



humanity in motion

rotary international in great britain and ireland

press release

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ROTARY SHOWS THAT SCIENCE IS ANYTHING BUT BORING



Hundreds of budding young scientists from across the UK were taken on a true adventure of scientific discovery this week when they spent a day enjoying explosions and surprises as part of Rotary's Excitement of Science 2008.

More than 200 pupils, belonging to the generation that will continue to walk in the footsteps of Einstein and Faraday, revelled in the exciting biological, chemical and physical experiments put on for them at the Royal Institution's famous Faraday Theatre in London on the 24th June.

This year pupils aged 13 to 18 from schools across the UK were asked to spend six months investigating the topical theme 'Oceanography', with an aim to determine when the Gulf Stream will next 'switch off'. The young scientists collated data from scientific buoys which float freely around the oceans and then constructed hypotheses to explain those data.

During the day, scientists from the world renowned National Oceanography Centre in Southampton examined the pupils' results and rewarded the schools with the best analysis.

Melissa Drewry, 13, from Costello Technology College in Basingstoke said: "It was brilliant. The explosions were really loud and I liked it when he accidentally set things off. I think days like this would help to show that science is fun and exciting. I like science anyway because we have good teachers and do a lot of experiments. I want to do something with Chemistry when I'm older."

Rotarian and co-organiser Mike Shaw said: "For many children, learning science can be disconnected from reality rather than the core of human knowledge. The Excitement of Science project, which Rotary organises

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with the Royal Institution, aims to communicate the thrill of research: students are not taught; they are those who, by making discoveries, teach the rest of us.”

Fellow organiser and scientist, Rotarian Bill Mullarkey, said: “This was one of the most thrilling experiences for which any budding scientist could possibly wish... the opportunity of taking part in a series of vibrant, exciting experiments and then watching their work reach its culmination at a venue which many regard as the Cathedral of Science. It gives them a flavour of the sort of science that most only experience after they have completed their first science degree at university.

The day’s programme began with a light-hearted demonstration 'The Chemistry of Life' presented by Dr John Kilcoyne, a research chemist with no obvious fear of smoke, fire, or the shiveringly cold properties of liquid nitrogen. The excitement continued in the afternoon with 'The Way We Do Science', by Dr Ken Collins & Dr Simon Boxall, from the National Oceanography Centre.

Rotary’s Excitement of Science, running since 2002, aims to make science interesting and attractive amongst school students and to encourage them to take up a career in science, technology and engineering. The programme also aims to help curious adults develop their understanding, and that of the community at large, about the process of scientific discovery.

Photo, from back l-r: Scientist Jeff Teasdale sprays dry ice over Dr John Kilcoyne, Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Immediate Past President Allan Jagger and budding young scientists Fraser McKeown, 13 and Melissa Drewry, 13 both from Costello Technology College in Basingstoke.

Ends

RIBI PR Officer Karen Jones on 01789 768126

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

- There are 1,845 Rotary clubs in Great Britain and Ireland with 57,000 volunteers raising money for their communities and carrying out humanitarian work both at home and abroad.
- Rotary International was founded in 1905 in Chicago and is now the world’s largest international service organisation with 1.2 million professional men and women as members. There are 32,000 clubs in 200 countries and geographical areas.
- Rotary initiates local and global projects to promote world understanding and peace and improve life conditions for people of all ages and cultures.

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