



Rotary Club of Billericay

News

March 2016

“Service Above Self”



Best Club Website
in District 1240
2014-15 & 2015-16

President’s Message

SELL, SELL, SELL!



Our Soapbox Derby is fast approaching and our priority is to sell programmes. It could pour with rain on May 2 but adverse weather is a risk with any outside event and we may be lucky. It is the first event of its kind in Essex and, whatever the weather, I am sure that it will be a day to remember.

I am honoured to be president in the year when this inaugural event could be the forerunner of many such in future for the benefit of the community and my thanks goes out to all those members who have worked so hard to make the event happen. Inside you will see all the action we have put together and circulated to all the press outlets. I am grateful for everyone’s support.

Meanwhile, against that background, club life goes on.

Monday February 29 - Dawn Roche, a former member of Dagenham Girl Pipers, gave an

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amusing talk about the Pipers. Established in 1930, they were the first female pipe band in the world and are still going strong. Dawn saved the best until last – she had once danced with Fred Astaire! We were joined for lunch by Adam Elwell (a guest of Founder Member Ben) and Terry Rothery.

Congratulations, Keith

Monday March 7 - we had a Fellowship Meeting to review progress with our Soapbox Derby, and Keith kindly bought drinks to mark the birth of a granddaughter, Isla Grace.

On the following afternoon, Vice President Mike, Malcolm, Patrick and I attended a meeting of the Basildon Council Events Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) at Barleylands to discuss the Soapbox Derby.

Thursday March 10 - this evening, nine members attended our daughter club’s meeting at Burstead Golf Club for a presentation on the history of forensic psychiatry in our country. The speaker Dr Kishore Seewoonarain, a retired consultant forensic psychiatrist, was formerly Clinical Director of Runwell Hospital.

Monday March 14 - Smell and touch was the subject of our

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President's Message (continued)

speaker Ruth Andoh-Baxter, a Community Fundraiser for Sense, a charity established over 60 years ago to provide support to deafblind children and their families. Ruth told us that Sense is the seventh charity for which she has worked and she will be retiring later this year. She is also a Rotarian from Dorking Deepdene Club.

On the evening of Wednesday March 16 Peter Greene and I attended the District Council Meeting at Writtle College (please see separate report).

Monday March 21 - at our Business Meeting we were joined by Rotarian Frank Rigg, a friend



of Peter Greene from schooldays, and a member of the Rotary Club of Concord, Massachusetts.

We agreed to donate £100

to Bristol Volunteers for Development Abroad to assist with a project in Malawi. We were contacted by Kirsten May, a resident of Billericay. Kirsten is currently studying at Bristol University and will give a presentation at a club lunch later in the year.

During the month we were sorry to receive the resignation of Rev Paul Carr for health and personal reasons. The Billericay Team Ministry will continue to be represented by Rev. Margaret Fowler. Margaret is currently an associate member and will be inducted as a full member in April.

Inner Wheel

Dealing with Dementia



Hello Rotarians.

At our March meeting our District chairman

Jane joined us for the meeting and an excellent buffet lunch prepared by members. Jane chose the growing problem of membership as her theme since many clubs are struggling to recruit new members and District is not finding it easy to get officers. Inner Wheel, like Rotary, has a formal structure and it's a fine balance between informing prospective members about this and not putting them off joining. The District's theme this year is "Dementia Friends" and we will be holding a public event in St Mary's on April 29 at 10.30am with a speaker from Dementia

Friends who will answer questions from the audience and privately afterwards. Clacton club won the award to enter a piece of creative writing for the District's Daphne Cole trophy. I accepted the challenge for our club and you can read it below.

The word dementia had to be included in a maximum 500 words. Not easy to write about such an emotive subject matter in so few words, but I believe it was honest and emotional.

By Maya Gupta, Inner Wheel special correspondent

Changing Tides

Editor's note: The newsletter is delighted to produce Maya's brilliant creative article for the Daphne Cole 2015-2016 award. She did not win but I am sure all Rotarians will share her emotions. Dementia is a major blight on modern living.

Seagulls circled, silhouetted against the dawning sun: a new day was beginning. John was sleeping heavily and didn't stir when I got up. The journey down had been tiring for both of us. I do all the driving now, grateful for the satnav, not able to rely on John to do any map reading. He'd stared out of the window most of the way, not saying anything so I'd put on some music as he didn't

seem to mind.

I preferred it to the silence.

The room was nice, I'd asked for a sea view. We'd both always loved the sea, listening to the sound of the waves on pebbled beaches and trying to recreate the sound, laughing, hoping no-one could hear us or we'd walk on the soft sand and paddle in the cool water. We would sit in the Victorian shelters out of the wind, holding hands and watching seagulls swooping and yachts with brightly coloured sails leaning into the wind, being quiet for many minutes in our own world. It feels now that we live in separate worlds,

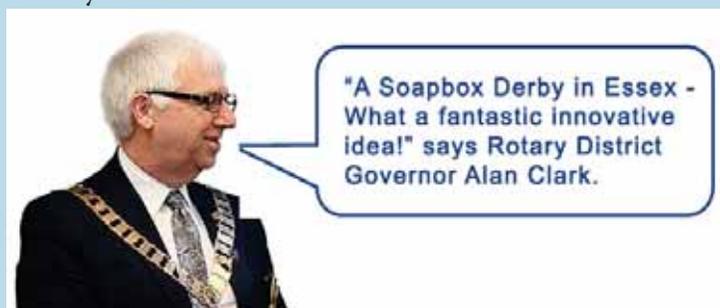
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Soapbox Diary - Now We Start The Big Sell!



The mechanism's in place. Race-wise we're on the grid, metaphorically if not literally. Five weeks to go before the starting gun and the chequered flag. Excitement rising from members, entrants and all involved; tension mounting. Fifty plus karts entered – great racing guaranteed. A Wacky Day for all! May 2 – our red-letter charity, community and fun day.

The drivers are buzzing: Comments range from "What a thrill. Cannot wait," to "Has got to be the fun event of the year," and "Always wanted to have a go," - young "wacky" racer.



But for the club's organisers, the final sprint is onto SELL, SELL, SELL!

Five thousand spectators on the day expected – more will be a bonus – and we might believe that our inaugural Soapbox Derby was worth all the effort, the planning, the headaches and the battles. But 5,000 spectators are not just going to turn up as though wandering through the High Street on Bank Holiday Monday, and discover this strange event going on.

We are not letting that happen. Sales and promotion have now be-

come the top priority. Here's how we are going about it.

Tickets & Programmes: Thanks to website manager Peter Greene's initiative and RedBox Tickets who helped us develop this charity event free of charge, a major systems development exercise has just been completed. Tickets can now be bought on our website at: tinyurl.com/RCBuyTickets

In the first of weekly bulletins circulated to all entrants, sponsors, advertisers etc, Peter says: "Tickets are available at the usual price of £3.00 for an individual and £10 for a family (two adults, two

children) and are exchangeable at the entrance gate for programme(s). There is a £1.50 fee per trans-

action (not per ticket) to cover credit card fees etc., so why not join friends and colleagues and consolidate all your tickets into one transaction and spread the fee over all the thicketts?

"Space is limited, buying your ticket now guarantees admittance on the day – buy now to avoid disappointment and enjoy fast-track entry. Encourage your friends and family to buy now."

Shops and pubs

Programmes are now available for purchase from selected shops and

pubs in Billericay.

Promotional Banners: Not just to decorate the course but a chance for companies, clubs and sponsors to project themselves before a fantastic turn-out of people. Members are rallying to this by personally contacting their suggested takers and we are targeting high profile clubs and companies. Billericay loves its sport so we are daring to approach national icons like West Ham United and Essex CCC who draw great support from our area along with local clubs, Billericay FC, Burstead GC and Rayleigh Go-Kart Company. We hope they will respond kindly.

Sponsorship Opportunities:

We have so far received generous sponsorship, not least from our main sponsor, Toomey Motor Village Basildon and we have now informed those entrants etc. who agreed to raise £100 in sponsorship to add to the charity fund that they can now collect some (or all) of this sponsorship on-line through our website at:

tinyurl.com/RCBSponsor for full details.

President Ed Harrison says. "It is not just a passive opportunity for teams to collect sponsorship money but also for people to get really involved by sponsoring a team and getting directly involved. As we say on our website: It should make your experience of the event more enjoyable if you have a personal interest in your sponsored team." (continued next page)

Soapbox Diary (continued)

Our Colleagues

The Media: Magnificent support from the Billericay and Brentwood Gazette, who will be highlighting our event during April. BBC Essex and Phoenix FM will support us with interviews etc. from organisers, entrants, sponsors.

Support: As a small club in number, organising, managing and stewarding etc. is always something we have to overcome when staging a major event. Which is why we are delighted that other charity/ service clubs in the area have agreed to help us in organ-

isation and physical manning support on the day. They include: Billericay 41 Club, Billericay and Brentwood Lions, Billericay Round Table and, not least, our colleagues from the Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower.

Other key points:

Catering: Confirmed a deal to keep food outlet choices and prices to a level to suit families and supporters on the day. These include carvery, burgers, noodle bar, hog roast, kids sweets and ice creams, picnic areas and seating tables on Sun Corner field where

there will also be children's entertainment, classic car display and a modern car (Toomey Motor Village Basildon) show. London road closed to traffic but full pedestrian and viewing access. Billericay rail station car park free on the day

Helpline: Contact us on 07791 116458. Ticketing queries to: 0844 776 6777.

Charities supported include: Local - Two schools & Little Havens Children's Hospice; International - Hope & Homes for Children and Doctors Without Borders (Médecins sans Frontières).

Farewell Paul And Thank You

Editor Trevor Bond talks to Paul Hatton

Paul Hatton, 45 years old. Manager for eleven years of Billericay's best known night-spot - called Quilters when Paul first arrived, then the Ivory Rooms, which became the new home for the Rotary Club of Billericay. It is now Reids Restaurant and Cabaret Bar. Now he's moving on.

On Monday, February 29, Paul said goodbye to Reids - his last day at the office - and to us - "all my friends in Rotary," he said as he spoke to me about his change of scene after saying goodbye to our lunch members. Paul has been appointed general manager of The Brickworks, a Romford restaurant, bar and night club.

"Why now?" I asked. He adds: "Very simple. Not so much a career change but a career challenge. Eleven years in one place is enough. At 45, I feel I still have a lot to offer. It is my decision - nothing to do with the changes taking place at Reids. The guy who owns The Brickworks has

expansionist plans - three, four more similar outlets. I could end up bossing them all. How could I say no to that challenge? Not about money - no more than I have been paid here."

Paul is half-Cypriot. "I lived in Cyprus for seven years and helped run a karaoke bar in Agia Napa. Suppose that is when I knew how my career would work out."



In his time at Reids, Paul has survived two brain tumour operations at Queen's Hospital, Romford. "The first one wasn't easy but nothing as horrendous as the second one - long hours in surgery and a time when those around me were crossing their fingers and praying I came through."

"How are you now?" I asked. "Good as new. It seems a long time ago but it is in the past."

"You must have many great memories of working in Billericay. What are the big moments?"

He thinks for a moment. "Arranging some wonderful cabaret nights with celebrities, rates highly, but it is when you meet the real person in the flesh and you tingle. It happened with me when Alexander O'Neil appeared in person. A hero of mine. He did not let me down."

And adds: "I am lucky. I have many contacts in showbiz and the sporting world. They trust me and they come. We have had The Drifters - a great evening And West Ham's legends like Tony Gale, Billy Bonds, Tony Cottee, Alvin Martin come back time and again for a sporting evening - always house full. Plus great players like Ossie Ardiles."

One special memory? "OK, I staged a charity boxing dinner here - what they call a munch and punch evening. I went in the ring and knocked out the "champ" in the third round.

Paul's love of skiing began on the slopes of Mount Olympus, Cyprus. He never lost the love and had

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I Danced With Fred Astaire

There are, in this modern age, boy bands and girl bands - "bands" being a loose word for a singing group of young wannabees.

But where else in this modern age would you find a real band - a band that actually plays, which is what bands are supposed to do.

Brass bands in Yorkshire? - probably still. Drum and trumpets in Devon and all stations west - likely?

But if there was one unique band, it has to be the Dagenham Girl Pipers - yes, the DGP in darkest Essex - hardly Essex even. But weren't we "locals" (those Dagenham, Romford, Hornchurch kids) so proud of them.

As kids, we would walk out of a cul-de-sac and rush to see them play through the town, the arena, the circus, the May Day parade - just to be there.

OK. Enough of boyhood memories.

Over to Dawn Roche, an original piper member and now a local magistrate - what a brilliant talk to

us on Monday February 29 about the Girl Pipers who, literally and physically, conquered the world in their hey-day of the Fifties and Sixties - and remain strong today.

Dawn gave us chapter and verse:



Memories of a Dagenham Girl Piper

***The Band's formation, 86 years ago, starting in a vicarage and almost for fun**

***How they were disciplined and trained from the age they were "qualified".**

***Where they travelled to - all parts of the world including China, Australia, Venezuela,**

***Recruited at 11, two years before being "qualified". Get married - OUT! Single girls only!**

Dawn added: "We have opened shops, supermarkets, never missed the Dagenham Town Show, appeared at circuses and in US malls where we were introduced to a couple of movie stars plus a gangster or two.

I have been in the Oval Office at the White House to meet President Reagan, and I've danced with Fred Astaire. We have travelled

the world, been to see so many exciting places. A great adventure."

The Dagenham Girl Pipers still exist - now sponsored by Barking and Dagenham

Council and piping for charity.

"We are now about 15 strong. And there is still one lady aged 98 who can still pipe!" In or Out - Dawn did not reveal.

A brilliant and illuminating talk - what a plus for the Club!



South Africa.

***How they met presidents and monarchs - including our Queen**

***How they spent hours and hours on voyages, flights and ferry boats - and had always to stay in uniform**

Farewell Paul (continued from Page 4)

just returned on the Monday from a week's snowboarding in Austria. "What a thrill - loved it."

