

Club Forum 1st October 2019

Notice was given of Crocus planting on 21st October and a reminder of the freestyle theatre visit on 12th November. Richard Green then presented the exciting Shelterbus initiative by Birmingham Breakfast Rotary in collaboration (for the Wolverhampton bus) with Good Shepherd and Enterprise Homes. The bus is a gift to the 5 clubs of Wolverhampton and they and the Council are enthusiastic takers. Up to 10 of the neediest homeless people will have a place to overnight (together with their dogs!) initially for the duration of the 15 month contract. There are many more than that number of homeless but Richard referenced the 'starfish procedure' – one action will lead to another. The second major item was preparation for our club's Centenary Celebration (1921-2021). Brian Bailey gave us an account of the work done by Governing Council. After the meeting he emailed a three page document to all members with a request that we respond with our comments and ideas. It is to be noted that we have a rival Centenarian in Walsall RC. (It is intended that the rivalry will be friendly!) SW



RAF Cosford Annual Reception

On 23rd September RAF Cosford held an Annual Reception in the newer hanger at the museum. Rotarians and wives, as pictured, attended together with Rotarian Brian and Anne Bailey. The presentations highlighted the way that RAF Cosford, the Museum and the Air Show cooperate to raise the profile of the RAF aiding recruitment, ensuring the RAF is part of the local community and making sure the museum has a steady stream of visitors. Our own Group Captain Tone Baker presented on behalf of the RAF. Guests were privileged to be able to observe the Beating the Retreat ceremony, fortunately, from inside a hanger as it was drizzling at the time. The band were inside as well; one had to feel sorry for those marching in the rain outside. On a lighter note the champagne was excellent and the canapés had Peter Wright's seal of approval. RH.



MS Centre Anniversary Party

A pleasant scene at Goodyear Pavilion on 11th October, eight round tables of patients, friends, Rotarians celebrating 35 years. Good food efficiently served and good entertainment by Pete Boddys and Marilyn last seen and heard on a 'cruise on the cut'. He has entertained for 60 years they say. She has a super voice. We were treated to many well known numbers - Jolene, A teenager in love, I'm all

shook up, Rock around the clock... They played and we sang before and after the usual magnificent raffle. Peter Williams recounted some of the Centre's history and thanked the staff and volunteers. President Richard thanked him for his devotion to the cause. Among the representatives of the Centre was Paul Williams who is currently involved in revamping its IT systems to save money and improve its communications in preparation for the next 35 years. SW



On the 10th October the **Ten Pin Bowling** winners were Clive for the men and Val for the ladies. Both competitions were fiercely contested with the lead changing frequently. Dick Dawes and Mike Boyce were jockeying for position all game when Clive came up on the rails and took it on the last set. The ladies challenged Val but she managed to hang on for a narrow win. The bowling was followed by a very enjoyable night of fellowship at the Nickelodeon pub at Bentley Bridge near the bowling alley.



District Quiz

Our team on the 15th October, Horrell, Williams, Woolley and Wright, came second at our venue with an overall average of 67.5%. So not bad. The few questions that we should have answered correctly (e.g. Darjeeling (tea) or Franklin (lightning)) would not have enabled us to beat the winners Walsall. However there seems a good chance that we will make it into the second round in January. An interesting excursion to Druids Heath golf club in furthest Aldridge. SW



Burkina Faso

Means 'Land of the upright Men' and Kevin Lawrence came to talk to us representing an Albrington charity called Transform Burkina. In sub-saharan Africa, one of the poorest countries in the world, blighted by drought and deforestation, with 70% illiteracy, high child mortality and extreme poverty. Kevin's charity (www.transformburkina.org.uk) supports initiatives to provide clean water, sanitation, education, health and micro-credit – with the mantra 'fix one life at a time'. They aim to provide education through bursaries, sustainable fresh water supplies, with a small fee paid to a local management group, health care—he mentioned one part-time doctor in one clinic in a town of 120 000 people and a team of midwives. (The latter frequently work by torchlight!) The charity also supports a micro-credit system like Lend with Care – loans for small start-ups repaid and reloaned. MC

What a lot of Waste!

On the morning of 22nd October 10 of us visited Veolia's Energy Recovery Facility at Four Ashes, with a similar number due to visit in the afternoon. This French company bought up three British plants in 1980 and now employs more than 14 000 staff in waste-handling outfits in the UK, 10 of them ERFs. They are like power stations that burn waste to drive their turbines and supply, in this case, 29 megawatts of electricity to the grid (minus 1.5 MW used to run itself). Their very expert Communications Manager Hilary Hampton was our guide and the company is constantly searching for new ways to recycle –as people should also do. Rejig, reuse, recycle. She was not able to give us the full tour because parts of this vast plant are undergoing periodic 'banging cleaning' using explosives. However she answered all our questions and we were able in the Control Room to see all the parts of the plant on monitors, and imagine 'the atmosphere and the vastness'. They receive 1000 to 1400 tons of waste each day via 100 lorry visits, 340 000 tons a year from Staffordshire and also Sandwell, Warwickshire and Walsall. Their very high chimneys emit only vapour, everything toxic is removed and everything useful is salvaged including ferrous particles and heavy metals. The 'incinerator bottom ash' is very useful in road building. In the present state of waste science hazardous waste has to be packaged and buried (in Cheshire salt mines). The only significant loss is heat, which would be used for District Heating in another country, like Germany where the planners are more in control! The trip was fascinating and much more could be written. SW



Youth and Community Services

Brian Bailey has sent us a detailed summary of the work of his committee. To summarize further, it acts with great care and responsibility and makes grants locally to those individuals and associations with greatest need for a variety of purposes. This year it has so far committed £5850. Among the recipients are : Wildside centre, Let us Play, Shelter Bus, Youth Orchestra, Dictionaries for Life, Young Citizen award, dinner for Cosford Apprentices, Schools Technology Challenge etc etc The challenges for the future include our Club's ageing profile, lack of community projects, need to avoid contributing to an organisation's general funds, focus on a small number of organisations, the Committee's contribution to the Centenary celebrations. Brian or Roy Fielding can give further details and members are cordially invited to make suggestions. SW



Past Presidents' Dinner 2019

A jolly crowd in best bibs and tuckers assembled on 24th October at South Staffs golf club for a tasty meal and a presentation by Mike Kendrick. Mike started in hot air ballooning and project managed a number of Sir Richard Branson's record attempts. He moved on to airships, flew across the Atlantic, then the Pacific and pioneered aerial advertising – and the use of airships in landmine detection, elephant and rhino poaching etc. His company Straightforward Aviation is currently working on a heavy lift hybrid airship. He has been honoured as a Living Legend of Aviation (together with Richard Branson, Elon Musk, John Travolta and Harrison Ford etc). He has also recently been awarded an honorary doctorate by Wolverhampton University. He outlined the advantages of airships - cheap to run, can land on any flat terrain. Clearly he has forward plans; 'We need to get this planet cleaner' he says. And there is a plan to circumnavigate the globe. As Jerry said in his vote of thanks -'inspirational!' . SW