



# HUB

## Rotary Club of the City of Wolverhampton

Registered Charity No. 220492

[www.rotaryclubwolverhampton.co.uk](http://www.rotaryclubwolverhampton.co.uk)

District 1210  
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### Cape Medical Response

Following Alan Walters' talk to the club on 14<sup>th</sup> January we have more detail about what they get up to in Fish Hoek. They are partly financed by subscription and do about 30% of their work without charge, particularly in one or other of the nearby townships (one of them for 'Cape Coloureds'). The national paramedics group called ER 24 is 'trying to meet our standards' as they visit schools, provide first aid training and liaise with Rotary, helicopters, lifeboats and Fire Brigade. The incidents are sometimes 'normal' – fires, anaphylactic shock, testing for diabetes, traffic accidents, a broken leg on an offshore tanker.

Sometimes they involve animals – a whale to disentangle from nets, a dog that needs intubating after a snake bite, a shark attack. Increasingly and worryingly they are dealing with drugs and gangs and gunshot wounds. One can understand that Alan would miss the excitement but also that he (and Helena) think it might be prudent to be based in the UK. SW

### Lunch in Shrewsbury

Instead of Linden House ten of us visited our daughter club on 22<sup>nd</sup> January where we were welcomed by President Elect Mary Pascoe. After a nice meal there was not much club business and we listened to an excellent talk by Marianne Blaauboer the Dutch manager of the Flaxmill Project. It is supported by Historic England (previously English Heritage) and by Shrewsbury Council and financed by the National Lottery (£27m) and Shropshire (£1m). This was the first iron frame building built in 1797 and was a flaxmill for 90 years and a maltings for another 90. (The canal alongside became less important than the railway from the 1840s.) During World War II it was a training establishment – with rats hanging around from the malting days! For a long time many hoped in vain for this historic site to be restored and this is now happening on time and on budget. The Friends of Flaxmill are looking forward to a thriving, multifarious and viable enterprise. And the impressive Marianne is hoping for continued employment! We enjoyed our visit. SW



### Tree of Remembrance Cheques

The people of Wolverhampton continue to cherish the opportunity to remember their loved ones. The Wulfrun Centre welcomed us again and the Express and Star printed the many messages. In addition to the display we had two excellent Saturday choir performances. This culminated in the awards over lunch on 28<sup>th</sup> December of valuable contributions to the funds of Compton Care, The Haven, the MS Centre and Rotary charities - as well as the Compton Care Choir and the Wombourne Community Pop Choir. Donations in cash or services were also made by our sponsors: Millers, Peter Posh, the James Beattie

Trust and FBC Manby Bowdler. The recipients all thanked the Club for its efforts and encouraged us to do it again next year. SW

### Hayley Powell

Was our speaker on 4<sup>th</sup> February, a week after receiving the Tree cheque for The Haven. She spoke passionately about the 'global domestic abuse epidemic'. The Haven is clearly helping effectively in its 5 refuges – there are 275 refuges in England and Wales. (This compares badly with the c.1500 animal refuges!) St Georges Hub receives abused men. 1 in 4 women are affected by abuse in England and Wales. Not just physical abuse ('battering') but sexual, honour-based, forced marriage, financial, coercive control and 'gaslighting'. Children (up to 16 years) must also be catered for in the Haven's list of advice and therapy sessions: legal, benefits, finance, and (PTO)



### Rotary Young Musician

A quite good crowd attended the Wolverhampton Music Service for the Area Round on 4<sup>th</sup> February where 9 contestants performed delightfully. Richard Green was a compere plus, introducing Rotary activities between the performances to allow adjudicators Simon Platford (Wrekin College) and Peter Edwards (Music Education Hub) to collect their thoughts. After the performances Simon and Peter gave sympathetic critiques to each musician while praising the overall high standard. They concluded that the best instrumentalist was Oliver Pritchard-Jones (clarinet, 6th from the right in the photo) and the best vocalist Fiona Winning (9th from the right). Oliver fluently played two contrasting pieces - Lou Cabri-



dan apparently means 'the bee'. Fiona sang three contrasting pieces and filled the room - 'prends garde à toi' ('watch out!') resonated. The winners now go forward to the District Final, at the same venue on Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup>. We wish them all a good future in music. SW