One final question: "What has Rotary meant to you?"

"When the Rotary Club chose to come here, I was delighted. I believe in Rotary and like to think that I have made many good friends as a result.

Now the 41 Club and the Lions come here too.

Long may it stay that way!"

So say us all!

Speakers Corner (continued)

How SENSE is breaking down the barriers

Conversation piece. Young child to Mother; “Mummy, what’s that lovely smell? Mother: “That’s my new perfume, darling. Do you like it?” Child: “It smells lovely, mummy and you LOOK so nice.” That is a normal child and her mum. There can be no such conversation with a deaf-blind child and its mother. No hearing, no seeing, but an increased sense of SMELL, one of the other senses left to such a disadvantaged child. Ruth Andoh Baxter, speaker on May 14 and charity organiser for SENSE (Touching People’s Lives) explained:

“When a child is born deaf and blind, their opportunities for contact with their loved ones comes down to their remaining senses, touch and above all, smell. This is why SENSE developed a fragrance which you will not find in a depart-



ment store or boutique. It exists only in the mind of an eight-year-old boy, let’s call

him Jay. “Jay is deaf-blind and the familiar smell of his mother’s perfume is the only way he can recognise her. We understand how to make the most of their existing senses, such as touch and smell.

That’s why every day after school Jay is given a handkerchief sprinkled with his mother’s scent. That way, he knows it’s home time.”

Ruth, a fellow Rotarian, now based in Surrey, has served on seven charities. “SENSE is one of the two I have valued most,” she says. “And SENSE is the best”. Due to retire later this year, Ruth outlined the charity’s work from the days



Gift Aid on Donations

Sense has Charity shops across the UK, including Billericay. Did you know, when you give donations of clothes, toys, etc., you can become a supporter with a supporter number. Then, whenever they sell any of your gifts they claim gift aid on what they get, and they notify you so you get Gift Aid on it too.

So, become a supporter!

when London’s Royal Hospital first set up the aid project. “Since then,” she says, “the mindset has changed for the better. No real estimate can be made of the number of UK affected, but it’s probably 350,000. We cannot reduce the numbers – just try to give them a better quality of life. This is why funding is so essential.”

She touched briefly on how deaf-blind children could develop more severe damage – meningitis, brain damage, mobility problems. “But, thankfully, they are rare cases.”

President Ed presented Ruth with a cheque for £100 towards the charity funds.

Changing Tides (continued from Page 2)

together but apart, John often not remembering our many happy days by the sea.

When we talk now he repeats the same thing over and over again, like a loop in his head. Perhaps we shouldn’t have come here. John can’t remember being here and it seems he often doesn’t remember me. There are fleeting signs of him remembering parts of our past life, but the memory is quickly gone. When the doctor told him he had early onset dementia he worked hard to do things that he thought would keep his brain active; crosswords, puzzles, Sudoku

and walking daily. He seemed fine at first, just a few things he’d always forget but it didn’t last.

We went to a support group and learnt more about who to contact for assistance and discussed practical things to help with the frustration of worsening forgetfulness. We came away quite positive and started thinking what we would do, but he would get annoyed when I tried to do things I thought would make life easier for us. His increasing frustration at not being able to remember parts of the recent past, or where he’d put things, threatened to

push a wedge between us. I was always trying to be positive but he was becoming increasingly negative. When I did find some of the things he had “misplaced” they were in some very strange places, which at least made us both laugh. I decided then we should start going to the places we used to love. One suitcase, nothing much to “misplace”, enjoying our own company. I am writing this on what will be our last trip as the driving is difficult for me. I fear the future is now set but we will enjoy it while we can, visit local places and use all support offered, meeting the challenge head on.

Diary of a Novice Cruiser (Part II)

Final Extracts from Mrs. Greene's Diary

Day 21 - Burns Night

A parade led by a piper and a Scots priest and, dancing Filipinos in kilts! Well, they did their best! It was great fun and our priest did a great job in addressing the haggis and drinking its health in whisky. *(To judge by his loud and continuous "Bravos" during the Scottish themed show after the parade, he imbibed a fair amount in honour of the haggis - Peter!)*



James remembered each other very well. Judy tells me the man with the white hair is a coroner – I hope he's not here to deal with mysterious deaths.

The token drunken lady has two suitors – both rather sleazy.

The one very glamorous and stylish woman has become an item with a burly Australian.

There's a married South African who lives in Wales, but his wife

doesn't like boats and bought him the cruise for his birthday. I can understand that!

There's Felicity from Aldeburgh (twice mayor) - grows her own vegetables and has a glut of Jerusalem Artichokes.

