



CONNECTIONS

January 2015

Kimberly Carroll, Editor (kvcarroll@yahoo.com)



There may still be time to book the Taiwan tour, March 12-23, 2015. Many of the accommodations will be provided by host families, giving everyone an opportunity to have a true Rotarian experience:

- ✚ price in US Dollars: \$1,200 per person twin share with single supplement of \$350
- ✚ reservations are first-come, first-served and limited to 30 people (with a 20 person minimum)
- ✚ the booking form can be downloaded here: <https://us-mg6.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=24he7j1kt8ldc> and returned to Ms. Abby Wu, email: rotary.care@msa.hinet.net
- ✚ reservation deadline: Nov. 30, 2014

The tour will include such sites as the Yehliu Geopark, National Palace Museum, LongSun Temple, Taiwan History Museum, a tea farm experience & DIY tea making, Salt Mountain, Buddhism Memorial Museum, Sky Lantern Show, and Chi Shing Beach. Luxury hotels have also been booked for those times when host families are not available.

You may also contact John Steven (johnsteven@bigpond.com) if you would like further information.

Always Room for One More

The RI Convention on Sao Paulo Brazil is quickly approaching. As most know, this year the Convention is starting on a **Saturday**, rather than the customary Sunday start. Even though the deadline has passed for the pre-registration discount this is still time to visit www.Rotary.org to register; the dates are 6 - 9 June, 2015.

While on this subject, even with the January 5th deadline having passed for the guaranteed price there is the possibility of having space available on our ITHF Pre-Convention tour or Brazil. You can see all the information about the tour on our www.ITHF.org site. If you are interested, you should contact John Steven, our ITHF Tour Chair at johnsteven@bigpond.com as soon as possible to see if you can be added to the tour. Don't miss out on this great tour by waiting too long.

ITHF Connection in Taiwan President Medicare Hsu

In the evening of November 27th 2014, a group of Taiwan ITHF members, Edelweiss, Dolly, Sharon together with Medicare, had the honor to welcome Sean Dunne and



his wife Eleanor Swan from Ireland. Sean is one of the three ITHF members in Ireland and also a senior member of Rotary Club of Newbridge District 1160. They have had the experiences of hosting several international ITHF members at home.

Sean was happy to rejoin Eleanor who had resided at the famous Taiwan Yingge Ceramics Museum for three months as a visiting artist. They got the opportunity to taste delicious Taiwanese cuisine, look around beautiful sceneries plus National Palace Museum full of the Chinese dynasty treasures.

The dinner was at the renowned Grand Hotel, a palace style one, with the good conversation to know each other, future cooperation even covering Ireland ABC, Pottery art, the beauty of Taiwan. (2 photos included) They also invite Taiwan ITHF members to visit Ireland as they say in Irish "*Cead Mile Failte*" (a thousand welcomes).



Elvis had Left the House – but the Boldings were at Home
Kevin and Mary O’Flaherty

On arrival in Memphis via Tupelo MS and Nashville TN we were made so welcome by Robert and Ingrid Bolding. They insisted we join their family activities and know their city during our stay - not just visit Graceland and Beale St. We had arrived from Australia ill-prepared for the Arctic Vortex sweeping the Tennessee area – Ingrid graciously found a warm coat for Mary so we could cope with the huge drop in temperature that occurred that week!!

A granddaughter’s 8th birthday party allowed us to meet all their family before Robert showed us around nearby Memphis University precinct and offered welcome drinks in Links at the beautiful Rhodes College.

That night we enjoyed Memphis BBQ – apologies to our Argentinian ITHF friends whose BBQs were so delicious we vowed never to compete when hosting in Australia! Memphis matches the Argentinians!!

On Sunday we were welcomed at all the activities of the 2nd Presbyterian Church of Memphis including an International Focus Group and the Ordination of a Minister – there were 1500 congregation members from newborn to 90 years spread throughout their complex—all involved in community worship activities. Chinese Brunch with the whole family followed—before we were driven to Graceland. The following day Robert gave us his car so we could revisit downtown to spend time at the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel [ed. Note: this motel is the location of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr’s assassination].

Surrounding all these activities Robert and Ingrid were exceptional ITHF hosts sharing their knowledge, wisdom and family experience with strangers who are now friends we hope to host in our home in Kirra.

