



President Richard Watts

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" PEACE ON EARTH "



COMING AND GOING WITH A PURPOSE: A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

When it comes to Christmas shopping, there are broadly two sorts of shoppers. On the one hand, there are the people who have no clear idea what they are going to buy, but simply know for whom they need to buy. Then, on the other hand, there are those like me who have a list with all the things to get already decided. As far as possible this second group will not be satisfied with anything other than the item that they have earmarked as a gift for each person on their list.

In other areas of life too some people seem to know exactly what they want and will not be sidetracked from doing their best to achieve that, whilst others seem to meander along without having much idea what they are aiming at or where they are going, but often enjoying themselves a great deal on the way.

Some music can seem like that. The nineteenth century Austrian composer Bruckner wrote some very long symphonies and if you are not in sympathy with his style it may seem that his music is all rather aimless and taking a long while to go nowhere. Sir

Thomas Beecham (who did not like this composer) said of his 7th Symphony: "In the first movement alone I took note of six pregnancies and at least four miscarriages", meaning that for him the music never seemed to get anywhere. Yet in the hands of a sympathetic conductor, Bruckner's music can be shown very clearly to hang together and be going somewhere.

Similarly, the Christmas story is not just a pretty tale suitable for the children to present in nativity plays, but is all about people who knew exactly where they were going because they believed that God had spoken to them.

The wise men set out looking for the new-born King and they would not be deflected until they had found him. The shepherds, once they had heard that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem, could not rest until they had seen the baby for themselves. Mary and Joseph were ready, at God's direction, to go to Bethlehem and for Jesus to be born to them, despite the disgrace that would come their way as they weren't married when Mary became pregnant.

Of course, we can't say that the baby Jesus asleep in the stable knew what God wanted at that precise moment, but, as He grew up, He became aware that He had come to this world for a special purpose.

So all the characters in the Christmas story are like the shopper who knows just what he/she wants to buy or the conductor who knows exactly what the music is all about and where it is going. Indeed, the Christmas story is all about God sending His Son into the world to change the world and bring new hope, peace, and, above all, love. It is a story with a meaning and a purpose about a God who has a meaning and purpose for this world and for everybody in it.

So this Christmas let us rejoice at the baby born in the stable to show God's love. May we accept this love that God offers us through Christ and so discover a new sense of direction and purpose in our own lives. This is a wonderful Christmas gift which lasts not just for 12 days or so, but all the year round.

Alan Haine



James Walter Johnson. It was with regret that we heard of the death of Rotarian Jim Johnson. Jim, as he was known to everyone, was about to reach his 85th birthday having been born on 21st. November 1923. He joined Rotary in 1972 and in his over 35 years of service to our club he gained the respect and admiration of all of us. Although Jim never aspired to high office he was always active in supporting committee chairmen and the various Presidents that he served under. He was particularly interested in International Service and helped in the planing for the contact visits by our twinned Rotary clubs from Europe. He also served for many years on the Sports and Entertainment Committee and together with David Barlow organised many club outings always ensuring that the venues chosen were up to standard. He supported our Winter breaks and was a regular member of our teams at the District Darts Competition. He was also a valued member of the team winning the District Quiz final. He had an extensive grasp of general knowledge. As Maurice Humphris said at his service he was always on hand to help in club duties at our lunchtime meetings.

The funeral took place at St. Mary's Church Adderbury where many Rotarians and friends attended to pay their respects to a man who earned the respect and friendship over many years.

We gathered afterward at Banbury Cricket club to pay our respects to his wife Barbara and the family.

D.H.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Well it is hard to believe that I am virtually half way through my Presidential year. It has been fairly busy but the year really seems to take off in the run up to Christmas and the pace continues throughout the next 6 months with street organ collections, the Christmas float, mock interviews, young musician, District Conference, and the Contact visit by our European friends, not forgetting all the other Rotary events that we will try and fit in. Yes it does mean a commitment from all members but that is the fun of it all. I'm sure that as well as the fellowship and socialising, we all get a great deal of satisfaction in helping others who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Thank you all for your continued support. I look forward to an enjoyable, if busy, second half of my Presidential year.

