



## LET'S SHARE THE SECRET

Neither DG Charles, nor International Chairman Roy were aware that this is a 1260 Centennial project when they took office. I guess few Clubs were. Today both have seen the benefits it will bring and are keen supporters. We thank both Charles & Roy for that ... and hope you to will see the light that beckons.

Stevenage Grange's Rotarians Ophthalmoscope Initiative (ROI), was launched at our Conference in April 2006. Since then it has received donations from clubs in 10 out of the 29 districts in RIBI. Rotarian Optyse™ ophthalmoscopes are now operating in over 30 developing countries.

RIBI is now into the main conference season and things are beginning to build. Sightsavers are now an official ROI partner. They will promote ROI at most District conferences, including those of Inner Wheel. So by the time the next article on ROI is published in December's Rotary Today, donations will no doubt increase.

**1260 is leading the Way** In just 5 months donations valued at some £10,000 have been made by 22 clubs nationwide. District 1260 has donated more than half ... with an average donation of around 14 units or £350 per Club (excluding the 'Grange's pump priming contribution) .That exceeds our expectations & we thank you for that. Obviously there is lots of opportunity for more clubs to donate to our District initiative. For just £100 you can donate four Optyse™ ophthalmoscopes, simply, and make a start in helping to save sight, life and livelihood for millions in less developed countries.

**So where have the first Optyses gone?** Currently most recipients are in Africa, in Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Gambia, Ethiopia. 16 units have gone to Afghanistan, some to India, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Solomon Islands and Russia, & 20 have been donated directly to Mercy Ships.

One of the big achievements in the last few months has been gaining the support and approval of the major eye-care charities to handle worldwide distribution. We are all aware of Sightsavers International, but they do not cover the world. They will therefore cooperate with other eye care charities with which you may not be so familiar. These include: The International Centre for Eye Health (ICEH), United for Sight (UFS) and the Christian Blind Mission (CBM)

In addition to providing conference exposure, Russell Richards and his team at Sightsavers's will provide a mail shot to all Clubs of the ROI leaflet, provide Club speakers, and link with colleague Phil-Hoare to facilitate global distribution.



*Phil Hoare, Sightsavers International's Procurement Manager comments. "Sightsavers looks forward to receiving the generous donation of Optyse™ lens free ophthalmoscopes through Stevenage Grange Rotary Club's initiative. One of the biggest challenges facing international charities is the procurement of equipment that is both cost effective and appropriate for less developed countries. We have tested 80 of the units in 5 countries and the results were very positive.*

*The ophthalmoscopes will be distributed to Eye Care Workers, Ophthalmic Nurses and Ophthalmic Medical Assistants in less developed countries. We are confident that the donation programme will make a difference to saving sight in the world's poorest communities."*

**Current Plans** While concentrating on clubs in RIBI, plans are also in hand to develop the American market with help from the International Eye Care Fellowship of Rotarians (IECFR), and others. Craig Fisher, our 1260 Webmaster has kindly volunteered to produce a DVD for Club use. This will be available for download from our ROI web site [www.roisight.org](http://www.roisight.org) and in hard copy.

In recognition of Sightsavers commitment to the Initiative, the Club recently published an updated information leaflet. Following feedback this has an extended focus of saving not just sight ... but life and livelihood. The leaflet can be downloaded now from the Club's new ROI website. It will be made available in hard copy at the District Shop, at no cost.

The new website, which creates a separate identity for ROI, offers a comprehensive range of material for Club and public use. Why not have a look and see how our 1260 International project is helping others to see the light.