

THE ROTARY CLUB OF TAPPAHANNOCK'S TOASTS OF FOREIGN ROTARY CLUBS

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In order to remind our members that Rotary is an international organization, for many years the Tappahannock Rotary Club has begun its Thursday evening meetings with a toast of a club in another country. It has always been the responsibility of the Tappahannock Club's International Committee to select the foreign club to be toasted. Our toasting has reached a new level in the past two years.

In the Spring of 2013, one of our international committee members suggested that we should tell the club toasted that we had made the toast. He had been a member of a Rotary Club in California that began its meetings with such a toast and that club followed up with a note to the club toasted. We found that in today's electronic world it was an easy thing to do. We looked the clubs up on the Rotary Club Locator and put together a brief email to the club president that explained our practice, advised that we had toasted their club, wished them success in their Rotary endeavors and invited their members to join us if they were visiting the U.S. and were near Tappahannock.

A month later our international committee developed a certificate commemorating the toast and we began adding it to our emails to the presidents of the clubs we toasted.

In October, 2013, we select-



ed an Italian Club to be toasted during the week that we celebrate Columbus Day. We thought it might be a meaningful gesture if we added to our email

the fact that our toast had been made during the week that we celebrated Columbus' discovery of America.

We then began to select the clubs to be toasted based on a historical event that occurred on the date of our meeting. Some of our selections were of significant, weighty events and others were a bit lighter. For example, on April 10, 2014 we toasted the Rotary Club of Brest, France because on April 10, 1778, John Paul Jones left the French port of Brest to attack the English. On August 28, 2014 we selected the Rotary Club of Worcester, England because it was the anniversary of the day that two pharmacists, John Lea and William Perrins, introduced

their famous Worcestershire sauce. Both clubs responded thanking us for the toasts.

On November 6th we toasted the Whakatu Rotary Club of Nelson, New Zealand. Our email conveyed our toast certificate and advised the Whakatu Club president, Steve Kelso, that we had toasted his club on the anniversary of the WWI battle in 1918 when New Zealanders took the French city Le Quesnoy by scaling a ladder placed on



Certificate of Toast of Whakatu Rotary Club

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the town's wall and rushing the ramparts to seize it from German control.

President Kelso responded in an email as follows and took our toast one additional step. He advised that the Whakatu Club had toasted us and enclosed a picture of their toast. He said in his email,

"We were absolutely delighted to receive your toast and your certificate this week, and have reciprocated at our Rotary meeting this morning with a toast of our own to your wonderful Tappahannock club in district 7610. Attached is a quick snapshot of our toast, and as you can see we are a breakfast club (Nelson's only breakfast club), so our toast is literally that - toast, tea, coffee and orange juice (with a little bacon thrown in for good measure)!"

During the morning one of our members recounted the incredible historical events that took place at Le Quesnoy, and told us of how warmly he and his wife were welcomed in the town when they were asked where they were from. Once they advised they were from New Zealand they were then formally greeted by the town mayor and invited to attend a ceremony that was taking place in the honour of that event back in 1918. Something they will never forget."

Like so many good things, our procedures for toasting have developed slowly and incrementally. They were the result of contributions of a number of our members. We look forward to the toasts and believe that in some small way we are contributing to fellowship among Rotarians throughout the world.



Whakatu Rotary Club toasts the Tappahannock Rotary Club

