



“Oh No, Not The Foundation !”

The Rotary Foundation might not be the most scintillating of subjects to talk about, but it is an organisation that is profoundly respected around the globe.

Speaking at Plimmerton Rotary on 1<sup>st</sup> July, Past District Governor Graeme Blick brought members up to date with how the Foundation is funded, and how Clubs around the world can access those funds. Graeme is currently serving as Chair of the Foundation Committee for Rotary District 9940, which encompasses most of the Rotary Clubs in the lower North Island.



“The Foundation was set up in 1917, and today it is the second largest charitable foundation in the world with US\$1 billion in investments. These funds have been built up over an extended period through donations from members of the 34,000 Rotary Clubs worldwide.”

Graeme explained the process by which Clubs could access funds. “The basic idea is that Clubs can apply for grants for local or overseas projects which their members may be interested in pursuing, but some funding must also be contributed to the project by the local Club. Grants are considered and administered according to strict audit and accounting criteria.

“Grants” must be applicable to one or more of 6 areas of focus. These are: peace and conflict resolution; disease prevention; water and sanitation; child health; education and health; and economic development.

Besides making grants for local projects, the Foundation funds global projects as well. “In recent years the Rotary Foundation, together with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has been on a crusade to eliminate polio from the planet. We are just about there, with only a few pockets still remaining in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. India is completely polio free now, largely through the efforts of our Foundation.”



Graeme urged Club members to get involved in considering projects that would qualify for funding. “Each year the Rotary Foundation allocates a certain amount of funding to our District. It is up to us to ensure these funds are used. One recent project Plimmerton Club has been involved in, where funds from the Foundation were used, was the repair and maintenance of a school on the Fijian Island of Taveuni. New Zealand Clubs tend to focus, quite properly in my view, on projects either in New Zealand or in the Pacific Islands.”