



September 2020

Lord Saye receives the Paul Harris award

The Rotary Club of Banbury today presented Lord Nathaniel Saye & Sele with a Paul Harris award. It is named after Paul Harris, a Chicago lawyer who started Rotary International with three business associates in 1905. The designation as a Paul Harris Fellow is as a tribute to a person whose life demonstrates a shared purpose with the objectives of The Rotary Foundation.

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Rtn David Richardson the President of the Rotary Club of Banbury 2020-2021 accompanied by fellow Rotarian Maurice Humphris BEM, JP, DL made the presentation at Broughton Castle on the 19th August. He expressed his pride and pleasure that the Club had decided to make this award recognizing LORD SAYE & SELE as he becomes a Paul Harris Fellow. It is always given as a true recognition of a valued and sincere contribution to Rotary and the local Community. Lord Nathaniel Saye & Sele has been involved with the Rotary Club of Banbury since 1976.

It was noted that in normal circumstances it would have been a presentation made with all of the members of the Rotary Club of Banbury present but restrictions relevant to COVID 19 were followed. It was also a chance to recognise that Lord Saye and Sele will be 100 years old in September so it was an opportunity to wish the recipient many happy returns for that very special birthday.

Lord Saye & Sele's response was to express his excitement at receiving the honour of a Paul Harris Fellowship. In a letter to the President of the Rotary Club of Banbury he expressed his warmest thanks to all members of the Rotary Club of Banbury and added that to be involved with Rotary over many years had been the very greatest of pleasure. "Little did I think that I would one day receive such an award - I am both proud and humble.



Communication in the new normal

Last month John Groves gave a talk entitled communication in the new normal.

It looked at how the general, inexorable drift in communication towards digital and online sources has been given a massive boost by the Covid-19 pandemic situation. He warned that the communication methods most popular with club members is anything but typical of the population as a whole and that failure to grasp this could have dire implications for club's future.

Whilst recognising the quality of some of our existing methods of communication questions were raised as to whether

we had a coherent and sufficiently broad communication strategy or an adequate information flow mind-set to assist those delegated to manage the different media.

He then took members on a whistle-stop tour of the website focussing predominantly upon the members area which requires a log-in to access. Members were encouraged to visit this on a regular basis. Patience was urged if they had to update their password leaving a few minutes between receiving and using the update link email. If they needed help to sort a password they were urged not to give up but to email him as he could change it for them.

The members' area contains recent notices and events although, again, this could be made even more useful if all club members got into the habit of

"Think Internet and Social Media" as well as more traditional forms of communication. Additionally the area has a plethora of useful information such as: members roles and contact information, committee make-up and minutes, advice on organising activities etc. etc.

He concluded by saying the club needed to take-on-board the emerging "New Normal" at club, committee and individual member level if we were to continue to survive and thrive.

The session gave rise to extensive discussion of a predominantly positive nature which included talk about of the balance of paper vs digital, the use of social media and the idea that some in-house IT training amongst the members might help.

The Rotary Club of Banbury
Rotary International
Club no 19229 District 1090



Thoughts of current President August 2020:

The Rotary Club of Banbury has suffered like everybody else in the country from the constrictions imposed and various knock on effects from the battle we all face with the Covid 19 pandemic.

Most members are a happy and integral part of our multi-national and international organisation who all want to help people, alleviate poverty and improve the world we live in. The fundraising and community service record we have with End Polio Now, Shelterbox, St Katherines Hospice plus Alan's Africa and projects in Sierra Leone and in India plus the concerts held for Children Singing for Children plus the Crocus concerts, Xmas parcels to name just a small number are spectacular. Also the organisation of the Young Chef and Young Musician competition were wonderful.

Face to Face meetings were a weekly enjoyable event. Meetings are now by Zoom and we are all getting better at using modern technology.

We are also beginning to see that the lockdown imposed and the fight against the coronavirus may give us a chance to update and make many needed changes to fit in with a modern multi racial mobile and multi tasking population.

Rotary year runs from 1st July to 30th June. Many thanks to Surinder Deshi whose great time as 2019-2020 President was somewhat spoilt by the lockdown imposed in the last three months but it was still a very successful and enjoyable year for members.

The Club held its usual year planning meetings at the end of June and July 2020 and will implement all the proposed and planned events as and when we can. Meetings on Zoom continue with speakers, quizzes and debate. There is continuing enjoyment and involvement with great expectations of glorious events to come.

It is easy to visit us whilst meetings are on Zoom so please do so. We welcome visitors and have capacity for new members. Details on web site – if any problem

It is a great experience being President of the Rotary Club of Banbury. The Club has now started its 85th year. A glorious achievement that we will recognise regularly throughout 2020-2021 and hopefully seriously celebrate when properly possible.

David Richardson President Rotary Club of Banbury 2020-2021

John Bennett receives the Paul Harris award

'Rotarian John Bennett has been around for many years. He has always shown willing and got his hands dirty at most of the events the club has staged. He is a great example of a modern and future Rotarian getting deeply involved with our events and our fund raising locally and worldwide and having an ever growing awareness of what is happening here and in the world. John is a real example of what a Rotarian should be like.

The PH award is always given as full and proper recognition of a valued sincere contribution.

John responded saying that he was quiet and unassuming so I added that the PH was also given to those who were quiet and unassuming about their valued contribution.'



When hybrid cars were cool...

At the 7th August Zoom meeting Stephen Groves gave a talk entitled "When Hybrid Cars were Cool."

The hybrids he talked about were not the petrol/electric hybrids that we're all familiar with but luxury cars of the 1960/70s with a European body and American v8 engine.

After a brief introduction the three vehicles that he subsequently focussed on were the:

- Facel Vega II
- ISO Grifo
- Jensen Interceptor.



All had limited production runs and the expression "If you need to know the price then you probably can't afford it!" seemed to fit well. In their day they were aimed very much at the super-rich, and celebrity market.

The performance data for all the vehicles revealed they out-shine the huge majority of vehicles on the road today some fifty years later – with the exception of fuel consumption and maybe reliability.

The talk included fascinating facts about the rise and fall of these companies. It also included mention of the issues involved in selecting and restoring them.

It finished with one of the stand-out UK offerings: the Jensen Interceptor which was specifically included because the World's largest Jensen dealer / restorer is just down the road in Croppedy. (In post-pandemic times it may be possible to arrange a visit.)

After fielding a few questions he was thanked for a talk that was as entertaining as it was informative.

The contribution of non Europeans to two wars...

At the beginning of September, Rotarian Cllr Surinder Dhesi gave a talk about the contribution of Sikh and Indian soldiers during the first and second world wars. Her account is reprinted here:

The UK's official commemoration of World War I and II white washes a good deal of the truth in relation to the contribution and sacrifices made by Sikhs and other non-European nations and communities.

After the British Empire seized control of the Sikh Kingdom based in the land of the five rivers, called Punjab, in the Northern Indian subcontinent, the British recognised the bravery, high moral character and sincerity of Sikhs and enrolled them in their Army.

Sikhs made up 2% of India's total

population, however at the start of World War I, 22% of the Indian Armed Forces were Sikhs. Sikhs enrolled having been given the promise that Sikhs would be granted independence their Sikh Kingdom would be returned (a promise which was fulfilled).

Sikh soldiers came to the Western European Front in September 1914 and after the bloody battle of Neuve Chappell in 1915, Sikh regiments lost 80% of their men. Three Sikh regiments were left with only 16% of their original numbers of men.

130,000 Sikh men took part in World War I and up to 75,000 died in World War I.

A Sikh contingent proved vital backup to the British Forces in France in 1940 and these mule transport companies



were evacuated at Dunkirk. they received praise from British officers for their discipline and exemplary conduct in the midst of chaos.

Following Dunkirk, they were stationed in Britain until 1943 to provide vital back up on the home front.

Sikh pilots such as Mahinder Singh Pujji was one of seven fighter pilots chosen to join the RAF. He flew Hurricanes, engaging German aircraft in dogfights over the English Channel during the Battle of Britain. He was one of the 24 Indian Air Force pilots sent to Britain in September 1940. Others flew bombers, making many operational flights over Germany and later commanding an Indian Air Force squadron in Burma. The Royal Air Force needed to make up a shortage in pilots by actively recruiting personnel from across the Commonwealth.

In addition to meeting her own requirements, India's new factories maintained a regular supply of vital war materials to her Allies. Textiles were sent to 15 countries. India would supply 37,000 of the 50,000 different textile articles required by the United Nations in the war. India was the third largest consignor of supplies to Australia for the Pacific war. Russia and China also received much war material from a India.

South Asian merchant seamen living around the ports of London, Cardiff, Liverpool and South Shields also played a significant role during the war. These sailors helped to ensure that the supply lines to Britain remained open and provided vital manpower often working under atrocious conditions for less pay than their white counterparts.

Sikh regiments played a major part in the operations in Italy, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, East

Africa and the Far East. The Fourteenth Army in Burma was the largest single army in the world. Its battle front of 700 miles was approximately as long as the Russian Front against Germany. By the end of the war, 14 Victoria Crosses were awarded to the Sikhs, whom fought on land, sky and sea.

One would wonder where all the black and brown soldiers have gone when you learn about World War 1 and World War 2!

History books and schooling, as well as movies shown on television, and commemoration coverage on mainstream media seem to hide the fact that non European soldiers fought in the war. When the BBC decided to do some coverage, they only did separate smaller pieces outside of its mainstream material, to give some kind of skimpy acknowledgement to the non white contribution. All of this is very painful for British Sikhs whose forefathers fought and died on the front-line for this country.

