



reconnections

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Rotary has changed my life

Mauro Casal (second from left) and the GSE team from District 4900 (now 4855) in Bristol City, England, during a visit to the Rotary Club of Bristol (Breakfast)

I have ties with Rotary dating from 1994, when I was 14. It was a privilege to have as my English teacher Miguel Cánchero, past governor of District 4900 (now 4855) in Argentina. He talked about Rotary during his English classes, so you could learn another language and about Rotary at the same time.

My father, stricken by polio when he was six months old, participated in project to equip a rehabilitation centre for the disabled, which was completed by the Rotary Club of Lobos with the help of a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant. Club members told my father and me about the Polio Plus program.

In March and early April 2007, I visited District 1100 (part of England and Wales) with a Group Study Exchange (GSE) team from District 4900. Led by Past District Governor Hugo Zeyen, the team included Ignacio Gesualdi, a businessman; Andrés Paipa, a psychologist; Gustavo Trucco, a teacher; and me, a specialist in insurance for workplace accidents.

The GSE provided the opportunity for cultural and vocational exchange, including a presentation on Argentina by our team at club meetings and the district conference. We also enhanced ties between our respective countries, England and Argentina, both involved in the 1982 Falklands War. On 2 April, the local media mentioned the 25th anniversary of the war; it was strange tube in an English home, but we were cordially and respectfully. In discussions, the conclusion reached was always “War is unnecessary and doesn’t solve anything. Peace can only be achieved through negotiations.”

After my wonderful GSE experience, I attended the Rotary Foundation Alumni Celebration in Los Angeles last June, which made me appreciate Rotary even more. Convinced that Foundation alumni represent Rotary’s hope for the future, I became a member of the Rotary Club of Lobos in July. I was sponsored by Past District Governor Cánchero, my former English teacher, who is a great friend and very knowledgeable about Rotary. I wish to thank the Rotary Club of Lobos for sponsoring me for the GSE and helping me at all times; my wife, Ana Clara, who encouraged me to join Rotary; Past District Governor Hugo Zeyen; and District Governor-elect Oscar Vergara. GSE gave me the opportunity to grow personally but most of all professionally, opening doors for me and leading to long-awaited recognition from my employer.

Thank you, Rotary!

— *Mauro Casal*