Day 23 - New Best Friends

We thought we were the only passengers just trying to reach St Helena. We are wrong, we met *Miriam* on Day 2. She was the first English baby born on St Helena (1929), but left in 1931 and has never been back. She too had found organising a trip too difficult. Miriam is an architect and still working at the age of 87 ("How else would I afford this trip?"). She was kayaking in Australia last year!

Then there's *Judy*, the fount of all knowledge, who knows everybody. She is 73 and married to a Wing Commander (*James*) who is 94 and in a wheelchair (broken hip but otherwise fit). He used to run Princess Margaret's household. One of the ship's lecturers was Princess Margaret's body-guard for over 10 years. He and

She used to own a nursing home but her friends kept leaving in boxes. Hopes her friend who has an artificial leg and two walking sticks will get ashore today. She is not travelling with the friend, but often meets her travelling on the same cruise - she had two legs when they first met! Felicity met her second husband on a cruise and is now widowed again. Is number three in sight? She is going "all the way".

I have found myself sitting next to an old couple on several occasions. They often bicker. Today I heard her say "What we need to know is when we're going to get to Madagascar because that's when you have to start taking the pills." He said "What about Egypt – I think it's Egypt?" She said "forget about Egypt, it's Madagascar!" I'm thinking it could be fatal if they

don't get the right place.

There is a man on board who spends the whole time up front with binoculars and camera with a massive zoom lens (nicknamed by a passenger as "Dolphin Dave"). He told Peter that he is only on the cruise to spot a rare dolphin which is only seen in this area. He saw them this morning! He puts notes in the library every day telling the other passengers what he has seen. A few days ago Peter heard him shouting excitedly "It's a Booby! A Brown Booby!" *(I was quite disappointed when it turned out to be a bird - Peter).*

Day 25 - Cape Town



It is my birthday and by sheer coincidence, Peter's brother Stephen and his wife also arrived in Cape Town today. Stephen has the same birthday as me. We usually celebrate together, although usually not on the actual day. This year is different – not only did we celebrate together on the 29th January, but in a wonderful location.



We've had time to go shopping and to enjoy the atmosphere, as we were in Cape Town in December a year ago and did most of the tourist things then.

(continued on the next page)

Diary of a Novice Cruiser (Part II)

Day 28 - At Sea

There has been a changeover of lecturers in Cape Town. Edwina Currie is on board. She gave a very amusing lecture entitled GOD (Growing Old Disgracefully). She didn't mention sleeping with the Prime Minister. The sun came out and people are doing their after-lunch walk around the deck – "A mile for a smile" – five times round the deck is one mile. But it's only the thin passengers – the rest can't move after lunch. Others are baking themselves round the pool – getting a deeper shade of leathery orange – no need for spray tan here. I heard a grumpy voice say "They're killing themselves". True, of course.

Day 29 - Port Elizabeth

The couple who are sitting next to us at breakfast live in a retirement complex in Cornwall – "It's marvellous – everything is taken care of – maintenance, housework, gardening, laundry, meals if they wish, entertainment. It sounds just like being on a cruise! Their little dog is in a "Dog Activity Centre" for the three months they are away – probably costing more than the cruise?

Judy is going on the "Elephant Safari" trip this afternoon and we are going to keep her Wing Commander company. (*He told me "If you've seen one elephant, you've seen them all – but I won't tell that to Judy" - Peter*). We didn't go because it was a short trip, the wrong time of day and we saw so many last year. If you've seen one elephant, you've seen them all!

Day 30 - At Sea

The on-board romance between the burly Australian and the glamorous lady has taken a tragic twist. Judy, tells me that burly Australian is leaving the boat in Durban



whilst glamorous lady is going all the way. I've told Judy to become best friends with glamorous lady - I must know the end of the story. The choir group gave a performance today. They'd win no prizes, but, they've only had four weeks to practice. Felicity from Aldeburgh did her best to raise standards by singing her heart out. She is a pillar of any community of which she is part. Franz from Holland was in the choir too. His wife, Sue, from Liverpool, was overcome with emotion (maybe I'm too cynical). Glamorous lady was also in the choir. At the end of the performance, we found out she was leaving in Durban! Judy and I are shocked – Judy has gone to seek the truth. Sure enough, glamorous lady is leaving and burly Australian is staying. Glamorous lady couldn't change her plans and "go all the way". Judy will just have to get friendly with the burly Australian. (*Peter seems unperturbed by any of this*).

Quiz night again – **and we win!**

Day 31 - Durban

Left the ship today. The airport is flooded with cruise ship passengers. Glamorous lady looks sad. Boarding the plane was a nightmare. The stewardess had a great sense of humour. Frustrated with

the slow boarding, she announced "I have another 130 people to get on this plane, so if the person in front of you is not moving, give them a push. I would like to get to Johannesburg tonight". (*It worked, boarding really speeded up – Peter*). On landing, she announced "We'd like to thank the 160 cruise passengers for flying with us tonight and the two other passengers!"

