



Stevenage Grange Rotary Club

Press Release 23rd January 2006

Rotary initiative may help millions

Millions of people Worldwide might retain their sight and enjoy healthier lives through earlier retinal screening thanks to the Optyse™, a local invention supported by the enthusiasm and commitment of a small Rotary Club in Stevenage, England.

"Our involvement started back in 2003, when I was in the Chair", said Past President Ian Begg. Billed as a normal speaker evening, Stevenage Grange, one of many Rotary Clubs in the UK, settled down to listen to Roger Armour (pictured right). Previously a vascular surgeon at the Lister Hospital, in Stevenage, Roger explained that he had for a long time felt that the ability to see into patients' eyes was a valuable method of detecting many eye and health ailments such as cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes, heart disease, brain tumours and cerebral malaria, at an early stage of their development. The principle obstacle was that the existing medical ophthalmoscope, which was particularly complicated for the vast majority of its uses; was also expensive, and therefore out of reach for large numbers of potential users such as nurses and clinical students. To overcome these obstacles Roger invented an easy to use and lower cost ophthalmoscope that has the ability to enhance the use of retinal screening and revolutionise this method of diagnosis.



Later in 2003 Roger won two prestigious awards for this invention from Medical Futures: The Best Innovation to Improve Global Healthcare and Overall Winner. In June of 2004, Team Consulting Limited, the medical device design company working with Roger, and Lone Medical Optics (Roger's company) formed a joint venture, Ophthalmos Ltd, to complete the development and to commercialise the lens free ophthalmoscope (now called the Optyse™ Lens Free Ophthalmoscope).

The Club, impressed by the potential benefits of Roger's invention, decided to lend Roger, and later Ophthalmos, support for this low cost, portable, and simple lens free ophthalmoscope. It guaranteed the purchase of the first 225 units and offered to market the benefits of the Optyse™ to the Rotary community on a non-profit basis. Stevenage Grange's project, actively promoted by Ian Begg, was adopted as one of the few Rotary International [Britain and Ireland] (RIBI) Centennial projects in 2004/5, thus helping to bring Roger's invention potentially to the attention of 1.2m Rotarians world-wide.

Some three years on, Ophthalmos is one of 11 finalists named last week for the Saatchi & Saatchi Award for World Changing Ideas. The winner will be announced at a high profile ceremony on Thursday 26th January in New York. On 30th January Stevenage Grange Rotary Club will launch its Optyse™ Initiative. Hosted by Club President, Bryan Cornish at the Corus Hotel, Stevenage, it will be attended by District Governor Meirion Morris, Directors of Ophthalmos including Roger Amour and fellow Rotarians from the Grange and elsewhere.

The Optyse™ - a shared vision



"The Club's aim is to complement Ophthalmos' vision by facilitating the purchase and distribution of Rotary engraved Optyse™ Lens Free Ophthalmoscopes through the Rotary network to organisations supporting developing countries. If 1,000 Rotary units are sponsored and the Agencies undertake just 10 examinations a day with each Optyse™, over 3 million

'new' patients, in developing countries could be screened for less than 1p per examination" said Ian Begg.

Laura Garcia, Chief Executive of Ophthalmos Ltd, adds "We are delighted by the Grange's support over the past few years and, in particular, Ian Begg's enthusiasm in making the Optyse™ initiative a reality. The Company's vision is to promote the use of ophthalmoscopy and "eye health" in general medical practice and to provide healthcare workers with revolutionary products to support this change. The value of our vision may be realised through healthcare savings associated with early detection of medical problems and the potential to improve the quality of life for individuals; especially those that may be prevented from becoming blind. This vision extends beyond the traditional healthcare setting. The launch of the Rotary Initiative is exciting as it will contribute to our drive to reach people requiring support in developing countries around the world".

The Rotary ophthalmoscope

The Optyse™ is also ideal for use by those working with the international eye-sight charities and in developing countries. Ophthalmos aims to help these organisations and charities achieve the goals established by Vision 2020 in their quest to eliminate unnecessary blindness by the year 2020.

Cost and ease of use

User trials confirm the simplicity of this innovative product. *Prof Bron*, Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology, University of Oxford comments “Unlike standard ophthalmoscopes, the lens free ophthalmoscope allows a rapid view of the fundus of the eye, with very little training”. Nick Beare, Ophthalmologist, Blantyre, Malawi, tells us “It functions as well as a standard direct ophthalmoscope to visualise the red reflex and fundus. It provides particularly good views of the optic disc, and macula, which are clear and focused.”

The Optyse™ is priced from £35 ex. VAT, but a specially assembled kit is available to Rotary Clubs for onward donation to appropriate agencies, at a reduced cost.

For information on pricing and delivery arrangements Rotarians should either email Ian Begg of Stevenage Grange Rotary Club optyse@sgrc.org.uk or complete the Order/Request on www.sgrc.org.uk. Commercial sales should be addressed to Ophthalmos Ltd on +44(0)1799 532777 or Email: enquiries@ophthalmos.co.uk

For more information take a look at the Club's web site www.sgrc.org.uk or visit www.ophthalmos.co.uk

Note to Editors

The Optyse™ or pen sized ophthalmoscope, was invented by Roger Armour, was designed and developed by Team Consulting Limited and is being manufactured and marketed by Ophthalmos Limited. Being robust, lightweight and low cost, the Optyse™ can be used in the field with minimal training, by visiting GP's, health care professionals or aid agency workers/volunteers.

Team Consulting Limited is a leading product design and development consultancy working primarily in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. Team has extensive design and engineering expertise which enables them to translate designs into appropriate, cost-effective products that can be scaled up for volume manufacture and achieve rapid time-to-market.

Ophthalmos Limited designs, manufactures and markets medical devices for use in ophthalmology and in promoting the use of eye health in general medical practice through the provision of revolutionary products. Optyse™ was the overall winner and winner of Best Innovation to Improve Global Healthcare at the Medical Futures Innovation Awards 2003. The Company's Quality Management System has been approved to ISO13485:2003, For further information about the Company and the Optyse™ refer to www.ophthalmos.co.uk

Roger Armour, Director Ophthalmos: Roger, the inventor of the Optyse™ Lens Free Ophthalmoscope, is an Honorary Consultant Surgeon who worked within the NHS for 40 years, including 24 years at the Lister Hospital in Stevenage, where he specialised in general and vascular surgery. He developed an interest in the eye during his training in ophthalmology and neurosurgery, and found the ophthalmoscope to be an invaluable tool during his career. In 1996, Roger retired, which allowed him to spend more time developing his ideas for enhancing the use of retinal screening in general medical practice. During this period he worked with Team Consulting, to bring his concept into a manufacturable product. In 2004, Ophthalmos Ltd was formed to complete the development and to bring his lens free technology to market.

The Saatchi & Saatchi Award for World Changing Ideas. For further details of the award & its finalists see Newswire's release <http://www.woio.com/Global/story.asp?S=4359322>

Meirion Morris: Is Governor of Rotary District 1260, which covers Rotary clubs in Herts, Beds & Bucks. He lives in Riversmead, Hoddesdon. A member of Hoddesdon Rotary Club, Meirion can be contacted via email at meirion@beara.net or through www.rotary1260.org Meirion's District forms part of RIBI – see www.ribi.org

Stevenage Grange Rotary Club comprises people drawn from all walks of life. It meets at the Corus (Cromwell) Hotel, High Street, Old Town, Stevenage on most Mondays at 19.45 for 20.00. The Club's President is Bryan Cornish, formally Chairman of the Stevenage Carnival Committee and Managing Director of Retail PlastiX Ltd of Stevenage. The Club celebrates its 20th Charter in 2007. New members are always welcome. Please email the Secretary, Stephen Sypula stephen@sgrc.org.uk. Details of our programme, activities & what the Club does can be found on the Club's website www.sgrc.org.uk

Contacts:

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This Release: Rtn. Stephen Sypula (www.communityinitiatives.org.uk)