

**Coming events to lock in:**

**12 April**—Formal meeting in the Caulfield Tabaret on Tuesday volunteer's rest room, far right Exhibition Hall. Time is 6.45 as usual .

**19th April** (second night of Passover), there will be an informal but official meeting downstairs at the London Tavern at the normal time. No external speaker but we will think something up.

**26th April** is a public holiday, so no meeting

**EMAIL YOUR DETAILS TO LBL0DE@LOGON.COM.AU**

April is Rotary Health Research month	April 5	April 12	April 19	April 26
<b>Topic</b>	Rotary Down Under	Rotary Art Show Club Meeting at Tabaret	Downstairs at London Tavern	Anzac Day
<b>Chair</b>	"Our champion article"			
<b>Toast to Club</b>	Jan Hill			
<b>Toast to Australia</b>	Jack Dimand			
<b>Meeting</b>	Alan Samuel			
<b>Cashier</b>	D Panakos			

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**THE GEN**  
Bulletin  
**Rotary Club of Glen Eira**  
April 5 Week 40- Rotary Health Research month  
www.rotarygleneira.com.au  
Meets at: London Tavern, **414 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield**  
We Meet at 6.30pm for 6.45pm each Tuesday evening



**In Case you missed it...**

**Killer's on the ropes as India wages war against polio** Ben Doherty April 2, 2011 The Age.

BY THE train tracks in Moradabad, among the squalid nomads' tents and the rag-pickers' concrete houses, the children have ink-stained fingers. They show them to the women with notebooks and coolers filled with vaccine.

Before polio eradication efforts began more than two decades ago, the disease killed or crippled 200,000 Indian children a year. This year, there has been one case.

In what is probably the largest sustained public health effort in history, billions of courses of polio vaccine have been distributed across the world's second largest country. Twice a year, more than 172 million children are vaccinated in a single week, with 2.3 million vaccinators visiting every slum, every railway bridge and bus shelter to immunise every child under five.

In the rag-pickers' village, as women scavenge through the masses of garbage, baby Krishna is being immunised "for the second or third time", his young mother Devi says.

The vaccinator squirts two drops into Krishna's mouth. He mewls for a minute but is asleep even before his left pinky finger is marked with a black pen.

Once there was reluctance to take the vaccine. Rumours would

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Let's lead the way and bin our Gen when finished.



sweep Muslim communities in particular that immunisation was a Western plot to sterilise girls. "But now everyone here ... knows it is important," Devi says.

In the northern state of Uttar Pradesh alone, 500,000 babies are born every month, most at home and never registered. They must be found before the disease finds them.

Uttar Pradesh and the neighbouring state of Bihar are considered a perfect storm for disease, spread most commonly through contact with water contaminated by sewage. These states are poor and, in the 21st century, polio is a disease of only the very poorest.

Making it harder to track is the fact that only one in every 200 children will show any symptoms. The disease's "silent" carriers can spread polio hundreds of kilometres in days, infecting thousands more.

When smallpox was eradicated in 1977, it was hailed as the 20th century's greatest medical achievement. That took 14 years and \$500 million of today's money to banish. Polio is at 23 years, \$9 billion and counting.

It has involved scores of global players, including **Rotary International**, UNICEF and the World Health Organisation. More recently, Microsoft chairman and philanthropist Bill Gates has donated \$1.3 billion, declaring polio's eradication his foundation's top priority.

From around 350,000 worldwide a year before eradication efforts began, polio cases are down to between 1200 and 1500 a year, a 99.6 per cent drop. But erasing that final fraction has proven akin to squeezing the last of the toothpaste from the tube.

Some in the global health field have criticised the focus on polio, saying the money it attracts skews priorities. Richard Horton, editor of the medical journal *The Lancet*, wrote that "global health does not depend on polio eradication".

But Mr Gates defended the effort, telling *The Age* in Delhi: "Zero is magic ... once you get there you get no more outbreaks. The economic benefits for every year, forever, of not having those 200,000 cases is incredible."

Four countries have never eradicated polio: Nigeria, where Muslim communities boycotted the vaccine; India, with its sheer size and poverty; and Afghanistan and Pakistan, where security issues remain.

Rotarians are encouraged to use **THE GEN** as a means of sharing information about Rotary coming events and news. Your item can be emailed to [lblode@logon.com.au](mailto:lblode@logon.com.au) **Preferred deadline Friday 5pm..**

But now Hamid Jafari, head of the World Health Organisation's polio program, says India is likely to be the first of the last dominoes to fall, saying "we are very close - very close

Photos from previous meetings:

