



The Banbury Bulletin

The Rotary Club of Banbury

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

President John Bennett

March 2012

The Fun Race Evening on Thursday 16th February was a very successful and enjoyable evening. Nearly 40 came along to enjoy watching the horse races and 'betting' with the 'fun money' that Val Douglas handed out to everyone as they arrived and Rupert Kipping sold them their raffle tickets. Alan Woolstencroft and Andrew Fairburn did a great job organising the races and taking the 'bets' and announcing the winners. The four races were each sponsored – the first race by Malcolm Douglas which was named Henry's Handicap, John Bennett had sponsored the second race and named it President's Handicap. John Smith and Stephen Jakeman sponsored the third and fourth races naming them Wroxton House Handicap and Jakeman Handicap.

Each race had eight horses and every one of them was sponsored by either those who were not able to attend or those that had been able come along. Some of the names were very amusing, one being Hoof Hearted and Brian Cornley's was Birthday Boy as it was his actual birthday that evening. Carole Humphris from Inner Wheel also sponsored two horses calling one SewSaw, which is the charity she is supporting during her year as President. Hopefully everyone enjoyed their evening and the lovely curry supper that Pink Peppercorns prepared in their usual tasty way.

The sponsored horse winners were Richard Watts whose horse was called The Wonderful Beast, Val Douglas's horse called Rampant, Monty's Mate, my sponsored horse – named after my lovely Tibetan Terrier dog – won the third race which was exciting (for me) and a guest, Betty Lawson won the fourth race with her horse called Betty Booth. There were also lots of other winners who used the 'fun money' and the winner who won the most 'fun money' during the evening was my manfriend Joe Bright. Malcolm presented him with a bottle of champagne.

As it was an evening to raise money for international charities, including Aquabox, Malcolm Douglas, Chairman of the International Committee would like to thank everyone who supported the evening which raised over £460. Rtn Helen Morris

Rotary Young Chef of the Year.

The final of this year's local Rotary Young Chef of the Year competition took place at the Oxford and Cherwell Valley college on 7th February. There were eight students taking part and their resulting menus were of a particularly high standard. The winner was 17 year old Megan Gambrell who was presented with the winner's trophy by Town Mayor Alastair Milne Home.



Representatives of Banbury Charities were also there and presented the other certificates as they had sponsored the event. Megan then went on to the District final in Reading.

STOP PRESS. Megan has won the District competition and goes on to the final in Brighton.

John's Jotting's



President John Bennett

In November I promised myself that I would arrange for a proper service on my mower during the winter months, to get rid of the slipping clutch and be ready for the new year's growth. Well I forgot - the grass is growing like mad and the mower is at the service centre waiting for parts.

I've just been making a list of all the other things I intended to do during the winter and realise depression is setting in. But on the positive side, I have done a few things with Rotary this month, starting with:

7th February: Attended the Banbury Young Chef competition at the college (do they still call it the college?) and witnessed a display of culinary excellence from the talented competitors. The event was a great success and several of the student's parents were full of praise for Rotary - for arranging the competition and making them feel so welcome.

10th February: Meeting with Ian Rodrick, David Sullivan & Andrew Fairbairn (Martin Phillips is in USA lucky chap) to agree a Memorandum of Understanding, which establishes the commitment and the limitations of Rotary's involvement with the Tour de Trigs.

16th February: Enjoyed the Race Night organised by the International Committee, which not only encouraging those present to become addicted to gambling, but also raised some valuable funds for Aquabox and Aqua-filter. I left with my shirt still in place.

20th February: Meeting at Deddington with the organising committee of the Tour de Trigs in the company of Ian Rodrick and Andrew Fairbairn Martin in USA, (still a lucky chap). It was their first full meeting after confirming that the Tour would go ahead this year. We were invited to attend, mainly to observe, but we were impressed with the enthusiasm of the committee (about 20 people) and the plans & facilities already in place.

23rd February: The monthly Council Meeting at home. As ever, details will be passed on at committee meetings. Only one bottle of red wine consumed this time. (where was Martin?). That's funny - February seemed to be busier than that. However, March is getting off to a busy start with the finals of the Young Musician on Saturday 3rd See you there? The DG's coming!

John.

Community and Vocational.

The annual Party for the Blind will be held on 16th May 2012. It is proposed to have a stall at the Dragon Boat event. It was agreed that we should support the Banbury Food Bank and that members would be asked to donate an item of food to this cause. The Old Ford Rally was again being held this year and Rotary have been asked to take part in some fund raising at the event.

Foundation.

The two targets set us by Rotary Foundation have been reached.

The target of \$100 per member has been reached for Foundation also the £6,000. For Polio has also been sent to District.

An excellent result for our Club.

