



The Banbury Bulletin

The Rotary Club of Banbury

District 1090 R.I.B.I. Club No. 415

President Ian Rodrick

January 2013



Rodrick's Ramblings

Christmas has now come and gone, and what a month we have had!

We started with the Inner Wheel Christmas lunch at Wroxton. It was a most enjoyable occasion, the hotel staff looked after us well and the entertainment was "just right". Thank you President Annie.

This year's Family Festival of Christmas Music was another successful occasion and reflected great credit on the Foundation committee. In particular I would like to acknowledge the hard work of Jonathan Meredith and John Bennett. A very useful sum was generated for Foundation and it was good to be able to contribute the retiring collection of £300 to Home Farm Trust.

The Service Clubs Joint Carol Service was held on the next day, and was the last to be conducted by the Rev'd Rob Anning. Rob has always made us most welcome and we wish him well with the new responsibilities which he will take up later this year. This service is always a joyful occasion, the only one shared by all the Banbury Clubs and a good opportunity for a sing and a chat with old friends.

This year's street organ collection was always going to be a marathon as we had an extra collecting day. As usual, we rose to the challenge thanks to a combination of Mike Bank's organisation and his nagging (thank you Mike) and we raised the magnificent total of £6965.50. The generosity of Banbury people is amazing and it is good to think that, in spite of these hard times, we are trusted to use their donations wisely. Half of the proceeds will go to Katharine House and the remainder to our trust funds.

As President, I thank you all for your support during the last six months and wish you well for 2013.

“President’s lunch” at Tudor Hall School on Sunday 24th March.

The President has decided to have a lunch this year instead of an evening function in the hope that our more senior members, who might be reluctant to go out in the evening, will attend. He hopes to keep the cost as reasonable as possible and that we can organise transport for anyone who does not want to drive and that this will encourage a good attendance. Please put the date in your diary.

Ian



One of the many groups of Banbury Rotarians who supported our annual collection. This year a five day operation at Sainsbury’s, Tesco’s and Morrison’s super markets. At a number of the collections Rotarian John Webb appeared with the second Organ adding a little variety to the music list.

Speaker Reports.

To restore or not to restore that is the conservator's dilemma.

The speaker at our fifth Friday, evening meeting, was Peter White a furniture maker and restorer from Stockton near Southam. His talk was illustrated by slides showing some of the very impressive restoration work that he had done over his 30 year career. He also brought a few small items to better illustrate points that he wished to make.

He opened by explaining that conservators generally are university trained and seek always to maintain items in their original state, while restorers tend to be cabinet makers who try to work out what the original item was like and then restore it as best they can. Before any work is started the craftsman has to get the consent of their client and clear instructions as to whether a piece is to be conserved or restored. Peter said that although he always uses as much original material as possible and where repairs are required uses glues, timbers and other materials which would have been used originally he emphasised that there is no attempt to deceive, simply to make a piece of furniture look as beautiful as possible again. All work is documented so that changes are noted and recorded. He does as much

research as possible before starting any work, the knowledge that he displayed of the history of furniture and the availability and use of different timbers and other materials was impressive. It was maybe surprising to some of us to learn that though French furniture generally has historically been beautiful and ornate externally, pine was often used as a base timber whereas English, (should I say British even though Peter did not), was far superior and based on oak.

We were shown pictures of items which had been restored copying as far as possible original methods even down to using similar dowel joints which would not be visible when the work was complete. In contrast some furniture could only be used if it were changed considerably from the original, an example of this which I found very impressive was a chair which had been badly misused and thoughtlessly painted, which Peter then restored to be an item both of beauty and of practical use. He pointed out that the furniture on which he works is rarely his own and the owner has to make a commercial decision as to whether to conserve or restore. Although he is dealing with social history, and he displayed a strong social conscience and awareness of his responsibility, he has always to respect his clients' wishes.

A very unusual talk for us, with a true craftsman giving an insight into a field that was new probably to most of us. Peter's skill, his depth of knowledge and maybe above all his sense of responsibility in dealing with items of socially historical value was impressive and gave us an absorbing presentation.

Maurice Humphris.



Fiona Castle – Pictured with Rotarians Fred Riches and President Ian Rodrick.

After Dinner Talk – Friday 14th December

Fiona Castle popped up on the train from Gerrards Cross (pron. Crawss as “one” lives there – “a very small place”...) Fiona’s talk was spiced with lively wit – owing much, she readily admitted, to her friendship with the Morecambes.

Fiona ended with “But suppose it’s true...” – a way of looking at Christmas (see below), Fiona entertained us with her story of life before, with and after Roy.

Fiona's earliest claim to fame was her appearance as Lisl in the original stage cast of "Sound of Music". A little later, appearing in the Chorus Line of a Pantomime starring Harry Secombe and Morecambe & Wise at the Hippodrome Coventry (that ran till April!), Fiona was taken under the Morecambes' wing and watching Roy Castle on TV in their home one night proclaimed her love for him. Eric duly took the opportunity to introduce them. "Roy – this is Fiona. She's in love with you."

Fiona recounted a few of Ernie's one-liners, but my notes include only his comment on greeting Michael Parkinson in a leather jacket – "Hello Mike! Do you always go to work in a wallet?"

Fiona and Roy married a year after they met and had four children, who "thrived on neglect"! Fiona chose to stay at home and be mum while Roy travelled performing, but she recounted how she suffered from being a perfectionist – and therefore always saw herself as failing. "I looked at other people's strengths and saw my own weaknesses". Fiona explained how, one day, at the end of her tether, she cried to God for help. The phone rang. It was a friend who'd had a sudden urge to ring to come round and have a chat. Fiona described how she saw this as God at work and "let go that other finger-wagging God (the one demanding perfection) 37 years ago. It transformed her family life and relationships.

