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**Rotary Club Web Site**  
[www.oldmeldrumrotary.org.uk](http://www.oldmeldrumrotary.org.uk)

### Rota For Reception, Grace & Speaker Duties

Date	Rec/Gr.	Cash	Speaker	V. of Organiser	Thanks
1 Mar	Maurice C	Anne L	David Mc	Neville J	
8 Mar	Christine F	Jim W	Helen M	Nicola H	
15 Mar	Douglas C	Andrew Mc	Carol N	Jim W	
22 Mar	Robin F	David McC	Business Meeting		
29 Mar	5 <sup>th</sup> Monday		Wine Tasting		
5 Apr	Anne F	Helen M	Phil D	Simon K	
12 Apr	Neville J	Carol N	Annette R	Anne L	
19 Apr	Nicola H	Susanna R	Rob R	Andrew Mc	
26 Apr	Simon K	Annette R	Business Meeting		

### Look Ahead:

**Monday 1 March 2010**  
Speaker : Natalie Hunter, Imagination Library

**Monday 8 March 2010**  
Haddo Egg Hunt and Eggsplanation!

**Monday 15 March 2010**  
Speaker : Carol Nicol

**Monday 22 March 2010**  
Business Meeting

**Monday 29 March 2010**  
5<sup>th</sup> Monday Wine Tasting

**Monday 5 April 2010**  
Speaker : Simon Cousins, Producer, Landward, BBC Scotland

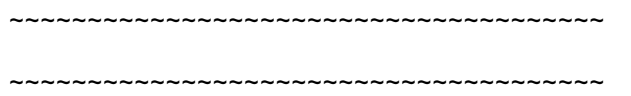
**Monday 12 April 2010**  
Speaker : Annette Ramsden, "Breath of Life"

**Monday 19 April 2010**  
Speaker : Richard Leavett, Friends of Haddo

**Monday 26 April 2010**  
Business Meeting

**Monday 3 May 2010**  
Speaker : Anne Shirran

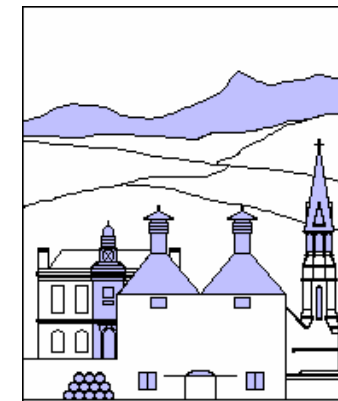
**Monday 10 May 2010**  
Speaker : Willie Sinclair



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# Rotary Club of Oldmeldrum

**District 1010 Zone 3 No: 52376**



## Squeeky Wheel

01/03/10

**The Fight  
against  
Polio**

I think it wouldn't do any harm to remind ourselves what effect polio has had on our population. Ian Sansom is Christine Falconer's brother-in-law and lives near Perth. This is his story.

### **HOW CHILDHOOD POLIO AFFECTED ME**

I was 2 years of age when I contracted polio in 1950 during what was supposedly the largest outbreak in Britain up to that time.

I had been playing on the promenade at Leven, Fife on perfectly normal afternoon with the family.

The following morning it became obvious that I was unable to bear my own weight with my legs crumpling beneath me. I was taken to the doctor [the NHS has been created in 1948 the year of my birth], who quickly dispatched me to Cameron Hospital at Windygates. The diagnosis was polio, or infantile paralysis.

I was kept in an isolation ward for 6 months.....totally isolated apart from the medical staff. My parents were only allowed to see me through the ward's windows.

On being released from hospital I had to learn how to walk all over again....although I had been infected from the hips down the real damage was only to my left leg which had been left withered and my foot had been turned inwards. I had to wear a leg iron during the day and a plaster of paris splint at night all through my primary school years. Being unable to walk any great distance, or run, or participate in any physical games, and other kids being what they are made for an uncomfortable time. Being classed as a bespectacled cripple who spoke with a funny English accent possibly helped to shape me into the awkward sod that I am today!

Through primary school I had to attend physiotherapy sessions to try to get some power back into my left leg. I had to attend regular sessions and eventually met with Mr George Mitchell who was to be my surgeon when the operations started when I was about 11. Perfect timing....just as I was about to start secondary school.

The Fife branch of the IPF [Infantile Paralysis Fellowship] ran a busload of polio victims every Saturday picking up throughout Fife and taking us to Perth swimming pool and it was there that I learned to swim. Because of the damage to my legs most of my swimming power came from my arms but the effects of hydrotherapy also helped my legs.

Around the beginning of 1960, Mr Mitchell performed a series of operations to correct my foot. This included taking pieces of bone from my shin and relocating them into my foot. I also believe that I was among the first, if not the very first, person to have a tendon transplanted into my foot. The whole series of operations worked and it was not long before I was able to throw away the leg iron and the splint.

Great days lay ahead. Although I still had, and to this day still have, a noticeable limp, I was able to take up cycling both for exercise and exploration. I used to think nothing of cycling the 26 miles each way to and from Perth virtually every weekend to visit the steam engine loco sheds. I cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats for charity.

I kept up swimming and won a couple of Scottish IPF medals competing against other polio victims, although to be honest my problems seemed insignificant to some of theirs.

As far as schooling goes I have to be honest and admit that although I did miss a large-ish part of the start of my secondary education due to hospital and other treatments, I did use that as an excuse and basically was a lazy so-and-so at school. As a result I left school with very few qualifications. Under-utilised potential.

Around my late 40's/early 50's things took a turn for the worse. I have plagiarized the following from the internet to illustrate what has happened to me and countless others since reaching maturity. It is claimed that body parts which substituted for the parts damaged by polio have now been overworked to the point that they are now breaking down and thus causing some of the original symptoms to return.

Post-polio syndrome (PPS) is a condition that affects polio survivors years after they've recovered from their initial bout with the disease. An interval of 30 to 40 years usually elapses before the first PPS symptoms occur, but intervals as short as eight years and as long as 71 years have been documented. Modern rehabilitation may restore individuals with post-polio to their regular level of functioning; it may also require that they return to or begin using braces, crutches, canes, wheelchairs and a variety of adaptive equipment.

Weakness is the general symptom of post-polio syndrome. Muscle strength decreases when the nerve supply to the muscle is reduced. Symptoms can appear in the muscles that were affected at the time polio was contracted or in previously unaffected areas. Most new pain problems in polio survivors result from repetitive strain injuries to weakened muscle fibers and muscular tissues.

The rest necessary to resolve pain and inflammation often leads to further weakness and atrophy. Thus, a vicious cycle of increasing weakness, increasing pain and increasing disability can result. Shrinking of muscle size and decreasing strength occurs very slowly, at a rate of 1 percent of muscle strength per year.

Some well known polio survivors include[d]...Alan Alda, James Drury, Ian Dury, Kerry Packer, Dinah Shore, Neil Young, Robert McNamara, Jack Nicklaus, Lord Snowdon, Arthur C Clarke, the Emperor Claudius, Sir Walter Scott, and probably Joseph Goebbels and Franklin D. Roosevelt for good measure.

Polio wasn't selective.

Ian Sansom February 2010

### **Items for the Diary.**

Ellon Rotary.

Wed 31st March

Whisky Tasting and Horse Racing Evening

and

Sat. 29th May

Spring Ball in Aid of "End Polio Now".

## **RIBI Thanks for Life (TfL) Campaign**

### **The Purple Gang strike again!**

As you will be aware members of Oldmeldrum Rotary Club have been involved in publicising the work of the Rotary Organisation in the fight against Polio. Below are a couple of photographs to show the lengths that some people will go to attract publicity! Super-heroes had nothing on this.