Stephens Steaming is booked for June 17th 2012.

Sports & Entertainment.:- Club Quiz 5th March. District Conference, Bournemouth 15th – 18th March 2012.

The Club Outing is arranged for the 10th April to Lord s Cricket ground.

Golf :- Bigwood Trophy is fixed for Thursday 30th August.

Spring and Autumn Comps to be arranged, also awaiting date for the 4B s competition.

International:- John Hansford is arranging details for the Contact visit to Italy on 17th - 20th May 2012 with a possible stay over at Lake Maggiore. Andrew Fairbairn will be conducting his "The Shelterbox Olympic Challenge" from Porthleven to Weymouth with overnight stops on the way. He is also showing Shelterbox at the District Conference in Bournemouth.

Youth Opportunities. A full programme of events are taking place:- Young Musician, Young Chef, Practice

Interviews and RYLA. It is hoped to attract a R.Y.L.A. candidate from the Frank Wise school. The possible schedule of events for the next Rotary year have been listed together with the likely costings.

Treasurer'sTalk.

Frugal Lunch

For the information of our newer members, and a reminder for those of us with short memories, a brief word about our recent Frugal Lunch.

Every year around this time, usually to coincide with Rotary founder Paul Harris's birthday, we have a Frugal Lunch. At our ordinary Friday meetings all of the £10 that we pay for our lunch goes to our caterer, Pink peppercorns, and excellent value it is to.

However, for our frugal lunch we still pay the full £10 but ask the caterer to provide us with more frugal fair for a payment of £5. The other £5 that we all pay is deemed a free will donation to Foundation on which a Gift Aid tax refund can be claimed.

As a result of our recent Frugal Lunch we collectively donated £285 to Foundation which will be supplemented by a further £70 from Gift Aid, making a total of £355.

Where the money goes

During February payments have been made to the following:

Family Christmas Festival of Music

British Red Cross - £36

Young Chef

District 1090 (Entry Fee) - £45

Sew Sublime (Whites etc) - £334

Young Musician

Ban' Print & Design (Letters&Certs) - £37

Race Night

Pink Peppercorns - £370

4 race winners - £40

Donations

Katharine House Hospice - £2500

RF(UK) End Polio Now - £4000

HFT -£300

Brodey Bursaries

Tom Mitson - £200

Tim Traynar - £200

Jonathan Brown - £200

Michael Wheeldon - £200

Matt Titman - £200

Tom Gambrell - £200

"Free Funds" currently stand at just over £8,400

SPEAKER REPORTS. J.Webb,

Friday 10February2012.

Due to the snowy conditions that prevailed on February 10th the booked speakers could not attend and their host John Webb agreed, at short notice, to regale the assembled Rotarians with his memories of his time spent at R.A.F. Upper Heyford as an employee of the M.P.B.W (The Ministry of Public Building and Works) in 1962.

John started at the R.A.F. station after he had asked his previous employer for a pay rise which was not forthcoming. John stated that he asked for a rise on the Wednesday and it was not in his pay packet on Friday. When he asked where the rise was he was told he was not getting one and so, as jobs were easy to come by in those days he told his employer, "No rise, no John", and didn't go back on the Monday morning. John said he had another job before his P45 arrived at his home in the post the next weekend as he had by then already been to see George Gray, a well known footballer in the Jersey League and then a well respected football referee who was the Chief Clerk for the Ministry on the R.A.F Station. George was all for

youth being gainfully employed and took John on immediately. He was then partnered to Fred Cousins who worked on the heating systems on the station and whose main job was "dosing". John said he was not sure whether this was dosing the water lines with scale inhibitor or dosing off to sleep in the nice warm boiler houses but, under Fred's careful education he soon became proficient at both tasks.

He was then seconded to the airfield gang on duties with the American Air Force who occupied the base at the time which involved work on the underground pipelines and the couplings at ground level that enabled B47 bombers to be refuelled quickly and efficiently and readied with their two atomic bombs to fulfil their mission of bombing Russia as this time was at the height of the cold war and the U.S. Air Force was at the forefront of combating the threat of nuclear war from their bases in the British Isles and Germany. The fun and camaraderie he enjoyed with the motley crew of workers with which he worked could fill a book as there was on his team an ex military man who had driven fuel tankers in the desert for Montgomery during the Africa Campaign of WW2, a quiet old man who had worked on the camp all through the war with the English "Heyford" bombers, and a really good old boy who could always be relied on to supply eggs, chickens, pheasants, rabbits or any other game requested, so long as no questions were asked as to their origin. John said the goods supplied were always of good quality and very reasonably priced which helped this old boy to have a continual supply of Digger Flake tobacco for his battered and gurgling pipe.

