

Peter Kyle, Rotary International Director, 2020-2022 for Zone 33-34

By Carol Woodward

Peter Kyle, one of two Rotary International Directors this 2020-2021 Rotary Year for Zone 33-34, is a world traveler who began his life in Lowerhutt, New Zealand. Upon graduating from Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand, he noticed an announcement on the bulletin board about the Ambassadorial Scholar program offered by The Rotary Foundation. He was transfixed by the notice. He had always wanted to work overseas, perhaps in the Foreign Service.

Denys Pinfeld, a member of the Wellington North Rotary Club, assisted Peter in applying for the scholarship, introducing him to the local club, and the world of Rotary. Having succeeded in being awarded the scholarship, he entered the University of Virginia (UVA) School of Law in the midst of the Watergate era. It was a particularly exciting time to be in law school due to all of the novel Constitutional issues and the visits to the Supreme Court and to Congress.

While at UVA he was invited to speak at the Rotary District 7610 Conference. It was at that conference he met then Rotary International President (RIP) William ("Bill") Carter. According to Peter, that is when he "began his love affair with Rotary."

Upon his return to New Zealand, Peter became a Rotarian and pursued a career in law in New Zealand. He entered the realm International Law with the Asia Development Bank in Manilla for 5 years then with the World Bank in Washington DC for 20 years retiring in 2009.

Peter's Rotary career is the result of a series of irresistible opportunities through the years.. His Rotary career really began under the mentorship of Denys Pinfeld and grew through his years as an Ambassadorial Scholar. It received a jump start when he met the RIP Bill Carter, and from there this Rotary Alumni received growing levels of assignments. Some of his assignments included serving at the District and Zone levels on Alumni matters, the Peace Fellows Program, and on the Rotary Representative Network, which operates as a Rotary think tank monitoring international trends and organizations.

Peter, a member of the Rotary Hill, Washington DC, has begun his term as a Rotary International Director, encouraged and supported by his wife, Margaret. This year he is one of two directors representing Zones 33-34. This is unusual as there is usually only one director from a Zone. There was a redistricting of Rotary every 8 years. This last redistricting resulted in districts from another Zone were folded into Zone 33. This year his counterpart Director from Pennsylvania is Stephanie Urchick. She will fulfil her term this year. Next year Peter will be the sole RI Director from Zone 33-34.

Peter's view on how this pandemic will affect Rotary. He believes that there will be a transition to more Rotary opportunities online, especially for trainings and meetings at all levels. Rotary International has been through crises before, major health issues, financial depressions, and war. This is an opportunity for service and growth.