We were first off the plane. There to greet us was a line of wheelchairs (over 20) with pushers for each one. It was like the Wheelchair Olympics as they raced each other through the airport, deposited their charges, and went back for more. I heard a member of staff complain they were short-handed because so many staff had to push the wheelchairs. I came across Miriam (87), photographing designs on some columns and the floor for an architectural project. She said "did you see that wheelchair fiasco – wasn't it astonishing?" I said "Most of them were younger than you". I think I'll have to try to keep in touch with her if I can keep up, that is.

Peter has been to redeem the VAT on our purchases in Cape Town. Refund of over £100 – I knew it was worth doing all that shopping! Am I glad I am off the boat? – yes! Am I sorry I'm not going all the way? – No! ... Peter may differ. After all that, I have to confess that I have agreed to go on another cruise in July. We are going to Norway to see the Fjords – only seven days. Well, we had to spend the £500 compensation that we earned for being confined to our cabin for two days. It could only be spent on another cruise. **Maybe we have joined the cruising gang after all!**

Supporting The Young Chef Competition

It Turned Out Right On The (Day).....!

Peter Greene reports on a day with the Young Chefs

What a day! The District Young Chef competition at Chelmsford College. Our Youth Officer, James Ilesley couldn't go - working! I had got back from Wales only the day before. To go or not to go? That was the question. Answer: Yes. If only to support our finalist, Emily Hughes. Armed with camera to take a few shots for our club, I set off.

An inauspicious start. Drive to Chelmsford in the rain. Arrive at College in Moulsham Street as instructed. College closed; gates locked. Inspirational thought - there was another campus. Could I have been given the wrong location? Quick drive round to Princes Street Campus and rushed in. Right place! Phew!

Was I too late? No. But only two candidates were there. If I was given wrong location, so could the others. Back in the car, mad dash back to Moulsham Street. There they were, bedraggled and on the brink of going home after waiting over an hour. So took them back to Princes Street in time for the three contestants to carry their food and equipment into the kitchen and started setting up.



In charge was Gloria Nicholls from Rotary Club of Brentwood Breakfast, supported by other club members. She ran it brilliantly. Start at 10.15 - a 15 minute delay



“ A wonderful example of putting Service above Self”

- President Ed Harrison

to allow the newcomers to calm down and prepare.

Two hours to cook a three-course meal, provide two servings of each course - one for tasting and one



for judges' presentation table.

Ready, steady, cook? Not yet. No show by the expected photographer. Must have photographs. I was press-ganged into taking over. *(Editor's note: I have never known Peter having to be "press-ganged" into taking photographs!)*

Happily agreed but one problem. Camera battery was low. I had planned to take pictures of Emily, not the whole show. We just made it with the prize winners before the battery died.

The Judges?

Kier Keeble - Chelmsford College; Darren

Jones - Jamie's Trattoria; Geraldine Beaurain - Mary's Meals.

The line-up for the Final:

- Emily Hughes - Billericay

- Fern Lawrence - Bishops Stortford
- Samuel Staples - Harlow
- Daniel Rooke - Thurrock Gateway
- Alice Robinson - Southend

Two hours to cook but over an hour for the judging to decide the winner and runner-up. Finally - wait over.

District Governor Alan Clark attended with wife Celia, and Mayor of Chelmsford, Paul Hutchinson made the presentations, a certificate and a "Goody Bag" for each competitor, before Darren announced the result.

Runner-up: Harlow's Samuel Staples

Winner: Fern Lawrence (Bishops Stortford)

The Club sends special congratulations to Emily who was a close



second in our Billericay competition and stepped in for the final at only four days notice when the original winner could not be there on the day, and had little time for planning and preparation. President Ed Harrison says: "This is a wonderful case of the Rotary motto: Service above Self."

Hear, hear!

District Council Meeting



Held at Writtle College on the evening of Wednesday March 16. Peter Greene and I represented our club.

DG Alan Clark (above) had just attended the District 1190 Conference and the funds raised by clubs in Cumbria in response to the winter flooding were really impressive. If any club in our district still wishes to make a contribution, this should be sent to District 1190's DG. (Our

donation of £500 was sent in December to the Rotary Donations Trust). DG Alan also reported that, sadly, one of the clubs in our district has had its charter temporarily suspended; the position will be reviewed in September.

District Service Committee Reports are on the District website; but there were a few updates.