John also described the servicemen of small brains from the swamps of Alabama and Georgia who were conscripted and then allocated to the Air Police and were assigned to guarding the armed aircraft on their airfield hard standings. What they lacked in brains they made up for in shooting skills and their brief was to kill anyone who entered the restricted space they patrolled without authorization. John said that all the ministry men were always on their guard as these men's prowess with a rifle was regularly shown by their accuracy at target practice on the rifle range, and they would compete to see if they could put a ten shot magazine of bullets into the target bull's-eye without making many holes. The best that was ever displayed had only two ragged holes in the centre of the target which the instructor had signed the log that ten shots had been discharged at the target. Whether this was to be believed or not was for others to judge, but it was taken by everyone that these men only needed one bullet to see you having half a day out with the undertaker, so it was best not to take the chance. Another insight into the life of one of our members which are always both revealing, informative, honest and fun.

When it was revealed to the assembly that John was the speaker and not the ladies who were originally booked the number of booked "early leavers" who leave before the speaker does his bit rose considerably. However, when John rose to speak the members who had left were very few, and those remaining enjoyed the impromptu speech and showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

Rotarian John Smith

John gave his 'My Life' talk on Friday 17th February. Helen Morris had invited John to the Fun Races Membership

Evening in April 2011 and after several lunches John became a member of Rotary on 28th October 2011. In 1959 John was born in Barrowford near Nelson, East Lancashire and mentioned that in that year inflation was 0.9%, the Austin Mini was £500, the average house was £5,000, the Ben Hur film was released and Harold MacMillan was the Prime Minister. When John was 3 years old his family moved to North Devon.

John's father was a dentist in

Nelson but suffering with high blood pressure, which was initiated by being shot at whilst in the RAF during the war, the family moved to Bideford, North Devon where he became a School Dentist.

John felt he had a wonderful childhood with a family that loved him so much seemed a little surprised when they 'packed him off' to a school at 13. However, this turned out to be a great time too, playing rugby, cross country running, athletics, squash and doing a bit of work. After that he went to the Welsh National School of Medicine in Cardiff to follow his father's profession in dentistry and spent two and a half years learning Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, fillings, local anaesthetics, and extractions of false teeth. However, after a short chat with the Dean of the Dental School, John left the course but he offered his services to fellow Rotarians although he admitted that he couldn't do crowns.

Whilst realising he needed a proper job in something like banking or insurance, John decided to earn some money at the Cardiff Crest Hotel who were looking for part time staff and without any delay he was offered the 'temporary' job as a Banqueting Porter (which meant moving chairs from one hall to another) and became Assistant Banqueting Manger and the Banqueting Manager within two and a half years. The Millennium Stadium (which was previously

Cardiff Arms Park) had Rugby Six Nations event and the hotel was 36 hours on the go with corporate hospitality. Not great for the staff to hear the fun at the stadium whilst working hard at the hotel.

John then moved on to Bournemouth where he was the Junior Assistant Manager at a very busy hotel especially at week-ends. He met lots of celebrities during his time there - Dozy Beaky Mick & Titch Wayne Fontana and Dave Berry and earned the hotel a lot of money - £1,000 which was a lot of money 30 years ago. It was during his time at this hotel where he interviewed a lovely lady to be the Restaurant Manager and it was Gill who later became Mrs Smith.

After this John came to Bridge Street, Banbury where the Crest Head Office was based and he was offered a year's training to be a chef at Shoppenhangers Manor for six months (where it was mainly nouvelle cuisine) and a Receptionist at Gatwick Holiday Inn for the other six months. Returning to the Crest Head Office after this John was offered jobs in Peterborough or St Albans. Visiting both areas John thought that St Albans would be the better place to live as it was quite a 'posh' place to live but, when considering the cost of the houses, he decided that Peterborough was going to be a much better place to live!! The day after the Peterborough interview John got married to Gill in the Company issue morning suit.

John was the Front of House Manager in Peterborough and had an experience on how not to speak to lady staff! The first house was bought for £23,500 and his first child Emma was born soon after. However, the job didn't feel like it was going anywhere.

So in 1987 John became the Manager of the Tickled Trout, a 60 bed roomed hotel. A very busy hotel and restaurant. It was at this time that his second daughter Sarah was born. The hotel group was expanding rapidly and John was asked to go to Dunkenhalgl, between Blackburn and Accrington. This hotel had 67 bedrooms with a large function room and pub with leisure club and restaurant - it was never dull at the Dunk. John mentioned lots of experiences meeting Cynthia Payne, who met the local vicar at Salesbury Church for a Chernobyl Children visit. Lots of Blackburn Footballers came too - Kenny Dalglish, Colin Hendry, Kevin Gallagher, Alan Shearer, Tim Flowers, Chris Sutton and Graeme Le Saux and the Arsenal and Chelsea teams both stayed at the hotel. Another strange experience was that a wedding guest was shot at. It was a great time for John and Gill was an honorary WAG and when their son Adam was born.