It's Christmas time, mistletoe and wine... and I hope that together with good food and the company of family and friends you will all have a very enjoyable festive season. Perhaps January will be the time to roll out the sponsored diet again!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Best wishes Richard

WALMINGTON ON SEA was the venue for this years Inner Wheel party. After President Pat Calderbank's welcome we met with various local characters. Captain Mainwaring, Sergeant Wilson, Corporal Jones and Privates Pike, Godfrey and Walker who were there to show us how a Home Guard platoon should be run. That was until the need of new recruits led to the Ladies platoon being formed. The local Inner Wheel club of course rose to the occasion after and an endless committee meeting in which this matter (and others) were discussed at length, a decision was finally made. The newly formed platoon marched on stage with shoulders back and "chests" out, they outshone

the men with their precision marching and in the way in which they handled their brooms and mops. Captain Mainwaring of course was not amused with this turn of events. After various manoeuvres the two platoons joined us the audience in a hot buffet supplied by "Good Food" of Bodicote and not a few glasses of wine. The evening was a great success with good food, good entertainment and good fellowship. President Pat thanked everyone on our behalf and President Richard Watts thanked Inner Wheel for entertaining so well.

D. H.



DIDYOU KNOW????

The world's first service club was the Rotary Club of Chicago, Illinois, USA. The club was formed on 23 February 1905 by lawyer Paul P Harris and three friends – a merchant, a coal dealer and a mining engineer. Harris wished to recapture the friendly spirit he had felt in the small town where he had grown up. The name "Rotary" was derived

from the early practice of rotating meetings among members' offices.

The first Rotary club was formed to promote fellowship among its members. Word of the club soon spread and other businessmen were invited to join. By the end of 1905, the Rotary club of Chicago had 30 members. Three years later, a second club was formed in San Francisco, California, USA. M. Douglas.

CORRESPONDENCE. From Henry Sleight to Mike Budd our first Brodey Bursary recipient.

I am writing to thank you for the cheque I received from the Ian Brodey Engineering Bursary Trust. Since speaking to you last month I have started my second year at Loughborough and am enjoying it as much as the first year. My second year modules are quite different to my previous year and the Bursary has enabled me to purchase new text books which have already proved very useful. I am particularly looking forward to the year-long project in which I will work as part of a small team to design and manufacture a folding travel 3 pin plug. I am also currently searching for local companies to work for during a one year industrial placement which

will begin during the summer of 2009. I have read in the Banbury Guardian about the three successful applicants to receive the bursary this year and I think it is excellent that they are able to get help from Norbar, and that they can have contacts to speak to which will enable them to gain valuable advice in the future. I am looking forward to meeting the club members again during the summer break and would be more than happy to present what I have been doing during my time at university. Would it be possible to meet with you during my Christmas break to see if there are any opportunities locally for an industrial placement? Your help would be greatly appreciated. Henry Sleight.

The Bulletin Committee is springing into action with new look bulletins and renewal of the vignettes of newer members. These latter used to be a valuable way vital of getting to know our most recent Rotarians and for those who happened to be absent for their inductions! Information will be drawn from interviews, life histories and any other method agreeable to the 'victim.' The brief notes will be included as occasional articles and in no particular order.