### Snookering and Quizzing in January

After four frames we stood at 2:2 with Bilston (and the penalty points equalled the regular points). However we then won the last two frames to take the match. With light mainly over the tables there is no photo of messrs Bailey, Dawes, Hand, Lockley, Morgan and Williams. A nice photo of our quizzers, though that does not indicate a higher standard of competence! We were winning after 7 rounds but were then pushed back to third of the six teams in our Aldridge venue. 'Who was the first English player to win European Footballer of

the Year?' - we got it wrong! Now we wait and see whether we will go forward. SW

### Ten Pin Bowling, Snookering and Quizzing continued

With Liverpool's second team against Shrewsbury in mind our six chaps reported to the Hollywood Bowl at Bentley and defeated Walsall FC's finest. Not a lot of strikes. Not much to report really. So we go forward. However our recent snooker success is not continued when we draw in games but lose by 18 points against Jacko Page's Cannock RC. In quizzing, moderately gifted as we are, the news comes through that we are through to the next round in March. Hurray! The photo shows our beaming ten pin players.



### Tim Beech

Undaunted by our inability to show his laptop pictures on our screen Tim gave us a very informative sketch of his more than 30 years in radio broadcasting. After reading history at Oxford, not knowing what to do, he did a stint on Beacon Radio, then broadcasting in Dudley Hospital, then Radio Wyvern in Worcester - which led to a three month contract and 'great training'. Afterwards came Beacon Radio for 6 months doing football reports 'for 30 quid a game'. He wanted to be a news journalist but an exclusively sports offer came from BBC Radio WM. It was pre-digital in 1989 and he had become a sports broadcaster. They carried a heavy Uher around and spliced tapes with razor blades. He became Sports Editor. He didn't want to go to London, it was like being paid to follow your hobby. He interviewed many of the 'greats', Billy Wright, Stan Cullis, Stanley Matthews, Tom Finney. He covered a multitude of sports ('if you speak with confidence...') has great memories of European Cup games (post Heyssel), Wembley and many passionate games (e.g. Bolton vs Wolves). After 10 years he became Assistant Editor in Stoke Radio and in 2006 Editor of Radio Shropshire in Shrewsbury with a team of 50. He now does two days a week with his enthusiasm clearly still intact and marvelling at the 'mindboggling' changes in technology. He ended his excellent talk with a cautionary note concerning the BBC which has a revenue rather smaller than Netflix and is dwarfed by Amazon. SW





### Uplands Junior Technology Challenge

90-odd pupils in 24 teams of 4 took the challenge over two days. The pictures are from day 2 on St Valentine's Day. Richard Green gave them their instructions and Club members answered queries without telling them how to solve the problems. As before the task was to construct a squirrel bridge using the materials provided. This activity provides a welcome variation for the teachers and, with a bit of luck, a learning experience in team cooperation and very basic engineering for the kids. The Rotarians judged the products including an attempt to blow the toy squirrel



off the bridge using a hair dryer. At the end of each session a winning team and runner-up team were declared. Pictures show them and us on the second day. (The floor mopping was an extra activity caused by an overflowing sink in the girls' toilet.)



### New Members



Jerry Hobbs was master of ceremonies for a historic induction of three new members to the Club. **Julie Hickman** was recruited by Mel Eves, was among other roles a former Head of Homeless Services for Sandwell and is now Project Manager for the conversion of the former Carillion building on the ring road. Sylvia Morgan introduced **David Hill MBE** who was in Steel and also fully engaged in the T.A. with the rank of Colonel. He was awarded his MBE in connection with his work for the Armed Forces Charity SSAFA. Kewal's old friend and fellow GP **Sudhir Handa** came from Kenya when he was 16, studied medicine at Edinburgh and has special interests in ENT and medical politics. DG Brian Reilly said a few words of greetings including the encouragement to 'have fun and do good'. Jerry in his emerging role of 'general factotum and jack of all trades' promised more members and change to come. Watch this space! SW

### Rotathlon Snooker

Nine Rotarians and one husband competed at Old Wulfs. Two ladies spectated (occasionally). Many were quite inept, one had his specs on upside down, Derek was exasperated. But the sport triumphed. After a pause for fish and chips Peter Hand defeated our organiser Dick Dawes in the final. (Hardly anyone paid attention to the TV screens showing the thrashing of Chelsea by Bayern Munich.