John received a Manager of the Year Award at the Grosvenor House, Cumberland and in 1997 John decided to buy their own hotel called the Forest and Vale Hotel. This only had 18 rooms but was a handsome Georgian property with a lovely walled garden and it was a lot less stressful working for himself. Over the next 10 years all the rooms were refurbished and four bedrooms had extensions put on. Again a very busy hotel with christenings, weddings, funerals, ladies lunches, Rotary and Lions groups. His son Adam used to hang up the coats. One of the renovations was moving the bar but because of licensing, it all had to be put back - very traumatic experience. In the ten years the turnover was tripled.

In 2007 John decided to retire and sold the Forest & Vale to enjoy having holidays and watching his son Adam play rugby but he got bored and so on 18th December 2008 he bought the Wroxton House Hotel, part of the Maypole Group and moved to the Banbury area where we are very lucky to have John as a member of our Rotary Club and hear a very interesting My Life talk.

Helen Morris

LUNCHTIMESPEAKER FRIDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2012

Our speaker today was Julian Knowles, fund raising coordinator for Macmillan Cancer Support in Oxfordshire.

Julian provided a very interesting talk, supported by a visual presentation, on the work of Macmillan Support. The alarming statistics which he gave revealed that some 300,030 people were diagnosed with some form of cancer every year with a total of 4 million expected to be living with cancer in the future.

He went on to outline the areas of support provided to those diagnosed and undergoing treatment namely, financial, medical help, practical help and emotional support.

These are the main areas which can help the increasing numbers of people who can actually survive cancer and a staggering sum of £96.7 million is spent on cancer treatment and the idea is that the Macmillan can reach and improve the lives of sufferers and it has been proven that many patients, where possible, can be treated at home as opposed to being in hospital.

Macmillan is able to support a speciality need, in particular, for young people. There is also a very readily identifiable Macmillan cancer information bus which goes round the county to various locations and on the 26th and 27th March will be on display and to answer questions at Bond Square in Oxford.

Julian explained that there is no government support for the charity and a third of their funding comes by way of legacies and they like to seek out figureheads of organisations in order to raise regular funding in that way.

Nationally a surprising sum of £10 million had been raised in one year from coffee mornings.

Initially access to the Macmillan service is generally only available via the NHS. One can understand how stretched the service is as there are only 41 "Badged" Macmillan nurses in the county as permanent staff.

The service was founded 101 years ago by Douglas Macmillan and the service continues to grow and unfortunately appears to be in greater demand as time goes on.

Local fund raising events will take place in the form of a walk in the area on the same day as the Canal Day and on the 23rd and 24th June there is an event at MG live at Silverstone and on the 23rd September there is the Blenheim MG50 event at Blenheim Palace.

More information can be found on their website www.macmillan.org.uk.

A Vote of thanks was given by Bob Nurden

STREET ORGAN COLLECTIONS DECEMBER 2012.

The Community & Vocational Committee, together with our band of volunteer collectors once again visited the supermarkets in the weekends preceding Christmas to entertain the shoppers and collect for our general funds.

A jolly time was had by all, and special thanks should be given to John Webb who manned the participating organs for many hours during the four collecting days. Needless to say the club could not continue to support so many local, national, and international charities if it was not for the generosity of the public from Banbury and the surrounding areas.

As we agreed before the collections started 50% of the collection would go to the Katharine House Hospice and 50% to general funds. The collections amounted to £4,978-00 and club agreed to round up the donation to the hospice to £2,500-00.



John Webb was tasked with taking the cheque to the hospice on behalf of the club and being John he assembled some familiar faces and some that are not so well known from the Fund raising Dept. to accept the cheque.

In the photo you can see the familiar faces of Sheila and Wendy who are well known to many club members, but the other two are Dot and Marie. Dot is the lady who accompanies Pat to many functions throughout the year with the portable fund raising stall, and Marie provides much appreciated I.T. work in the Fund raising Dept. For many reasons front line staff are the usual "face" of the hospice, but it is always good to give a little appreciation to the many others who beaver away behind the scenes to make "our" hospice the loving place that we all know it to be.

The letter we received from the hospice tells of the care given last year to over 700 patients through the services provided by the hospice and of the extended service of "night nursing" that is now provided which enables patients to be cared for at home for longer than was previously possible. It also highlights the fact that general donations last year fell, but the Rotary Club donation rose and this enables the hospice to keep to its plan of nursing care for people and families at this difficult time in their lives.

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