Close-to-Home Exchanges are Fun and Informative
Sheila Hart, VP, Canada

The relationship between Scott & June Owen of TaTa Creek near Kimberley, British Columbia Canada and Sheila and Bill Hart of Nelson, BC, (which are 3 hours drive apart), started on a Rotary Friendship Exchange to D 4480 Brazil in 2003. Subsequent to that exchange, while hosting an RFE from District D9700 Australia, both couples heard about ITHF and joined. Rotary has brought the world to their homes and they have taken opportunities to explore the world on RFE teams together. One of the items on Sheila's bucket list was to take a tour of the mine at Sparwood, BC. She contacted Owens and they were willing to host the Harts overnight and go with them to Sparwood. Tours are only offered during July and August. Sheila remembers her first trip to the mining area in 1972; there were 2 towns, Natal and Michel and absolutely everything was coated in coal dust – other worldly. About that time, the British Columbia government decided that it was rather disgusting to see such a mess on Hwy 3; subsequently the beautiful planned community of Sparwood was built and the two former communities are no more. However, the mine still exists and continues, as it has for over 100 years to be a major economic generator for the South-Eastern British Columbia area. The tour, by coach, took us to the top of the mountain (of coal) and there we watched humungous trucks and other equipment at work. The history of mining and the current mine operation was recounted by our guide and we were told about major land and wildlife reclamation projects that are ongoing. It was surreal to see little plumes of smoke on the side of the hill; fires caused by spontaneous combustion well below the surface of the mountain.

The trip was complete with a stop at the Bull River Trout Hatchery and an opportunistic visit to see a WWII Mitchell medium bomber that just happened to be at the Cranbrook Airport.

Friends forever as a result of Rotary RFE and ITHF, our travels together will continue.

ITHF Will Go to South Africa in 2015

Sandra Grasso-Boyd

I thought I would let you know what success I have had in making arrangements with ITHF members in South Africa. We are about to embark on a wonderful trip in early February returning in mid-March. The core of the trip was begun with our affiliation with Friendship Forces International: www.thefriendshipforce.org. The Good Hope Club in Capetown are hosting a group of us for 1 week. To make this exciting trip more than just 1 week, we arranged a safari and contacted all 12 ITHF members in South Africa and heard back from five of them with lovely offers to stay with them at various times. We have been corresponding with them for several months now and four of the offers worked out well for us; here is a summary of our itinerary.

- ❖ fly to Capetown, picked up and hosted by RTN Joke Young in Capetown for 4 days
- ❖ hosted by Rtns Bridget and Roger Cathew in Port Elizabeth and other coastal adventures for 9days (their offer!)
- ❖ hosted by Friendship Force for 7 days in Capetown
- ❖ safari in Kruger National Park for 6 nights
- ❖ hosted by Rtns Fred Koone and Peter Dupen from Durban for three nights
- ❖ return through Johannesburg to the USA

These lovely folks will make our stay in South Africa amazing—story and photos to follow!

Jan Lawrence Hosts a Canadian Visitor & is Hosted in Poland

It was a great pleasure to welcome Catharines Goheen from Canada to my home in Hamilton, New Zealand on the 3rd of January. It was a busy few days first a visit to meet my local family. The next day followed by a trip to the world-famous Hamilton Gardens. We then went to see Bridal Falls which were spectacular and followed that visit with fish and chips on the beach front in Raglan. We then rushed home in time to welcome old friends to dinner, enabling an old friend a chance to meet a new friend.

My friend Christine and I made contact with Dominik Sgpeniewski early in July telling of our intention of visiting Warsaw in October. What a pleasant young man-- he gave us all kinds of helpful information prior to our trip. On arrival in Warsaw, he came to our hotel and took us for a drive around the city showing us the not to be missed sights and generally giving us an idea how to get around. We couldn't thank him enough for the insider information; we know he gave up precious family time to spend with us.

The next night was his Rotary meeting which took the form of a vocational tour of the Parliament buildings. We had to take our passports prior to our admission to this most magnificent building. One of the Rotary members gave a talk of the history of the building, Dominik whispered a translation in our ears. Then came the tour—to say we were impressed was an understatement. The Rotary club was a very energetic group of younger people and Dominik told me most of them had been members of Rotaract and some had even brought their toddlers to the meeting which made it a very joyful occasion. We loved Warsaw—thank you!