### Rotary Theatre Visit

A group of Rotarians on 18 February, together with partners and friends, enjoyed a meal at Queen Street Cantonese and visit to the Grand Theatre to see Alan Bennett's **The History Boys**. This is a play influenced by his own experiences at school and the process through which he gained entrance to Oxford to study history. The eight school boys and four teachers played their parts well each developing a different personality, around which the play is built. The outcomes for the 12 emerging as the play builds to a close include a few surprises. (The play won three Laurence Olivier awards and 6 Broadway Tony awards in 2005. One of the stars was the late Richard Griffiths. The picture shows the Beyond the Fringe team with A.B. in 1962.)

### Richard's Birthday

A capacity crowd of family members, theatre friends and Rotarians attended Perton Park Golf Club on 29th February to celebrate Richard Green's 80th. The buffet was appetising, Alice Bennett played her saxophone and Fiona Winning sang,

brilliantly . Malcolm Holt and Geoff Lowndes entertained and informed us with a lot of information about Richard's life and Rotary career. In 1940 the Luftwaffe bombing Portsmouth prepared Richard for the drama critic of the Express and Star! His Rotary career took off in his second decade – he was Club President in 2011-12 and District Governor in 2015-16.(And will be Club President again for our centenary year 21-22.) Richard is still very much involved in both theatre and Rotary. Rehearsals are taking place for Harvey in April and he returned recently from a Rotary Jaipur Limb clinic in Kerala. It's a busy life! (P.S. Fiona having won the local round of Rotary Young Musician went on to win district round vocalist on 1st March.) SW



### George Sidebotham and the MBCC Apprentices

President Richard welcomed us to this event in memory of George Sidebotham and in support of the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre apprentices. Guests included DG Brian Reilly, George's relatives David and wife Jonquil (from Comer, Norfolk), Peter and son Lewis (from



East Kilbride) and Trish and Richard Slator (her father flew the Hampden which the MBCC has recently restored). Our very efficient organiser Peter Wright told us about the instigation of this very pleasant evening 10 years ago after George's funeral. He piloted in turn a Halifax, Wellington and Lancaster, was imprisoned in Germany and after the war became our club president (1980-81) and District Governor later. Sales of a video and a book plus a grant from our club's Youth and Community Service committee support the apprentices. We saw Darren Priddy, Head of MBCC on video. He remembered Mick Shepherd, former head, who has sadly passed away. Ella introduced the six apprentices (two in each year) who all spoke well about their activities which include an upcoming Battle of Britain tour with a 1944 Spitfire. They also showed a clever speeded up video of their construction of a Spitfire on wheels which will be entered in Whacky Races. Daniel Cartwright was declared this year's winner and received a toolkit from Bomber Command historian Rob Davies. The apprentices enjoy this event, as they told us, and so do we. SW



### Marianne Redux

A group from Friends of Flaxmill making heading to-jigsaw include Marianne's complete on endeavours.



the club lunched with Shrewsbury RC in January (see previous report) and so much enjoyed by Marianne Blaauboer that we invited her back to ours. She is Manager of the mill Maltings. The listed building with its iron frame was built in 1797, changed from a linen thread after 90 years, became a maltings making beer after another 90 and is now towards a new existence as a cultural centre. There are several parts to the restoration including restoring the Coronet tower which commemorated Queen Victoria's jubilee but group has the funding (lottery) and the support of English Heritage and is striving to schedule. Others enjoyed her second presentation and we wish her good luck in her

### Rotathlon Skittles

On 12th March 22 Rotarians and partners gathered at The Swan in Brewood including new member Lisa Stallard, with us for her first Rotathlon event. Although there were a few last minute cancellations due to "coughs and sneezes" (and thinking of the virus problem), we had a most enjoyable evening including a super buffet supper. For whatever reason, the scoring was well below average (which made life a little easier for those Rotarians who were specially selected for their ability to quickly replace the skittles!) and some scores were "twos" and "threes" rather than "eights" and "nines" - I won't name names! The final was a 3 way play-off between "Stormin' Norman" Holmes; "Deadly Derek" Morgan and "Bean Counter" Ross, which Norman won with Derek second and Stewart third. For the ladies, the winner was "Mrs Pres" Penny, who was presented with a bottle of room temperature Pinot Grigio, with Sue Ross runner-up and Mary Woolley third. My thanks to those who supported the evening which is always a popular event in the Rotary calendar. Brian Woolley (Next edition July 2020)