The turban, the beard, the brown face, the black face of countless Sikh, Gurkha, Pathaan, Bengali, African, Muslim, Arab and South Indian soldiers should have been shown and visible and positively embraced by British Politicians and World Leaders.

But it simply isn't.

Sadly and painfully we remain but a



speck in the whole official story.

After the end of World War I, within six months, the British Empire, which needed Sikhs so badly in 1914-18, turned its own machine guns on them in the gory Jilian-Wara Bagh Amritsar Massacre in 1919.

In 1946 Colonel Landed Saras-Field lamented and argued in agonising terms

about the 'Betrayal of the Sikhs' during the grotesque and undemocratic British-Indian colonial 'Transfer of Power' of 1947. In a direct call to the British government, he protested about how the Sikh political and economic interests had been totally forgotten, carving up the two states of India and Pakistan and not living up to the promise of giving back Sikhs their kingdom in the Northern region of the Indian subcontinent.

I hope this country can move forward by recognising the contribution of Sikhs and other ethnic minorities in the World Wars by acknowledging the facts in history and taught in schools, and the future generation can grow up to know and celebrate the braveries and heroism of nations like the Sikhs and others, and also recognise the ugly reality and cruelties of the British Empire so we can learn to make a better future for all.

Rotary Youth Services

Chas Cairns, the District 1090 Youth Services Leader, spoke to the Friday Club Zoom meeting on 21 Aug 20. He outlined various Rotary Youth competitions that continued despite current COVID restrictions: Young Environmentalist, Artist, Writer, Photographer and Film Makers. He reminded organisers that Club winners of these competitions needed to be identified to District before 28 Feb 21 for their progress to national heats.

Nominations could be entered for national Rotary Young Citizen and Sporting Hero Awards for under 25-year olds, and a STEM oriented Technology Tournament was available for local school groups (although there was no District representative for this yet). He also confirmed that there would be no face-to-face Rotary Youth competitions held

nationally this year, but Young Chef, Young Musician and Youth Speaks competitions would continue at Club and District level.

Chas then went on to outline various ways in which Clubs could attract and interest young people in a long-term commitment to Rotary and our ideals through organising local Rotakids, Interact and Rotaract groups. Explanatory booklets on how these challenges could be achieved was available through him, although there was a postage charge.

Full details and contact information for all of the topics Chas covered can be found on District 1090 webpages.

Battle of Waterloo - 18th June 1815

What we know as the Battle of Waterloo was, in reality a series of 4 battles fought over 3 days in June 1815.

Napoleon had escaped his exile on Elba, returned to France, collected an army of 120,000 men and was again threatening the peace of Europe.

The British and the Prussians blocked Napoleon's advance on Brussels. The British fought a drawn battle on the 16th June at Quatre Bras just south of Brussels but the Prussians were defeated at Ligny, a little to the east. The Prussians withdrew to the east towards Germany but instead of maintaining that direction they turned north during that night and then turned westwards back towards Wellington and the British, giving the following French corp the slip.

So by Sunday 18th a quarter of the French army was vainly trying to find the elusive Prussians while the bulk of the British army was confronted by Napoleon and the remainder of the French army. Torrential rain overnight prevented the battle starting much before noon when the French opened with an attack on the fortified farm called Hougoumont on the British right flank. That part of the battle raged all day but thanks to the efforts of the Coldstream guards garrison, it was never taken. An attack by the bulk of the French infantry in early afternoon nearly broke the British defensive line but was eventually repulsed by the British heavy cavalry counter attack which resulted in 2 French eagles being taken as trophies. Mid to late afternoon saw repeated attacks by French cavalry on the famous British infantry squares. Horses, being more sensible than men, will not run at a bristling hedge of bayonets and the squares held on until the French horses were blown and tired. During the afternoon, all British staff eyes were turned eastwards looking for the expected approach of the Prussians returning to battle as promised to Wellington by Marshal Blucher. Napoleon saw them coming too and had to order his elite Imperial Guard to make one last desperate attempt to break the British lines before the arrival of the Prussians on his own right flank. The Guard attacked

uphill to what they thought was an empty skyline only to find themselves confronted by the British Brigade of Guards who had been held back behind the ridge by Wellington for just such an occasion. For the first time in their history the French Imperial Guard were repulsed and fled back downhill. The rest of the French army saw this retreat and there followed full scale panic and rout. 45,000 dead and wounded in one day moved Wellington to comment afterwards, "Next to a battle lost, the greatest misery is a battle gained." Napoleon was exiled again, this time for good, to St Helena and died 6 years later still blaming everyone for the defeat except himself. The battle did produce relative peace for Europe and the next major conflict was 40 years later in the Crimea, when, ironically, the British had the French as their allies!