



OBITER DICTA

The Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Colchester Forum

President: Andrew Grayston

www.colchesterforum.co.uk



OCTOBER 2012

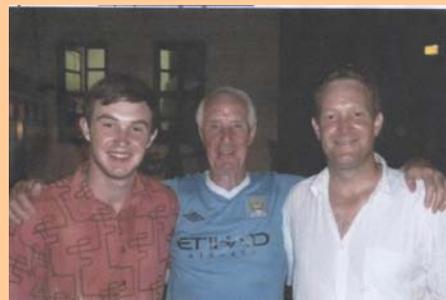


ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS

At our business meeting on Thursday the 27th of September two students from Stanway School came to tell us of their experiences whilst taking part in this programme. Isabella Moorby and Samuel Ryan had been to the day course at Brentwood and then chosen to take part in the 5 day programme in the Lake District in August. They were very grateful to us for making it possible.

THREE GENERATIONS OF RUSTAGES

See story on page 7



Alan tells the tale of an adventure holiday with a difference with his grandson Tom (left) and son Guy (right).

FORUM HAS OWN STALL AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE



LOUIS IS STILL LOOKING FOR HELP



Louis still needs more names of prospective members to approach for our next open evening. Please think of someone for him.

CLUB MEETINGS –October 2012

- 4th INFORMATION/DISCUSSION EVENT
- 11th HOSPITAL SHIP HMHS REWA – Fab Casales
Vote of Thanks: Bill Ward
- 18th WILLIAMS & GRIIFIN REFURBISHMENT
Rebekah Paczek
Vote of Thanks: John Parsonson
- 25th BUSINESS MEETING
Object of Rotary: Peter Blake

CLUB MEETINGS –November 2012

- 1st COLCHESTER WALLS PROJECT – Karen Turnbull
Vote of Thanks: Louis Thorp
 - 8th FOUNDATION & FUTURE VISION
Len Nieuwenhuis *Vote of Thanks:* Robert Jacklin
 - 15th RED CROSS FIRE & EMERGENCY SUPPORT
Dawn Hopkinson *Vote of Thanks:* Barry Donovan
 - 22nd BUSINESS MEETING
Object of Rotary: Tony Blaxill
 - 29th OLYMPIC MEMORIES – Ian Dewis, David & Pauline Jones, Alan & Rita Rustage. *Vote of Thanks:* President
- EVENING MEETING WITH GUESTS – ROSE & CROWN**

EDITORIAL



Editor: **Bill Ward**

The Olympics and Paralympics are now over. Despite all the knockers who forecast doom and disaster they were a great success. One factor was the great impact on the games made by the thousands of volunteers. They made us all feel a part of the event. We shall hear next month from our own coterie of volunteers about what it was like.

I enjoyed the games immensely and was lucky enough to see some of the tennis at Wimbledon (a first for me) and to go to the Stratford arena and see some of the Paralympic events. I found the courage of the blind long jumpers quite amazing. To be willing to hurl yourself into the air just with the guidance of a helper clapping his hands in front of you is more than I could do. It just showed that disability does not exclude achievement. (photos page 8)

Bill Ward

PRESIDENTIAL RAMBLINGS

What a week!

Starting off with a most enjoyable evening with the O2 performing Guys & Dolls at The Mercury with excellent Fellowship at The Old Court beforehand and very well supported by our club (that was Friday).

Saturday was the 90th Anniversary Dinner for Colchester Club at The Moot Hall. An excellent Black Tie celebration for Colchester who also entertained their Twin Clubs from Germany, France and Holland as well as local dignitaries.

Monday saw a visit to the Colchester Recovery Unit that the Club are visiting later on this month. I was in the honoured company of the RIBI President, the DG and other local presidents. Very impressive and I am sure that there are things such as Mock Interviews that we can do to help in the process.

Tuesday saw our esteemed golfers at The Colchester Golf Day in Aid of Holidays for Heroes. I joined in the evening dinner and David Jones won "nearest the pin".

Thursday Gill and I joined Halstead Club at their President's Charter Dinner at Colne Valley Golf Club where my brother is a member, and finally Gill and I, in the company of Irene, David and Christine, enjoyed the District Conference at Daventry for Saturday and Sunday morning. It is very interesting to see the wider picture and activities of Rotary with several ideas that we can take forward and great to hear people such as Sarah Storey with her 4 Paralympic Medals from the recent games and a fascinating life story.

We need more members to go to conference next year, it is to be just outside Norwich and well worth a go.

As you can see Rotary can be very involving and the problem with last week was that I would not have missed any of it as your President, but I have been in Rotary for many years and you don't have to do it all at once or indeed do more than you can cope with, with the other pressures of life. Enjoy your Rotary.

Andrew Crayston

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

October	6 th	District Council Meeting – Maltings Academy, Witham Saturday, 9am – 12.30pm (Forum acting as marshals.)
	10 th	Ray Burman PP RIBI – Presentation on Legislation – Marconi Sports Club, Chelmsford, 7 to 10pm
	13 th	Peldon Wine Night has been postponed
	17 th	Forum Golf Day – Colchester Golf Club
November	18 th	Visit to Personal Recovery Centre – after Rotary lunch.
	3 rd	Charity Collection – Co-op Stanway
	8 th	Mock Interviews – Thomas Lord Audley School
Dec	15 th	Mock Interviews – Alderman Blaxill School
	20 th	Mock Interviews – St Helena's School
	8 th	Saturday, Twilight Christmas Concert – St Mary's Church Wivenhoe, 4.30pm
	17, 18, 19 th	Station Collections 20 th
January 2013	20 th	Visit to Thursford
	23 rd	Intermediate Youth Speaks – Town Hall Colchester
	30 th	Senior Youth Speaks – Town Hall Colchester
March	2 nd	Peldon Wine Night – Peldon Village Hall (In aid of Jaipur Limb Project)
May	18 – 27 th	Cycling Watling Street. – In aid of End Polio Now.
June	23-26 th	RI Convention - Lisbon



Thursday 6th September 2012
PERSONAL RECOVERY CENTRE
Major Rob Thomas



Major Thomas is the officer commanding the Personal recovery centre in Colchester. He had left the army at the age of 55 but has returned to do his present job at the new purpose-built premises in the garrison.

The Aim

The aim of the Centre is to get their people back to duty as soon as possible or to fully support them to return to productive civilian life. The Centre supports all three services and reservists and also their families. It does not deliver any medical services. These are provided elsewhere before they come to Colchester.

The Story to date

The Centre opened on 8 May 2012 and has been very busy since. 120 different servicemen have been helped. They have had over 1,000 visitors. The centre is a fantastic building designed by a local architect and built by local builders. It has 27 bedrooms and 2 family suites. There is a gym, dining room and a bar.

There has been help from civilian companies in providing workplace experience but many more willing companies are needed. Many servicemen have no experience of a civilian job. They look for transferable skills. There is a need to help improve literacy and numeracy skills and train in IT abilities. There is also a need for life skills such as cooking and budgeting. Whilst serving, servicemen find that everything is done for them and many have no idea of coping with day-to-day living on their own.

There is a lot of help needed with welfare in families. Some are in debt and some in social trouble. Financial help is available from different charities.

The residents need fun. Sports and recreation are provided. The Centre tries to take a holistic approach as everyone has different illnesses and problems. They are still feeling their way as the whole concept is new and evolving all the time.

W.W.

Thursday 13th September 2012
LIVABILITY
Rose Dutch



Rose is the chair of Treetops League of Friends which provides support for the Treetops High Dependency Unit in Highwoods. She worked there for 20 years but joked that she still cannot get away.

Rose came with Sue Bishop, the deputy manager of Treetops, to our lunch as she felt she needed support but Rose gave an emotional and thought provoking talk which left everyone very moved. The centre was opened by John Groome's Partnership which was founded to help disabled women, many of whom were flower and watercress sellers. He built a factory for handicapped girls to make artificial flowers. He also opened an orphanage in Clacton but work with children ended in 1969. John Groome's and Lord Shaftesbury's Charities merged in 2007 to form Livability.

Livability

Treetops is a home for people with neurological disorders, all of whom are wheelchair bound and need 24 hour trained support. Their aim is to provide a place where people can live as independently as possible in a family atmosphere. The Paralympics have made people realise that disabilities do not always restrict. The Christmas parties are legendary with the weeks of preparation all done by the residents.

Rose helped to found the League of Friends to provide all those extra things that are not paid for from official sources. They arrange days out to places such as the Zoo and Colchester Barracks. One resident Kaye, who has Down's Syndrome, loves theatre trips. A very special outing was when Rose took Kaye to meet Princess Ann at a Buckingham Palace Garden party.

The League of Friends is a registered charity and they raised £5,000 last year, every penny of which goes to the residents.

Financial pressures mean that the League of Friends is being asked to do more and more. They were asked to provide £2,500 for a "Split leg tilt table" to help residents stand upright. They had a "Mile of 5ps" but were short by £500 which they hope to raise soon.

W.W.

**Thursday 20th September 2012
STREET PASTORS AT WORK
Vivienne Wiggins**



Vivienne lives in Colchester and is the co-ordinator for Colchester Street Pastors. They have been doing their work on the streets of the town for 4 years.

Who are we? What do we do?

Street pastors are people who just want to be good neighbours. The organisation is based on twenty Colchester churches. On Friday and Saturday nights between 11pm and 4.30am they patrol the town centre. 8,000 people on average are there on a Saturday night and they are all spending money on entertainment, drink, food and taxis, often as much as £100 each a night. Most are having a really good time but 2 or 3% of them get into trouble. Some go out just to get really paralytic drunk.

The popular culture has shifted and much antisocial behaviour is as the result of family breakdown with many people leading chaotic lives. More expensive alcohol would not stop this. All street pastors wish is to do is to help in a non-judgmental way. They offer care in helping people get home safely and listen to their problems. They have to be expert in reading body language. When they see a couple interacting badly they find that just chatting will lead to the man walking away. The best tool is a box of tissues. A lot of people do not have anyone to really talk to and suddenly find themselves desperately lonely in a crowd. Most people are reasonable but they often do not know their drink limit or realise how vulnerable they have made themselves.

The town is well policed with both civil and military police. There are 146 CCTV cameras in the town centre. The SOS bus offers good medical facilities.

Does it work?

Where there are street pastors the crime rate drops as the police can get on with policing and leave them to deal with those who just need help. Just by being there means that there are reliable witnesses which often stops things happening.

W.W.

**Thursday 27th September 2012
ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS
BUSINESS MEETING**

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards

A full programme with two visitors all the way across the seas from Mersea, two students from Stanway School and Phil Guy from Chelmsford Rotary Club, who is the district organiser for the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, for which Forum has donated £100 in each of the past four years. 50 students from District 1240 are selected each year to attend a course at Brentwood. This is part of the national scheme teaching leadership and communication skills. 15 of these are then selected to go on the national course involving three days in the Lake District. Isabella Moorby and Samuel Ryan spoke about their enjoyment of the course and thanked us for having helped make it possible.

Business Meeting

President: The President and Vice President are going to the District Conference with DAJ.

We are given advanced notice that the next RI Conference is in Lisbon on 23-26 June 2013.

Welfare: Steve Ling is seeing the specialist today because of angina. Ann Jackson is much better.

Secretary: We are stewarding the District meeting on 6th Oct and only 8 volunteers have so far come forward.

Club Service: Guys and Dolls went well with the reception in the Old Court House (better wine!)

The Canterbury trip has been cancelled. Discussions about the future role of the President are ongoing.

Community Service: The charities this year are CLIC Sargent, Treetops and Young Carers. The date of the Christmas celebration has had to be changed. David Judge has offered his display boards and club posters. The next collection is not for a named charity but for "Rotary Charities" to see if we can raise money instead of the 10% rule.

New Generations: The Kingsford School Literacy programme continues and we are still collecting books for their library. Youth Speaks is being organised. John Russell will meet the new Rotaract President when the University term starts. Jo is still selling on e-bay but has just about run out of items to sell.

International: We were waiting for the District grant to arrive before sending our money to the Meerhoff School but they have asked for it as soon as possible and John Lloyd wishes to send a first amount soon.

W.W.

Forum Freewheelers

EVENING MEETING – THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 20th

At Viv Juniper’s invitation, we had a splendid venue for our first evening meeting as Freewheelers. Our speaker was Geraldine Russell who offered to tell us of her many adventures and misadventures in places as far apart as the rain forest of Eastern Australia, the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, Iceland, Nepal and the Pyrenees.

The Australian rainforest provided the most gruesome of pictures, not shown here, as we saw the after effects of the leeches which abound there. We saw the basic dwelling in Morocco where Geraldine and John spent a night and heard of people they chanced upon high up in the mountains. She spoke of the herdsman and his family who live in total isolation at 4,500 metres and, having made yak’s milk into butter, descend for two hours to the village to sell this to buy other supplies. We marvelled at the challenges that she and John set themselves and gasped at some of the weather conditions they had to contend with.

Geraldine told us how she and John have been walking in the mountains for many years even taking Chloe as a small baby in a sling. We all knew that Geraldine and John went on regular walking holidays but I don’t think we realised the remoteness and the heights they reached.

They obviously love the silence of the mountains and choose to go at the times when they know it is quietest. You can see the reason for the attraction when you see the beautiful photographs.

Thank you Geraldine for such a fascinating account of your travels.



Geraldine and John high in the mountains



Prayer flags in Nepal



Left:

Thank you to our hostess Viv for providing such an excellent venue for our meeting and arranging refreshments to complete the evening.

Right:

Geraldine recalls her adventures. She has many more she hopes to go on.



Future Events

- Thurs Oct 18** Venue Change Ploughman’s Lunch–Mary Hughes
Contact Mary by Monday 15th
- Thurs Nov 15** Lunch at Thatcher’s Arms, Mount Bures
Contact Rachel Hills
- Wed Dec 12** Christmas Celebration - Library at Milsom’s
12 for 12.30. Cost £28 for three course meal.
Contact Ann Stedman.

Our best wishes for a Happy Birthday

- Oct 6th** Sandra Putt
- Nov 15th** Ann Blaxill
- 17th** Lynne Lloyd
- 29th** Pauline Jones

THE CAR TREASURE HUNT.

The devilish ingenuity of David and Anne London was given its annual outing when teams of Rotarians, partners and friends (these last two classifications are rarely the same on these occasions) took to the roads for Forum's Treasure Hunt. Ten cars took part in the event on Sunday, September 2 on a course which had been officially measured at 28 miles. Thanks to navigational errors, a couple of cars ended up in completely the wrong places; one in Salcott and the other in Fingringhoe with one recording a mileage of 54.

The Treasure Hunt is primarily a fellowship event and David London has since confirmed that the handful of participants who are still talking to him felt this had been achieved. After 10% had been deducted for the Club and a further sum to pay for the prizes, an impressive £168 was raised for Essex Air Ambulance. This did not include the proceeds from the sale of Essex Air Ambulance key rings which went direct to the charity. The key rings were one of four items of treasure participants had to collect as they drove around the countryside completing a questionnaire.

Everyone showed considerable imagination in sourcing the treasure which also included a non-British coin, a Bounty bar and a pink wild flower. Anne has suggested future events should feature Fry's Chocolate Cream which she prefers! The afternoon was full of unforeseen challenges. Early cars found themselves driving across the start line of an international cycle race followed by a couple of hundred Lycra-clad racers and in Earls Colne Rotarians had to gate crash a parish garden party to collect clues in a churchyard. One five-year-old girl had to go without her pink fairy cake after it was sent flying when an enthusiastic running treasure hunter ran into her! The intrepid folk who survived all this excitement were given the clue: "Your final destination is on your right having connections with a former Prime Minister". This turned out to be The Thatcher's Arms at Mount Bures. By coincidence and maintaining the Parliamentary theme, Colchester MP Sir Bob Russell was in the car park as the first cars arrived. He clearly thought better of hanging around for hours to see everyone home, had his drink and left. At the end of the afternoon the fellowship continued over a meal at the pub.

The winners were a team of four comprising Louis and Jane Thorp and Michael and Elfie Jones. Jane and Louis also won last year.

Anne has declared the organisers will have a year's rest before the Londons get their Ordnance Survey maps out again. They talk of an evening town centre treasure hunt on foot in late spring, finishing at a hostelry for refreshments. David commented: "In a Utopian situation teams would set off at regular intervals in opposite directions, thus providing additional scope for confusion!" Watch this space.

Irene Kettle

Final thoughts on treasure and treasure hunts:

Godfrey: Do you mind telling me just what a scavenger hunt is?

Irene: Well, a scavenger hunt is exactly like a treasure hunt, except in a treasure hunt you try to find something you want, and in a scavenger hunt you try to find something that nobody wants. **My Man Godfrey**

"Not all treasure's silver and gold, mate." **Jack Sparrow, Pirates Of The Caribbean: The Curse Of The Black Pearl**

"There comes a time in every rightly-constructed boy's life when he has a raging desire to go somewhere to seek hidden treasure." **Henry Kissinger**

"The wise man does not lay up his own treasures. The more he gives to others, the more he has for his own." **Lao Tzu**

"Riches do not consist in the possession of treasures, but in the use made of them." **Napoleon Bonaparte**

"So, I spend all afternoon stuck in the car with my husband only to be greeted at the pub car park by Sir Bob Russell and David London. Fabulous, all my favourite people in one place; treasure indeed!" **Irene Kettle**



Left:
Our President looks lost even before he starts off.