- In Pat Gaudin's absence, our incoming Assistant Governor Peter McCafferty stated that there will be another media course and exhorted members to keep "liking" the District Page on Facebook.
- District Foundation Chairman Len Nieuwenhuis reported that, this year to date, there

Flood Relief Fund Still Open to Offers

are only six confirmed polio cases (five in Pakistan, one in Afghanistan) compared to 17 at this time last year. Giving is 75% down and we need to finish the job of final eradication.

A new Governor

District Governor Elect Terry Dean advised that District Assembly will be held at Writtle College on Saturday morning May 14 and encouraged all members to attend. The District Handover Lunch

high quality accessible arts projects, providing pathways in and through the arts for all communities. Its focus is on working with disabled children, young people and adults, and those facing exclusion.

District 1240's Partnership with Essex Coalition for Disabled People will be launched in May.

National Disabled Sports Championships

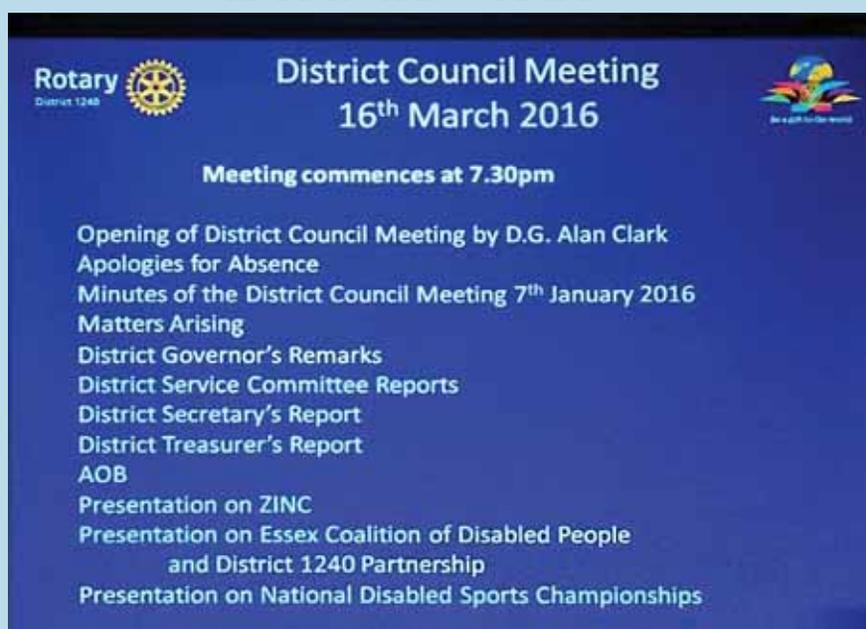
President Andrea Terry of Hadleigh Castle Club

spoke about the National Disabled Sports Championships which were held in November, and the need for additional sponsorship (£100 per club?). She introduced Adam Goldspink-Burgess and his parents who spoke enthusiastically about the weekend. Adam, who

has cerebral palsy and competes in swimming and pitstop, was presented with the David Lee Trophy by DG Alan.

The next District Council Meeting will be held at Writtle College on Wednesday October 19, 2016.

By President Ed Harrison



will be held at Chelmsford City Racecourse on Sunday July 3. The three-course lunch provided will cost £25 per head.

The 2017 District Conference is at Norton Park Hotel, near Winchester from September 22-24, 2017.

Arts projects

Rotarian Alan Buckley introduced Darren Hufton-Rees (CEO) and Sonia Cakebread (Director) of Zinc Arts, an access charity based in Chipping Ongar. It specialises in developing and delivering



Hope & Homes For Children

We recently received a letter from Catherine Butt, Rotary Liaison Manager of Hope & Homes for Children, in which she thanks Rotary for all its help. This is one of the major Rotary charities we will be supporting from our Spectacular Soap Box Derby on May 2. How appropriate then that we should receive a letter from Catherine, Rotary Liaison Manager. It reads, with some editing for length reasons.

To President Ed: "We have just announced the closure of another institution in Rwanda and I wanted to share the story with you to show how your Rotary club's brilliant support is making a real difference to children's lives.

In 2014 soon after I joined Hope & Homes I was driven through Kingali, Rwanda's beautiful capital set in a valley and surrounded by lush green hills, on the way to visiting my first orphanage. I found areas of poverty but also, despite the horrors of the past, a sense of purpose and optimism.

Two Year's On - A Haven in Rwanda and How Our Club Has Helped To Change Lives

My first greeting was a little boy who looked about the same age as my two-year old daughter. He locked himself onto my leg and gripped me for my entire stay. He was absolutely sodden, his clothes drenched in his own urine, no sense of caution or danger. Then I knew something was wrong.

Then I discovered a back corner of a yard children used as a playground, with a wooden out-house blockaded by steel bars behind which were children, some strapped in makeshift wheelchairs, some lying on hard ground, a few staring into nowhere. I left, overwhelmed and with the look of dejection and hurt from my little friend as I walked away. It has haunted me ever since.