Then had come the time when Roy was given three months to live. He had in fact lived another two and a half years – "a bonus". They were "able to stop and think of the moment" – "to get on with life but stop and smell the roses on the way". Fiona recollected how Roy had experienced a vision of Heaven the week before he died in 1994.

Now it was she, Fiona Castle, who was thrust into the limelight. Wrestling with this, she came to the conclusion that it was "better to rise to a challenge and fail than to wonder what if...?"

Before her final reading, Fiona told us how she recently felt she wanted to get out of a commitment on the Isle of Wight as the weather was bad and she was tired. I think she said she was on the ferry when she picked up a magazine, opened a page about people in refugee camps and thought "How can I complain?" She adjured us all to "never grumble... always be grateful..."

Fiona received a standing ovation – the only one I can recollect in my ten years at Rotary. It was my privilege to be Fiona's host. Our thanks go to Helen Morris for inviting Fiona to pop a few stops along the line from Gerrards Crawss to speak to us!

Fred Riches

But suppose it's true...

Which kind of Christmas is yours?

The one you have to struggle into, maybe like an old suit, somewhere early in December? The one that demands you make an effort to be friendly, find time to send cards to people who might send them to you, and generally spend more money than normal to create the right impression? Inside there is the gnawing awareness that, come Twelfth Night when the cards and Christmas tree are ditched, the play-acting will end and the real world will lurch back into focus. It's the motiveless Christmas. We send greetings, give presents, eat, drink and try to be merry because society says we should. It's December and that's how people

in the West are expected to behave at that time of the year. The result is often destructive – a lot of people become acutely lonely, depressed and envious. The family next door is having a great time, so we reckon, but our circumstances are different.

If only contentment and fun could be switched on that easily. Of course they can't.

But there's the other Christmas – the real one with the motive, the one that has Jesus in focus. I know you can't switch that on either. You can't make yourself believe Him or love Him – but can you understand that He makes sense of it all – the cards and the gifts, the parties and the daft hats? Just suppose for a moment that it really is true – that God really did love the world so much that he gave... - It would revolutionise your Christmas – not to mention the rest of the year!

Someone once asked a Christian friend of mine, "Supposing you're wrong about Christianity?" My friend replied, "If I'm wrong, I'll have lost nothing and still had a fabulous life. But suppose you're wrong...?"

Committee Reports.

Community and Vocational.

A fantastic result for this year's Street Organ collections. There were five days of supermarket collections between 15th and 24th. December over £6900.00 was raised. The proceeds are to be equally divided between Katharine House Hospice and Rotary charities. See President's note.

Foundation.

The Christmas Festival of Music was held at St Mary's Church a great result with funds gained for Foundation and the Home Farm Trust.

Martin and the Club are hosting an Ambassadorial Scholar, Julie Self from Canada.

The annual Frugal Lunch is to be held on Paul Harris Day 22nd February.

Sports & Entertainment.-

Club Darts evening now to be held on 4 February 2013 at the Cricket Club.

We have also be entering the District Darts competition.

The Club quiz to be held on 11 March 2013 at the Cricket Club.

District Conference. Hotel is booked, 1st - 3rd March.

The Club Outing to be on the 8 April 2013 visiting Birmingham, "Back to Backs Museum and Cadbury World.

International:-

This year's Contact Meeting is with Olten Switzerland on May 9-12th. A number of members have recently attended a meeting hosted by John Hansford. John gave us a presentation of the details so far received, although the precise details of the programme are still to come. Those present decided that we could all fly together from Heathrow, although this option was slightly dearer than other less convenient airports. There was then discussion as to the options of staying on for a further three days. the majority voted for the Hotel Kusnacht on Lake Zurich, a hotel at which we had stayed at previously. This is an option which some people may wish to take, others may wish to attend just the contact and then return home. John would like those interested to contact him. He will then be circulating further details as they are available.

Youth Opportunities.

The Young Musician competition will be held again at Sibford School, the heats on 18 & 19 January and the final on 23 February 2013

Young Chef is to be organised again at Oxford College, Broughton Road, Banbury.

It is hoped to again find a candidate for R.Y.L.A.

Rotaract, Interact.

Rotarians Ian Anthistle and John Bennett have met with the new Interact club at B.G.N. and have successfully held their first meetings and have been supplied with “Hoodies” with the Interact Logo and their school name. They are very enthusiastic and planning a full programme of activities.

The Rotaract Club is now up and running and is becoming involved in their own projects and showing interest in assisting at some Rotary projects. Their charter night is to be held at the Whately Hall Hotel on 25th. January.

Classification & Membership.

See Notes below regarding procedure for gaining new members.

The election of new members

The procedure and requirements for the election of new members is defined in By-law 8 of the RIBI By-laws and Articles 7 and 8 of the Standard Club Constitution and By-laws.

By-law 8b defines that Membership is by invitation only.

Article 7 provides the general qualification for Membership and By-laws 8c provides information regarding the limitation of Membership.

By-law 8d identifies the procedure for the election to active Membership.

As part of this procedure our Club will take account of the following:-

- a) Prior to any proposal for Membership a Candidate will be brought to two or three Club meetings as a guest but not introduced as a prospective Member.
- b) A Candidate together with the Proposer will meet with the Information sub-committee to be fully informed about Rotary and the activities of our Club. At that meeting the Proposal form can be completed or taken away to allow consideration of Membership.
- c) It should be specifically pointed out to the Candidate that there is a procedure for the Club to follow and completion of the application form does not provide an automatic passage to Membership.

Upon receipt of the completed form a report should be submitted from the Information sub-committee to the Membership committee as By-law 8dii and the defined process then continues.

There are general provisions of Classification and limitations on the numbers of the same Classification defined in Article 8.

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