of all, we have invited Sita to Hilo, Hawaii, so we can return the hospitality. ITHF enriches lives.

***ITHF Bhutan Tour February 2017  
Julie & Murray Burdett***



Fifteen ITHF tour members boarded the Drukair flight from the very dusty, noisy and busy city of Kathmandu to Paro, with magnificent views of Mt Everest on the way. Descending into Paro via a narrow valley between the mountains caused some trepidation but we were soon on the ground and welcomed by our guide Nidup. Paro airport, the only international airport in the Kingdom of Bhutan,

was quiet, clean and uncrowded! We were soon in a bus and on our way to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. The population of Bhutan is only 780,000 so the cities are very small. The main industry is agriculture with many small terraced gardens, most of the work being done by hand. All agriculture in Bhutan and now all imports must be organic. They pride themselves on having 72% of their country covered by forests. There is a lot to like about this tiny country. Houses were small in the villages but in Thimphu there were many 3 or 4 story townhouses, featuring magnificent, elaborate timber work. Tourism is increasing but controlled by the government. We were certainly privileged to be there.

As 75 percent of the population of Bhutan is Buddhist it was no surprise our tour included many temples, monasteries, forts (dzongs) and stupas. The largest sitting Buddha in the world is perched on top of a mountain over-looking Thimphu. For our Buddhist friends, especially the Taiwanese, this trip was a real pilgrimage. The road to Punakha was very windy, steep and nerve wracking at times. Clear skies at Dochula Pass provided another opportunity to view the snow-capped Himalayan peaks. The terraced gardens further down the river valley were magnificent. Our visit to Chimmi Lhakhang, the temple of fertility was memorable. The cafes and stores in the village took advantage of the “fertility” theme with names, logos and souvenirs depicting the phallus. The track up to the temple meandered through rice fields and other vegetable crops. Some of us enjoyed a rafting expedition. Despite having trouble getting us to work as a team through the rapids, our guide sang Nepalese folk songs as we floated down the easy parts – reminiscent of the gondoliers in Venice but in an extremely different environment!

Finally, it was time to return to Paro for the most talked about challenge of the tour–Taktshang Monastery (or the Tiger’s Nest), perched on the side of a cliff 900m above the Paro valley. We set off with our walking sticks, up the windy track, down 400 steps, under strings of hundreds of brightly colored prayer flags, up 350 steps and finally we made it! Of course, we were very pleased with our efforts. The views were amazing but a little hazy.

Thanks very much to Nidup for his enthusiastic introduction to his country and its culture and to all the people who made us so welcome. We have very fond memories of Bhutan and our adventure into the Kingdom of Happiness.

**Quebec City  
Ellen Haggerty**



I first met Rotarian Karen Hilchey in August 2016 as the Chair of Rotarians for Hearing RAG ([www.ifrahl.org](http://www.ifrahl.org)) when I requested to speak at her Québec Rotary Club and asked if someone would host me as for a Rotary Visitor



Exchange since I would need to be there for an early breakfast meeting. Karen generously agreed. I introduced Karen to ITHF and she was so impressed, she signed up for a 3-year membership. She invited me to come back for an ITHF Visit for the Québec City Bonhomme Winter Carnival in February 2017, where she was part of the VIP Committee of 40 out of 1200 volunteers. As a certified Quebec City tour guide and a resident of most of her adult life, Karen knew the best times and places to go to the Bonhomme Parade so we only spent 5 minutes waiting in the cold for the parade to start (which is traditionally over an hour late!) She drove right up to the highlight of the Bonhomme Winter Carnival, the Canoe Races across the partially frozen St. Lawrence Seaway and knew when and where to watch up close. Karen also escorted me to Bonhomme's Palace of ice carvings. Her tour guide friend & her husband with roots back to some of the original settlers also treated us to a delicious duck dinner, a French cuisine specialty. Karen also knew an excellent Italian cuisine restaurant I could treat both of us to in Old Québec City.



It was a fun weekend by all...including the snowman!

***North to Alaska!***  
***Mary Ellen & Rick Harned, Louisville KY***

In planning our cruise and land tour of Alaska in the summer of 2016, we decided to reach out to ITHF members in the area. We find meeting Rotarians in places where we travel adds a dimension of human connection that is always fun and enhances our experience. Since our ship would embark from Vancouver, we decided to contact Diana Cabott and Leo Nimsick whom we had met briefly when we traveled with ITHF's pre-convention tour in Portugal a few years ago. They welcomed us to stay with them and arranged to pick us up at the airport and drove us to their lovely home in Surrey, B.C., south of Vancouver. The next day after visiting famous Stanley Park with its totem poles and harbor views, we drove along the scenic route north toward Whistler, stopping at Shannon Falls. Then near Squamish, we rode the new Sea and Sky Gondola to the top where we had splendid views of the mountains and the vista below. During our second day, we were introduced to charming White Rock where we enjoyed walking along the waterfront, and then returned to the city for our departure the next morning. Diana and Leo were gracious hosts and we truly enjoyed getting better acquainted.



Our quite delightful cruise through the Inland Passage and charming ports of call was followed by a tour to Denali National Park, and we actually had a clear view of that famous peak! (We understand only 30 percent of visitors are so lucky due to the usual cloud cover!) Knowing that our tour would end in Anchorage, we again contacted ITHF members there. Tam Agosti-Gisler graciously replied that our arrival would coincide with the Anchorage East Club's weekly meeting. She invited us to join her for the meeting and then she would spend the afternoon driving us to several scenic areas not on the path of most tourists. Of course, we aren't "most tourists," we are the lucky ones who get to see local communities through the lens of our ITHF hosts! Alaska is a place of unparalleled beauty and grandeur, matched only by the unparalleled hospitality of our ITHF friends. (Photos: Diana and Leo as we ascended in gondola at Squamish & Tam, Rick and Mary Ellen overlooking a salmon run)

## ***Addendum - April 2017***

### ***Links to More Stories of New Friendships***

#### ***ITHF in New Zealand with Jan Laurence The Bauers***

Kia Ora! Linda and Jim Bauer smartly used frequent flier miles to visit New Zealand and the tale of their adventures is here: [ITHF in New Zealand](#)

Jan reported that she was excited to host Linda and Jim Bauer from the USA this weekend, they came to New Zealand to escaped the cold winter and we welcomed them to possibly wettest summer the Waikato has had for many years! The planned golf day was a no go due the rain...to make up we went to the movies to see a remake of an iconic film called "Good bye Pork Pie." I was then able to give them a copy of the original film. We then went to a BBQ with friends on a farm out in the Morrinsville area. My new friends met my long-term friends with and exchange of call in and visit if you are in our area. Linda and Jim may be in for a surprise or two as my friends are great travelers. As Linda and Jim are great Geocachers, Sunday I had a breakfast gathering with others who also are keen Geocachers. Thanks Jim as he was turned from Visitor to chef for the morning wonderful pancakes enjoyed by all...even Honey, my cat, who hates visitors and usually hides made Linda and Jim very welcome by sitting on their knees!

***Japan & South Korea with  
The Beamesderfers***

Here is a link to an in-depth report on the recent ITHF travels of Carey Beamesderfer and his wife as they toured Japan and South Korea.

Enjoy the travelogue! [.ITHF Tour to Japan & South Korea](#)