The first victim/volunteer is LEE DWYER who joined us earlier this year. Lee was born in West Ham east London in 1941, not the best of times or places to enter this world! as Lee says. On one side of his home were the docks and on the other a railway goods yard. His playing field was taken over by anti-aircraft guns whose aim was to protect the docks and railway, regarded as prime targets. As Lee was a babe in arms during the war, his recollections were minimal but he does recall the bombing and time spent in air raid shelters. The area was badly hit and the ruins were later to become the playground for he and his friends as they grew up. Schooling was nothing out of the ordinary for Lee and he had no clear career aim. After his parents died however, he moved to Essex to live with his sister and soon got a job with a company that had its own power generating system It was there that Lee took the first step on a ladder that was to take him

up to higher things. Lee says that he soon realised how great a proportion of our time is spent at work and he was determined to find out about everything he was involved in. His Chief Engineer noted this enthusiasm and put him on several courses which led to qualifications which led to him getting a post in charge of the water reclamation plant. Meanwhile, he had met and married his wife Joan and they frequently visited his brother who had met and married a Banbury girl. They liked the area so they decided to move here and we were fortunate in that would lead eventually to him joining the club. He had been appointed to a job with the Midlands Electricity Board on the distribution side. After some years with the board's training schemes he wound up as site co-ordinator in charge of the metering section at the Banbury depot. Lee and Joan have two sons and three grandchildren. His main interests are amateur dramatics and music, both of which he is able to fully enjoy after taking an early retirement package from his company. Lee thought that his life story was not the most exciting of reads but he enjoys life and fellow members will now know a bit more about him. His classification is Site Management electrical. John Cooke

At our recent S.G.M. the following appointments were approved for 2009-2010.

President :- **Roger Worrall**

1st. Vice President :- **Ron Barnett**

2nd. Vice President :- **John Bennett**

Treasurer :- **Tony Ilott**

Assistant Treasurer :- **Ted Wheatly**

Secretary :- **Ian Rodrick**

Assistant Secretary :- **David Sullivan**

Following the S.G.M. John Hansford outlined the plans for the forthcoming contact weekend May 21 – 24. The programme so far is Thursday welcome, then Rotarians to take their guests to various events planned by themselves. Friday, to Windsor Castle and then a boat trip on the River Thames. Dinner at Oxford in the evening.

Saturday morning at Sezincote House, then a free afternoon. The Gala Dinner to be held at the Heritage Centre, Gaydon with a tour of the Motor Museum. Sunday, Guests return home.



CHILDREN SINGING FOR CHILDREN.

St. Mary's Church once again echoed to the lovely voices of our local young children. Twenty schools took part on the three nights, Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday 11-13 November. This is the seventh year that our Rotary Club has been organising this event and each year brims with enthusiasm both from our organising committee and especially from the schools and children taking part. The quality of performance was certainly up to standard and the finale each evening with all the children singing "World in Union" is always a spine tingling event. The Young Musician of the Year finalists taking part also added to the enjoyment of the evening with Harriett Wells playing clarinet, Isabelle Bourne Swinton Hunter's cornet playing was particularly memorable and on the final evening Harriett Wells again played her clarinet.

The aim of the event is not only to give the children the opportunity of performing to a large audience but to raise funds for children's charities. This year the featured charities are the "Lets Play Project", "Skidz" and the Bwengu Project in Malawi. Approximately £4000 has been raised and will be distributed to the projects with the schools being informed of the success of their efforts. The Youth Opportunities committee led by Philip Cavill are to be congratulated for what is certainly a highlight of our Rotary Year. Thanks also go to our main sponsor "Bloxham School" and to all those who supported us by advertising in the programme. D.H.

2008's First Christmas Joke

Three men died on Christmas Eve and were met by Saint Peter at the pearly gates.

'In honour of this holy season' Saint Peter said, 'You must each possess something that **symbolizes Christmas to get into heaven.**'

The first man fumbled through his pockets and pulled out a lighter. He flicked it on.. **'It represents a candle'**, he said. 'You may pass through the pearly gates' Saint Peter said.

The second man reached into his pocket and pulled out a set of keys. He shook them and said, **'They're bells.'** Saint Peter said 'You may pass through the pearly gates'.

The third man started searching desperately through his pockets and finally pulled out a pair of women's panties. St. Peter looked at the man with a raised eyebrow and asked, 'And just what do those symbolize?'

The man replied, **'These are Carols.'** *And So The Christmas Season Begins.....*