Fast forward 18 months. Back in Rwanda. Home & Hope, the orphanage I described is about to be closed for good. Every child has been reintegrated with their birth family, been found a foster family or been supported into independent living.

One of those was a little boy, Steve. Unable to walk, eat solids or communicate and had been behind bars before my visit when he had been found a home with one of Rwanda's specialist foster families. The transformation could not have been greater.

Without your support the Home of Hope orphanage would never have been closed. Steve would never have found a family and would be living without love or hope.

Your support has enabled us to create new partnerships with organisations in Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana and Kenya as well as expanding our work in South Africa and Sudan.

We thank you."

Playing Away – Thank You Mayflower

Supporting Each Other In Rotary

It is always a pleasure to share an evening with Rotary colleagues on their "home ground".

We did just that on Thursday, March 10 when President Ed and eight other club members joined our daughter club colleagues from

the Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower for the evening at their weekly venue, the Burstead Golf Club.

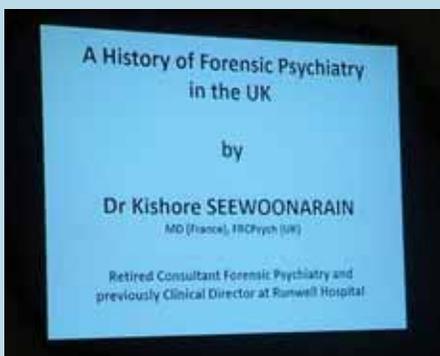
Enjoyable meal, good conversation and an interesting if somewhat disturbing talk from psychiatrist Dr. Kishoree Seewoonarain, about how mental health problems can sometimes take a serious turn involving acts of criminology. A serious and concerning subject and



Rotary members paying rapt attention

worthy of discussion, although there were only a few questions afterwards.

We thank Mayflower President Richard Rackham and his Club for their excellent hospitality.



Something to Brighten your Day

Random Thoughts

I changed my car horn to gunshot sounds. People get out of the way much faster now.

Gone are the days when girls used to cook like their mothers. Now they drink like their fathers.

You know that tingly little feeling you get when you really like someone? That's common sense leaving your body.

I didn't make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row.

I decided to change calling the bathroom the John and renamed

it the Jim. I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.

Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet.

Old age is coming at a really bad time.

When I was a child I thought "Nap Time" was a punishment. Now, as a grown-up, it feels like a small vacation.

The biggest lie I tell myself is, "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."

I don't have grey hair; I have "wisdom highlights." I'm just very wise.

If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would've put them on my knees.

Why do I have to press 'one' for English when you're just going to transfer me to someone I can't understand anyway?

Of course I talk to myself; sometimes I need expert advice.

At my age "Getting lucky" means walking into a room and remembering why I came in there.

Club Tit-Bits

No Birthdays this month.

This was a month for Club visits: **Peter Greene** was a guest of Chelmsford Mildmay club this month to provide advice on using Social Media. He had a very warm welcome and they refused to let him pay for the meal.

Nine members of the club led by President Ed visited our daughter club, Billericay Mayflower and enjoyed warm hospitality. (See

separate report.)

James Ilesley and Debbie have just returned from a trip to New Zealand to see their daughter, and took the opportunity to visit several Rotary Clubs there and in Singapore.

And also visits from other clubs:

- **Rtn Frank Rigg PHF** joined us on March 21st from the Rotary club of Concord, MA. Frank tries to join us whenever

he is in the UK. On previous visits he has given us talks on his life in the USA, and about Presidential Libraries.

- **Rtn. Robert Rollings** joined us Past President from the Rotary Club of Chard on March 14. He is always welcome.
- **Ruth Andoh Baxter** - our speaker from SENSE - see report inside - is a Rotarian. She is a member of Dorking Deepdene club in Surrey.

Rotary Club of Billericay – Forthcoming Club Meetings and Events

Location - Reids Billericay



We meet on Mondays at 12.45 for 13.00
If there is a fifth Monday in the month, please

check the website for information.

Reids, 66-68 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LD Tel: +44 1277 632378

April 4

Katie Wilkie - Cater Museum

April 11

Ian Davidson - Bank of England

Introduction of polymer banknotes

April 11 (6.30 pm - location TBD)

Joint Services Meeting & Club Council

April 18

Business Meeting

April 25

Soapbox Derby - Final club Meeting

All members to please attend.

Other dates for your diary:

April 23 (10.00 - 14.00)

Know Your Blood Pressure day

Waitrose Billericay branch

May 2

Soapbox Derby

May 22

Billericay Fun Walk

Support Roger again this year

May 27

Royal Opera House Visit

(scheduled 12.30 Tour - 20 px.)