Right:
The judges decision is final!!



THREE GENERATION HOLIDAY

Rita and I decided a few years ago that when our grand-children took their GCSE exams, there was usually a lull in school activities shortly afterwards. We thought it would be a good idea to have a last bonding holiday with them at this time, if possible, by inviting them for a paid holiday with us.

It was Rita's turn last year and she had a fabulous time taking our grand-daughter to Cuba. The two of them had a wonderful time. In July of this year it was my turn and I asked my grandson, Tom (17 years) if he would like to come with me, half expecting that he might think a holiday with an old crumbly might not be such a good idea. Anyway, he accepted and then I wondered about also asking his father (my son Guy) if he would like to join us. For various reasons he had not had a holiday for 6 years and he leaped at the idea.

I gave Tom a choice of 7 holidays (all in Europe) and he chose a multi-activity one in Turkey. We joined a group of 16 and I turned out to be well over 20 years older than anyone else there! There were three teenagers, some in their thirties and a couple approaching 50. We were based at a lovely place called Kas, near Dalaman, and the weather was glorious throughout although very hot – 35 degrees in the shade and in the mid-forties in the sun! Each day we went out for a different guided group activity which included mountain walking, sea kayaking, tubing, mountain biking, canyoning and abseiling. It was tremendous fun although having two artificial knees I found the canyoning rather testing. This was because we waded in water in canyons all day, so that we could not see the uneven boulders and rocks under the surface which meant that we were slipping and twisting quite a bit of the time. Sometimes the water was only knee high, other times waist height, or chin height, and others where we had to swim. We often had to climb up boulders and rocks out of the water using ropes to get to the next part of the canyon.

The abseiling was also a great experience. We had three to do and the highest was 170 feet going down alongside a huge waterfall, so sometimes we had water hitting us hard and pouring on top of us, then we would slip under and behind the waterfall, then to the side, then back underneath it etc.

I can strongly recommend taking grandchildren before they 'fly the roost'. It gives a wonderful opportunity to get to know them much better, to find out their hopes, fears and aspirations and it enables them to see you in a closer and more intimate way.

Give it a try!

Alan Rustage

A DAY AT THE PARALYMPICS

The Olympics were over and I thought that I had missed my chance to see the Olympic Park and the Arena at Stratford. Then on Monday morning my son rang to say that he had got seven tickets for the Paralympics the next day and "can we all come up and stay with you tonight and then go with you up to Stratford by train in the morning?" His wife could not get time off from her hospital at such short notice so my son and his three boys came without her. We set off very early on Tuesday morning.

Arriving at Stratford the first impression was of the huge crowds and when we finally got into the stadium it became packed. Many of the spectators were women with children. I am sure that, like us, they were seizing the chance to see something of the Olympics and give their children the experience without paying the ridiculous prices for the main events. (Our tickets as pensioners were £5!)

We saw wheelchair shot-putting and javelin and several wheelchair races. Every competitor was cheered and clapped, even the tail-end Charlies way behind the field. The event that impressed me most of all however, was the blind long jumping. It was hard to believe the courage you need to hurtle at top speed down the track guided only by someone clapping his hands to give you direction, and then hurtling yourself into space while he dodged out of your way and told you when to jump. Then to do this again and again. The blind racing was impressive also. Each runner having a sighted guide to run with them just joined by a strap. The blind runners got the kudos but the guides had trained just as hard and for just as long and their names were not even mentioned. What devotion to the ideal of service that shows.

When it came time to leave there was a huge mass of people walking out of the park towards Stratford station. My first thought was that this would mean chaos but to my astonishment we got quickly to our platform and after a fairly short wait onto a train to Colchester. We even found seats all together. The travel arrangements were exemplary and the Olympic fares very reasonably priced.

(Some photos on the back page)

Bill Ward



FORUM AT THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Our photo shows President Andrew and his wife Gill, vice-president Irene and PDG David and his wife Christine Judge at the recent District Conference at Staverton Park Hall in Daventry.

OLYMPIC MEMORIES

Tennis at Wimbledon



Tsonga wins his match



Olympic mascot topiary



Venus Williams at practice



Heather Watson in her match

Olympic Park and Water Polo



The Ward family in the Olympic Park



The Arena



The Water Polo pool

Paralympics



The Royal barge on the River Lee



The magnificent arena from outside



Amputee runners in the 400 metres