The Gift of ITHF
Linda Jenkins, RN

What a gift ITHF has been to us. Back in 2008 we sent an email blast to New Zealand saying that we would love to host any Kiwi interested in seeing the San Francisco area but we had just recently gotten an opportunity for my husband to sail a boat back to NZ and were headed that way very soon. We asked if anyone would be interested in possibly hosting us. Within a day, we had more offers than we could take advantage of so off we went. One of our hosts, David & Beverly Garland of Tauranga not only very graciously and ambitiously hosted us they also introduced us to another Rotarian who we later have spent months with on their sail boat both off the coast of Borneo as well as on another trip off the coast of New Zealand. David & Beverly Garland have visited us, we visited them again, worshiped on Christmas eve together on another trip to New Zealand and now we are set to pick them up at the San Francisco airport for a few hours before they board their plane to go back home.

We have enjoyed the holidays as we hear from our Kiwi friends that hosted us as well as those who have come to visit us. We have seen some in their new

retirement facilities, heard of the sad news of a family member as well as of the joyous success of other family members. We have become more than just casual friends all thanks to a start with ITHF.

Travels Down Under
Vivian Finlay and Clyde Boyer

We arrived in Sydney, Australia from Alaska and had the privilege of being hosted by Barry and Elizabeth Philps. As you know, Barry was President of ITHF a couple of years ago. They hosted us during our "jet lag" days, and took us on a wonderful Sydney harbor cruise. They also gave us some recommendations about further travel in Australia and Sydney. [Photo: on the Sydney Harbour cruise]



It was a wonderful connection!

Céad Míle Fáilte = One Thousand Welcomes!
Don & Annette Schiller

When you visit Ireland you will be welcomed...one thousand times over! During our October 2014 eighteen days in Ireland which included a fantastic 14 day Coach Tour we had some wonderful experiences with Irish Rotarians.

"Sightseeing Sean Style" was an ITHF connection planned in advance. Sean Dunne, Past President of the Rotary Club of Newbridge provided us a superior day in Kildare County. We visited the Newbridge Silverware Visitor Centre complete with factory tour and shopping. Russborough House described as a stunning Palladian Mansion which has been noted as "the most beautiful house in Ireland". Sean's wife, Eleanor, a ceramic artist has her studio located in the craft area which originally was the stables for the

house. Then, on to Glendalough known for its monastic settlement features an early Medieval stone tower of a type found mainly in Ireland. The exact purpose of these towers is unknown but they may have been bell towers, lookouts or places of refuge.

To top off our *"Sightseeing Sean Style,"* he took us to his beautiful home which contains many beautiful items made by Eleanor. Later we had a wonderful dinner together in a local Pub after which he returned us to our hotel in Dublin.



"Tag ! You Are It! A Rotarian!"

You never know when you will make a Rotary connection but it happened at Malahide Castle near Dublin. Don was shopping for a new cap and found a very nice one. He asked the store permission to wear it while shopping for other items to make sure it was comfortable. A stranger, came up to Don and said, "do you know you have a tag hanging from your cap?" Chatting followed and recognition of Don's Rotary pin led to Don, Annette, and Gerry & Susan McInerney of the Rotary Club of Dublin Fingal having a great lunch at Malahide Castle. This was a surprise encounter not yet an ITHF connection. [Photos: Sean, Don, & Annette and Don, Annette, Gerry & Susan]

"Dingle Double The Fun!" We met Annette Cremin, Secretary of the Rotary Club of Dingle, Ireland and club President Kathy O'Connor for another great day of fun and touring. Don was surrounded by two Annette's...double the fun! We visited two local pottery shops. One a local artist Sinead Lough who warmly welcomed us into her cozy pottery studio. The Louis Mulcahy Pottery factory and store has some beautifully crafted fine porcelain and robust stoneware. After tea and pastry then we all visited areas previously inhabited by monks with an interesting bee hive and other items of history.

"Kick The Wall." When in Galway, walk the walk along the promenade and at the end, Kick the Wall. There is also a slot where you can make a donation for local community projects of the Salthill Rotary Club. Rotarian Fintan Monahan, a Salthill Rotarian met us at our Galway hotel and presented us an outstanding verbal tour of the area.

One Thousand Welcomes, Irish warmth, caring, and friendliness made this a wonderful visit to Ireland. Rotarians are special and we enjoyed every moment learning about their country and enjoying their hospitality. We stirred up interest in ITHF and hopefully there will be some new ITHF members from Ireland in the near future.

Nominations Needed to Fill VP Vacancies

As we enter into a new calendar year, ITHF has several Vice President vacancies to fill. VPs are asked to represent and promote ITHF in their areas by stimulating the formation of local, district and/or regional ITHF social groups and their activities. These groups are comprised of members and partners in relatively close groupings who come together to share ITHF fellowship. They generate ideas and enthusiasm for the ITHF concept, recruit new members, publicize the attractions of their areas, and develop friendship exchange ventures between groups.

If you are interested or know of an ITHF member in a vacant area who would be a prime candidate to fill one of the open VP positions, or want more information on the position of Vice President within ITHF, please contact President Medicare or Administrator Phil Komornik.

The VP areas currently vacant are Africa Southern, South East Asia, Central America, South America, USA South Central, USA North East, USA Great Lakes, Australia Queensland, and South Australia.

Let's Meet at Our Booth

Again this year ITHF members will have an opportunity at the convention to really experience meeting and making new friends, rekindling old friendships, and just having a great time telling other Rotary members what it is like to live and travel the ITHF way.

Every year ITHF has a Fellowship Booth in the House of Friendship that allows convention goers to see us, talk with us, and become members of our wonderful fellowship. This year in Sao Paulo, Brazil we will have a booth in the House of Friendship, which we know will be extremely busy. The 20,000+ Rotarians who are registered will give all the booth volunteers unlimited opportunities to meet and greet old friends and invite others to become an active part of our ITHF family.

We have learned from years that 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. We all like to share our feelings and thoughts with these folks; it takes time to really let them know who we are and how we feel about our experiences, so we need many volunteers. I am asking all of you to become a part of this special event in Sao Paulo by becoming a booth volunteer for an hour, 2 hours, half a day, or whatever you can spare out of your busy convention schedules, and enjoy yourselves while doing it.

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

Friday	June 5 09:00 AM - 18:00 PM
Saturday	June 6 09:00 AM - 19:00 PM
Sunday	June 7 08:30 AM - 16:00 PM
Monday	June 8 08:30 AM - 16:00 PM
Tuesday	June 9 09:00 AM - 16:00 PM

If you are interested in experiencing this new level of involvement with fellow ITHF members, please contact Phil Komornik through email, pskomorn@yahoo.com, providing your name and date(s)/time you would like to volunteer, etc. He 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.

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words

Our profile photo is the first thing another member sees of us when they search our ITHF website. It is the first opportunity to set a connection. If your profile picture is out of date or missing there is no better time than the present to update it. Additional photos you feel are representative should be added too.

It's also a good time to edit your member profile and put in as much information as you can so other members can find you in their searches. Along with your address, make sure you fill in the Rotary Information, Additional Information, etc. Nearby Cities in Towns are important, since a member from say, London, would likely not know where Loveland, Colorado, USA is. Attractions are also important. The more info you share, the more comfortable a fellow member will feel contacting you.

If you have forgotten your password or username, go to our site www.ITHF.org look on the left side and click on the tab—***I FORGOT MY LOGIN***—from there you can have your username or password emailed to you almost immediately. Should you not remember the email address you used for ITHF connect our Administrator, Phil Komornik pskomorn@yahoo.com

While we're talking about pictures, the editor is still having problems with photos which cannot be copied and pasted into the Newsletter, losing an important part of the submission (not sure if it's Windows 8 or the lack of technological capability of the editor). Please submit your articles directly to Kimberly at kvcarroll@yahoo.com and ensure that your photos (only one or two, please) can be downloaded for inclusion and I will endeavor to learn how to insert them...thank you.

Please "**LIKE**" us on Facebook and see what is going on with your fellow ITHF'ers. You can find us in the Search Box at the top of your Facebook page by typing "International Travel & Hosting Fellowship," or you might try this URL:

https://www.facebook.com/pages/ITHF-International-Travel-Hosting-Fellowship/230255290323263?ref=br_tf

ITHF Pre Convention Tour in Brazil

The deadline has passed for the price guarantee for our tour prior to the RI Convention; however at this writing we have been informed that there might be some space for members on the tour at a favorable cost.

Please, get your booking in soon to make sure you don't miss out.

If you have any interest, please, click on the TOUR tab near the top of our ITHF website to get the information there. Then, please, don't hesitate to ask John Steven, our Tour Chair (johnsteven@bigpnd.com) or Camila at camila@blitztur.com.br any questions you may have concerning the tour.